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Kampuchea Rebuilding From the Ruins

**Exclusive
Interview
With
Deputy
Prime Minister
Chea Soth**



Right: Riverside market at
Kompong Chhnang, Kampuchea.

Diane Wang/IP

**Dominican Masses
Rebel Against
IMF Austerity Plan**

**Speech by Tomás Borge
'All Nicaraguans
Are at War'**

**ANC Vows
to Press Fight
Against Apartheid**

U.S. Left and the Iraq-Iran War

Reagan's not-so-secret war

By Ernest Harsch

Seeking to mobilize world public opinion against U.S. imperialism's war on Nicaragua, the Sandinistas opened their case against Washington before the International Court of Justice (known as the World Court) at The Hague, Netherlands, on April 25.

"We ask the Court to indicate that the United States should immediately suspend all financial, military and other support to its mercenary army fighting to overthrow my Government and that the United States should immediately cease and desist from all use and threat of force against Nicaragua," declared Carlos Argüello Gómez, Nicaragua's ambassador to the Netherlands.

Washington's response was to deny that the court had jurisdiction over this case, arguing on the basis of a number of dubious legal technicalities. But it made no attempt to deny Nicaragua's concrete allegations.

This reflects the fact that the U.S. imperialists are becoming more and more open about their war against the advancing revolutions in Central America — at the same time that they are becoming more deeply involved. Hardly a week goes by now without some new escalation in the war or some new revelation about the extent to which U.S. military forces are already involved:

- On April 17, fast on the heels of the revelations about Washington's role in the mining of Nicaragua's harbors, White House and congressional sources admitted to reporters that the CIA had directly supervised and carried out the Oct. 10, 1983, attack by sea on Nicaragua's Corinto port. That attack had heavily damaged the oil storage tanks at the port, destroying 3.2 million gallons of oil. It also forced the evacuation of Corinto's entire population.

- Three days after this revelation, on April 20, the massive Ocean Venture U.S. naval maneuvers began in the Caribbean. Slated to involve some 30,000 military personnel aboard 350 ships, the maneuvers are directly aimed at intimidating the Cuban, Nicaraguan, and Salvadoran peoples, as well as furthering preparations for the massive U.S. intervention in Central America that is being planned. Ocean Venture will include a military reinforcement and practice civilian evacuation of the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay, a part of Cuba still occupied by Washington.

- A major front-page article in the April 23 *New York Times* began, "The Pentagon is now in a position to assume a combat role in Central America should President Reagan give the order, in the view of military specialists and members of Congress." The article summarized many of the known facts about the extent of U.S. military preparations in the region, particularly the construction of new mil-

itary bases and airstrips in Honduras. It also contained a new revelation: that some U.S. agents of the CIA had flown on Honduran Air Force helicopters over Nicaragua to supply the counterrevolutionary terror bands fighting to overthrow the Sandinista government.

- An unidentified "knowledgeable U.S. military source" told the *Washington Post*, in an article in its April 27 issue, that U.S. military and CIA spy flights were regularly conducted over Nicaragua. Flying from U.S. bases in Honduras and Panama several times a week, the flights sometimes stayed along Nicaragua's northern border with Honduras and sometimes penetrated as much as 100 miles into Nicaraguan airspace.

It was earlier reported that similar U.S. flights were being conducted over El Salvador and that the U.S. pilots radioed information on Salvadoran guerrilla movements and positions to Salvadoran army commanders on the ground. Other U.S. personnel were involved in bombing missions over rebel-held territory.

The real terrorists are in Washington

By Fred Murphy

Behind clouds of rhetoric about combatting the alleged threat of "international terrorism," the Reagan administration has made a series of ominous moves aimed at stepping up U.S. military intervention abroad and curtailing democratic rights at home.

In the vocabulary of the U.S. rulers, "terrorist" has come to replace "subversive" as the code word for any individual, organization, or government that forcefully stands up against imperialist domination. By branding as "terrorist" national liberation fighters in Central America or the Middle East, or governments such as those of Cuba, Libya, or Iran, the Reagan administration seeks to legitimize its own terrorist acts and to intimidate those in the United States who speak out against Washington's escalating war in Central America.

It was to further these objectives that Washington joined the British imperialist government in a mid-April campaign of provocations and lies against Libya. For ten days, hundreds of British cops held Libyan diplomats hostage in that country's London embassy, following a shooting incident in which a police officer was killed.

The Thatcher government charged that the shots were fired from inside the embassy. Libya denied this. It offered to conduct an inquiry and hold a trial before international ob-

Such hard-nosed revelations about the actual extent of U.S. military involvement in Central America — and of plans for further escalation — are consciously being leaked to the press by administration and military officials. Their purpose is to condition the U.S. population to the inevitability of a new Vietnam war.

This was underlined by a speech Reagan gave on April 6. "Military force, either direct or indirect, must remain an available part of America's foreign policy," he declared.

Yet opposition within the United States to Washington's war policies remains widespread. A poll conducted by the *New York Times* and CBS News and released on April 29 found that only one in three of those polled supported Reagan's policies in Central America. Nearly half feared that those policies would lead to war, and 67 percent opposed the U.S. mining of Nicaraguan ports. (Only 13 percent supported the mining.)

While the U.S. rulers have launched major propaganda efforts to try to turn around this antiwar sentiment, they obviously have not succeeded. But that will not stop them. They are determined to push ahead, despite the opposition. The political stakes for U.S. imperialism in Central America are too great for them not to. □

servers of any Libyans found to have been involved. London rejected this proposal out of hand, demanding instead that British cops be allowed to search the embassy. This would have been a violation of international law, which grants embassies immunity from precisely such harassment by hostile governments.

Speaking to reporters at the White House on April 18, U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz declared that the London events illustrated "the out-of-bounds behavior of Mr. Qaddafi and the Libyans," whom he termed "the troublemakers of the world." Shultz said he could "envision" joint U.S.-British action against Libya.

The ongoing campaign to brand Libya as responsible for "international terrorism" is designed to isolate and discredit Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi's government, the longer-term goal being to overthrow it and replace it with one more to the liking of Washington and its allies. The U.S., British, and French rulers' hostility to Qaddafi flows from his willingness to speak out against imperialist domination of the Middle East, Africa, and other regions and to provide material aid to national liberation struggles.

Libya was among the countries singled out by Secretary of State Shultz in an April 3 speech to the Trilateral Commission — an elite

outfit that draws together top U.S., Japanese, and West European capitalists and political figures. Shultz urged consideration of "pre-emptive or preventive action against known terrorist groups."

U.S. officials soon made it known that on the same day Shultz spoke, Reagan had signed National Security Decision Directive 138. This secret order reportedly authorizes U.S. police and intelligence agencies to take the "preventive action" Shultz was calling for. What this amounts to is a thinly veiled threat of war against nations Washington has publicly declared responsible for terrorism.

"It's not necessarily a matter of striking back directly at the terrorists," CIA Director William Casey explained in an interview published in the April 23 *U.S. News & World Report*. "The Israelis, for example, send the message: 'If we're hit from your territory, that's your responsibility and we're going to kick you in the teeth somehow.' I think you will see more of that — retaliation against facilities connected with the country sponsoring the terrorists or retaliation that just hurts the interests of countries which sponsor terrorism."

The *New York Times* reported April 21 that the Reagan administration has secretly warned six East European states "that they cannot hope for improved relations with the United States if they continue to support Palestinian and other 'international terrorists.'" The aim here is to pressure these workers states to reduce the aid they provide to national liberation struggles and to governments in the semicolonial world that are in conflict with imperialism.

A further step Reagan aides are now openly discussing is the setting up of what would amount to U.S. death squads. "Some CIA and military officers argue," the *Washington Post* said February 12, "that the most effective way to retaliate . . . is through a surgical strike by a hit team, run and organized by the United States but probably composed of U.S. military personnel or even foreign nationals."

The *Post* noted that a series of presidential executive orders dating back to the mid-1970s bars employees of the U.S. government from engaging in "political assassination." However, the newspaper went on, "one official said the order could be revoked or simply ignored, arguing that covert action against terrorists could be defined as something other than 'political assassination.'" This apparently could be done in secrecy."

In fact, there is no reason to believe it has not *already* been done. On April 25 the Cuban government charged that the CIA had organized a car-bomb explosion the week before that destroyed an apartment building in Huambo, Angola, killing 14 Cuban construction workers. The CIA's "ominous footprints," Cuba declared, "are printed all over this brutal terrorist act." Credit for the bombing was claimed by UNITA, the South African-backed Angolan rightist group, which has also received funds and support from the CIA.

Washington's preparations for further aggression abroad entail stepped-up harassment

and intimidation of all those inside the United States who oppose and speak out against such policies. The current "antiterrorist" campaign comes after a series of earlier moves to expand the powers of political police agencies like the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the CIA, as an integral part of the overall ruling-class offensive against the rights and living standards of U.S. working people.

The latest move in this regard is a package of legislation Reagan proposed April 26. One law would provide for jail terms of up to 10 years for anyone within the United States convicted of providing "support services" to, or acting "in concert with," a group or government publicly designated as "terrorist" by the secretary of state. The draft law further specifies that the validity of such a designation

could not be questioned by the courts or challenged as part of the legal defense of the accused.

Jerry Berman, an official of the American Civil Liberties Union, told the *New York Times* that the bill's language was vague enough to apply, for example, to someone who "went to teach the poor in Nicaragua" or "provided financial support to any group championing the Irish cause in Northern Ireland."

In drawing up this law, Reagan's aides were careful to provide a loophole for the real terrorists employed by Washington. The legislation explicitly waives criminal penalties "for any activities conducted by officials of the United States government, or their agents, which are properly authorized." □

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Rebuilding from the ruins

Interview with Deputy Prime Minister Chea Soth

[Chea Soth is deputy prime minister of the People's Republic of Kampuchea and the country's minister of economic planning. He is also a member of the Political Bureau of the People's Revolutionary Party in Kampuchea.]

[The following interview, conducted through an interpreter, was given to *Intercontinental Press* editor Steve Clark and correspondent Diane Wang in March in Phnom Penh, Kampuchea.]

* * *

Question. Last January 7 the People's Republic of Kampuchea celebrated the fifth anniversary of the liberation from the Khmer Rouge regime of Pol Pot. What progress has been made in that time?

Answer. Five years after our liberation from the genocidal regime of Pol Pot, we observe a lot of progress in all fields.

Pol Pot left us empty-handed. Our regime started from scratch, from ground zero. Actually we can only date our own progress and development from 1980. In 1979 and 1980 we were living only by international aid. It is only since 1980 that we have been able to plan and the people have been able to work.

At the time of our liberation our people had nothing; they lacked everything. The Pol Pot regime had gathered the people to live in communes. Everything was confiscated — their houses, their tools, their plows, their oxen. So the people were empty-handed.

Since 1981, 1982, and 1983, people have started to work and cultivate more land as time goes on. They really have progressed and have done a good job. They have expanded the cultivated land to 1.5 million hectares [about 3.7 million acres].

Today the difficulties are in provinces that are isolated, especially in the mountains and forests of the northeast region. They lack many things. Not only speaking in terms of Kampuchea, but in all the world, the people who cultivate in the mountains tend to have a more difficult time.

Q. How are you developing the economy to raise the standard of living?

A. We pay special attention to raising the standard of living. To do this, we must concentrate on two main questions.

First of all is agriculture. At this moment industry is a secondary consideration because of the specific circumstances of our country. Other countries in the capitalist system or big socialist countries would give more priority to industry. We pay more attention to the agricul-

tural sector to fulfill the more immediate needs of the people.

Kampuchea has always been known for its abundance of natural resources. We estimate the population to be about 7 million now. Before we were 8 or 9 million, but 3 million were massacred under Pol Pot's regime.

If we can grow enough rice — the goals we have projected — we will achieve our primary goal. We estimate we have more than 3 million hectares of arable land [about 7.5 million acres]. In a year, if we can cover our land with rice Kampuchea will be self-sufficient in rice.

In the 1960s during the Sihanouk regime, the export of rice reached almost a half million tons a year. With that export we can exchange for necessary commodities.

Q. What are the prospects for continued recovery?

A. We can say that we have found that the reconstruction and progress in the standard of living will be rapid and easy, if the leadership is capable.

But we do not have stability now. Therefore we have a long struggle. That is why we still have the problem of providing what is needed. Our people still face a shortage of foodstuffs. This is our urgent need.

In the future we believe that our people will have enough to eat and clothes to wear. Each year we see the people's living standard making progress, and there is no real worry now.

But we still depend on the weather. This year the weather in Asia has not been favorable. In the world today there is still famine, especially in Africa.

For the past year, in 1983, we had not only a drought, but also a flood. You may already know that nearby Bangkok [Thailand] had a flood. In Kampuchea, four of our provinces were also flooded: Battambang, Siem Reap, Pursat, and Kompong Thom. All the provinces bordering Tonle Sap were damaged by the flood.

Frankly speaking, this year we will need 300,000 tons of rice. I have already personally met with the United Nations representative. I'm not sure if they will help or not, but we have discussed the problem. Today the humanitarian aid from the UN is going to the other side.

Q. To what extent has industry developed in Kampuchea?

A. We have more than 60 factories and light industrial shops producing consumer goods: food, clothing, and other materials. The

majority of these factories are in Phnom Penh.

In terms of industrial use and development, we do not leave industry idle, as the Pol Pot regime did. Industry is now making progress. Production has increased 70 to 90 percent a year. We are in the stage of rehabilitating industries. Those that we can repair we will.

Q. What difficulties have you encountered in trying to rehabilitate industry?

A. During the Pol Pot regime the factories manufactured nothing. All the equipment was left to rust. Now that we put the factories back in order, we need spare parts. But we can exchange and get parts from very few countries.

For example, some of our textile factories are full of machinery manufactured in China. Now that China is attacking Kampuchea as an enemy, even if we had the money they would not sell us spare parts. So the work in some of the factories has been frustrated.

We can manufacture only 3 million meters of cloth a year, and we have about 6 or 7 million people, so we cannot even produce enough for one change of clothes per person. In our textile factories we are making progress, but it is very slow, relative to our need.

Or take the electrical plant, for example. You have seen that some parts of the country have electricity and some do not. During Pol Pot they left this equipment unused, so many parts were destroyed. They even destroyed the map and plans, as well as the underground relays. So we have trouble locating the underground relays. We cannot find a map, so we make a new one. We are reorganizing a new system, and that cannot be done in one year.

You have seen various factories. There are also factories to process food, to produce cigarettes, a distillery, a pharmaceutical factory, machine shops. We can produce some of these goods for the people, but still not enough for local consumption. We lack raw materials and electricity.

It has been five years since we liberated the country from Pol Pot, but we could not spend them repairing the factories, since during that time we were faced with famine. Famine was our urgent problem, so we had to solve it first. Only in 1981, 1982, 1983 — for three years — have we started our work in rebuilding all the factories. You have seen the progress in your visit. We are making good progress in a very short period of time.

Q. What is the size of the working class in Kampuchea?

A. We estimate the manpower in the big machine shops and factories, including both blue- and white-collar workers, the labor force as a whole, to be 30,000. This is an estimate relying on our statistics, especially on the payrolls. In total, if we talk of workers and cadres together, we have up to 165,000. This is the total in all the factories throughout the country. This estimate does not include the self-employed who might contract to work for a day here or there. But it includes the workers



Diane Wang/IP

Central market in Phnom Penh.

of the port and of all the regional factories, such as those in Kompong Chhnang and Battambang, the jute factory in Battambang.

This is the new work force of our people. This is the green shoot coming up, the potential that will be the strength of Kampuchea in the future.

We have only a very few engineers and machinists. Many of those who had this training were slaughtered during the genocidal regime of Pol Pot, Ieng Sary, and Khieu Samphan.

Q. What kind of wages do Kampuchean workers earn?

A. Just after liberation, with all the problems, there was nothing. We could think of nothing but survival.

Right away, we planned to establish a currency, but it could not be done overnight. It took a year. It took several months to agree on what the currency would look like. We had to decide all the details: what kind of paper, the engraving, and so on.

When we got the money, we lent it to the people without any expectation of repayment. It was distributed all over the country, so everyone could use it.

During the period of 1979–80 salaries began at 60 to 90 riel, or a little over 100 riel per month for cadres of the ministries.

In short, salaries of workers and cadres were very low compared to international standards. However, the rate of wages may be of little comparison. Yet our workers and cadres still did not have enough. So in October 1983 we increased the wages of all workers and cadres. The average worker receives between 140 and 200 riel.¹

For workers or cadres who work overtime

there is a bonus. For those who do hard labor or those exposed to chemical products we have extra wages.

We have just come out of a difficult time. Our standard of living is not high, but our workers do not complain. It is enough for a living.

Q. In addition to wages, what do Kampuchean workers receive?

A. We guarantee the living standard, and the state pays special attention to providing for necessities, rice, for example. No matter how much rice costs on the private market, the state may sell at only one riel per kilogram [2.2 pounds] for the workers and cadres. Each administrative cadre gets a ration of 16 kilograms of rice per month. Someone who does heavy work would get 18. This amount may go up to 29, based on their labor.

If they want something better, they can purchase it from the state for a slightly higher price. Or they can have currency in place of a ration to buy on the free market.

The children also get state support and are included in the ration. Each child gets more as they grow up. There is a subsidy in rice for the whole family. So the standard of living is not that tight.

Q. Are there trade unions in Kampuchea?

A. The trade union is one of the organizations born under our regime. It is still very young, and we do not have enough experience. The party pays special attention to helping develop and strengthen the trade unions because these organizations are the strength and core, the most important forces of the working class.

The trade unions play a very important role

shirts were 500 riel; imported cigarettes were 40 riel a pack.

in our society. If the trade unions do not play a leading role, a model, the other enterprises cannot function.

We appeal to unite all the forces around the trade unions. We organize in all industries, in all the factories, in all the ministries, in all the workplaces.

What are the trade unions for? They are to defend the interests of all the workers, to protect the people's living conditions, to strengthen a close bond between the workers and peasants, and especially to strengthen the solidarity between our workers and those internationally, of other countries.

It was the unfortunate destiny of our people that Pol Pot destroyed the working class. We inherited this legacy, and it is hard for us to find leadership for the trade unions. We could hardly find one person who has experience in trade unions.

The Pol Pot regime destroyed all the grounds to build on. The Pol Pot regime destroyed everything. There was no school, no family. We were just like animals to have our labor wrung from us. There was no organization. All this legacy is left behind. We are the ones who have to solve these complications.

The Pol Pot "socialist" regime did not have any contact with the outside world. The Pol Pot "socialists" can be considered the model "socialists" of isolation. They had no contact, except with Peking. Kampuchea was isolated, with no relation to anybody.

Q. How much rent, if any, do Kampuchean pay?

A. Since liberation we have charged no rent. Why not? It is not that we did not think about it. If we demanded rent it would create more problems. That is why we decided not to do it.

All the housing in Phnom Penh is state property, because everything was abandoned when Pol Pot evacuated the city.

We will think about rent, for those who are not workers or cadres, for merchants and business people. We charge a fee for guests and foreigners who visit and stay in a hotel. But for cadres who are working for the state, we are just now considering rent, since the housing rate would affect the standard of living. We have to hold it for later consideration.

We now charge the population for electricity and water. But there is a lack of meters. So we cannot find out who is using how much. It creates another problem. We have to reorganize the whole city, and that creates another problem — to find a budget to spend on it. All this past year we have looked into this problem, but we have not found a solution yet.

Q. How do you regulate the circulation of consumer goods?

A. In short, we have no clear policy on this subject yet, only for state property such as the state cars.

But these days there are more private cars

¹ Prices in Phnom Penh's markets give an idea of what this wage represents. Chickens were 24 riel per kilogram; cloth was 35 riel per meter; machine-made

than state-owned. There are all sorts of means of transportation, not all of them belong to the state.

The people own other materials, such as fans or air conditioners. We make no restrictions.

We ration rice, cigarettes, soap, gas, cloth — those materials that affect the standard of living. Outside of that we have no regulations.

These days we have free markets, four or five of them in Phnom Penh. They sell a lot of foreign goods. We do not put any restrictions on them. Whatever people need they can obtain there. An exception, of course, is that we restrict dangerous materials, such as poisons or chemicals.

Q. How is the government developing handicraft production?

A. Our government and our revolution pay special attention to this field. We put no obstacles in the way of expansion. Instead, we have motivated the people to increase their activity in producing some of the handicrafts you may have found in our private markets, such as our traditional clothes that are called sarongs. They have not only sufficiently provided for the needs of their own families, but have also made enough to sell on the private market.

In agriculture, people produce plows, hoes, and farm tools; they only need raw materials to produce all this. They can produce these locally.

We have also promoted the expansion of artisan work in the countryside. We have a lot of wood and vines. People create furniture to be used in our houses or for export.

In the cities there is a lot of electric power, so the artisan handicrafts have been enlarged and well established in Phnom Penh. The people ingeniously make some of the things needed for daily living, things to sew, the tubes for automobile and bicycle tires, or soap.

You might find when you walk around Phnom Penh that there are some who use a lot of electricity, and it almost kills us. They do it illegally. When we find out, we charge them a heavy tax. That is another problem.

But the small shops further efficiency, even though they are private. For instance, if one of us has a car broken down, we take it to the small private garage so that we can get it back in a day. If you try to repair the car through the official state garage it may take a long time. I would just tell you that frankly.

In this case, as with all the others, it fits the state plan. Our party and state policy is to promote handicrafts. We are concerned that we may not be able to adequately supply them, especially in raw materials.

Q. Tonle Sap is one of the largest and richest lakes in the world. How has Kampuchea developed fishing?

A. Kampuchea is well known for our freshwater fish. Fishing is our third most important resource. Rice is the first, rubber is the sec-



CHEA SOTH

Diane Wang/IP

ond,² and fish is the third. Timber is the fourth. These are the bases of our economy. So fisheries play a most important role in production for domestic and foreign markets.

Nowadays we can only carry out the fishing in our fresh waters; we lack equipment for salt-water fishing. We do not tackle sea fish because we lack the budget to buy boats. We lack storage to keep the fish. Also there is a problem for the state to carry it out. That is why people who can do so sell to the state.

People who are able to go fishing, who have tools, may do it freely. However, we allot some areas to the solidarity groups, to units of our army, and so forth.

In 1983 we caught 66,000 tons. This is the amount provided for our people and some for export to Vietnam.

Q. What plans do you have for developing electric energy in the country?

A. From the beginning we have paid great attention to this question. In Phnom Penh there are four electric stations, which have been assisted by the Soviet Union. We hope that by the middle of 1984 we will get the fourth station into operation.

We pay special attention to the increase of electrical power in Phnom Penh to serve the needs of our industry. In the big factories that you have visited, you may have seen that the lack of electricity is a problem. Workers who are to work eight hours a day, like every other place in the world, will only have three or four hours before there is no electric current.

Besides this we have started to expand the

² Kampuchea has almost 100,000 hectares fit for rubber production. Some 50,000 hectares were developed in colonial times under the French; half of that was destroyed under Pol Pot. From 1980 to 1983 there has been a 988 percent increase in rubber production.

electrical capacity in the provinces. Four provinces have started: Battambang, Siem Reap, Kompong Cham, and Koh Kong.

We have a plan to restore the hydroelectric station in Kirirom. We have all the plans and perhaps will start in the near future.

We are thinking of beginning to build the hydroelectric station in Prek Thnot in five years. This work might get entangled with UNESCO [United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization]. During the former Sihanouk regime, UNESCO had become involved. Some equipment for the project was abandoned here in Phnom Penh. We may get cooperation from the socialist countries, like the Soviet Union. We are not sure about UNESCO and are not in a position to wait for them. This project is quite important and requires a lot of money. We really have to work hard on it.

Q. How have transportation and communications developed?

A. During the Pol Pot regime nothing was done. We have to work hard to build and restore communications and transportation. But nowadays the Pol Pot forces still try to destroy and ruin these.

The real difficulties these days is finding asphalt to put on the roads. We cannot buy it. We have asked for some help from the socialist countries, but they also have to import it from other countries.

In 1984 we would like to fix all the roads in the city. But we have no asphalt and do not know what material to substitute. We have gravel. We have manpower, technical know-how, but we are still short the asphalt. This is something we have to discuss with people.

We have a plan to restore our national roads because they were all destroyed and are in rough condition. These main roads are important for our communications and to develop relations with all the provinces and with our neighboring countries, such as Vietnam.

We try our best to enlarge the communications and relations with other countries throughout the world.

As for trade, we have good relations with the socialist countries concerning import, export, and selling. In this past year we exported rubber. Besides that we export corn, sesame, timber, and fish.

Q. What social progress are you making?

A. In education we are developing very fast. Now we have almost 2 million students. It poses a problem. Even in the remote localities we estimate that one out of four persons is studying at school. So we have the problem of providing materials such as books, pens, ink.

In health care, in rural areas we have clinics, from the village to provincial level. Apart from that, we have mobile units.

As for culture, we have rapidly increased both the study of foreign languages and of our native language.

In reality, during the Pol Pot regime everyone had nothing but a black suit and a scarf.

Now it is different. Five years ago we had nothing, but now we have a living standard. Most of the international agencies evaluate Kampuchea and say we are making rapid progress. For us to evaluate ourselves sounds like we are braggarts, but we let the international agencies do the evaluation.

Q. Kampuchea has taken no taxes yet. How do you finance the government?

A. For five years we did not take any taxes from the people. But in the last few months we have started a national contribution. The state provides everything. Now we appeal to all the people for national contributions.

Formally, we have defined a quota: that all who possess 1 hectare and who have achieved a production of 1.2 to 1.5 tons per hectare are asked to give 100 kilograms of paddy rice to the state.

But some of the people reply that it is too much to take that amount. So as a reply to the people we have asked a voluntary contribution. We do not force the people to pay the contribution according to our quota. But thanks to the people's patriotic conscience, people in all the provinces, more or less, have made a national contribution. This is the most recent activity that we have just established in the last few months. So we have not had much experience to tell you.

Besides this, in the city we only can ask from the big merchants, not the small vendors. We do not ask those who sell fruit and vegetables, but from the big merchants and those who import from abroad.

So our current revenue is very low. Apart from this, we collect money from the manufactured industrial commodities and from selling imported goods to the people, especially the daily commodities. So we raise some of our revenue through selling.

In Kampuchea our expenditure is much

more than our revenue. That is our usual situation. Since we have not done anything in order to gain for the state, the import from the foreign countries is of large scale.

We are concerned about repayment to some of our socialist friends; by 1986 some of the debts come due. This is not a big problem, however. Whatever we can pay back will be acceptable. The socialist countries do not demand or force us to pay the debt.

Q. The stated goal of the government in Kampuchea is socialism. Given the past experiences and current poverty, how will that be achieved?

A. As you may already be aware, the transition to socialism is never an easy task; it is a complex problem. And in Kampuchea it is a unique problem. Why do we say that? Because the people of Kampuchea were living in a mixed-up society under the Pol Pot regime.

Pol Pot and his supporters claimed that they were socialist too, moving toward socialism. But their type of socialism was very different from Marxism and Leninism. In fact, everyone had to break their backs laboring, nothing else.

The people believed what Pol Pot did was socialism. So when we talked of socialism people would get goose bumps. Some feared that we would be the same as Pol Pot.

For five years we have tried to educate the people about real socialism, but we still encounter the problem. Some still do not trust us. After all, Pol Pot taught them for four years; they only have had five years since then. They remember that regime, and they swore an oath not to trust anyone. They have reservations about socialism.

That is why we work hard to make the people aware, to make them believe and understand that what we are working toward is socialism. And in this past year people have understood better, and they have differentiated

us from the Pol Pot regime.

Take the question of collectivization. To some people it is just a word, and it does not seem to correspond to our reality. Today there are at least three modes of production. In agriculture we have at least three types of solidarity groups.³ Who expects socialism to work out that way?

What is socialist about it? I would like to emphasize the question of production. The first characteristic of socialism is that there is a leading role for collective work.

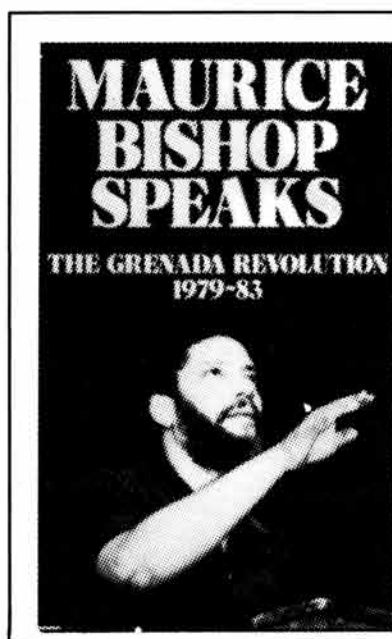
In some Khrom samaki, the draft animals, the tools, the plots are all collected together and worked together. And when the peasants harvest, they divide everything themselves.

The state does not take anything. If it needs anything, it buys it from them. In other countries, big socialist countries, the peasants would receive the production according to the labor given, and the rest would be given to the state because everything belongs to the state. This is a picture of it.

In another form, the people go on to help another person who cannot finish their own land. You do your own and then give a hand to the other. This is traditional in Kampuchea. The form is private, but it also involves helping each other.

And the third form is that work is done privately with the family doing their own plot.

³ All agricultural production is organized through *khrom samaki*, solidarity groups. These are made up of 12 to 15 families. In almost one-third of the *khrom samaki*, work is done collectively. In half of them, families cultivate their own land but share cattle and tools. In the remaining *khrom samaki*, families farm their own plots with their own purchased materials. However, the *khrom samaki* retain responsibility for social tasks and prevent too great a differentiation of wealth from developing in the countryside.



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But even in this kind of privately farmed sector, whatever they need the state will sell to them: the seed, the gasoline, the fertilizer. But in return we do not demand any portion of the crop. We have to buy from them what we need.

This is the first step of working toward socialism. Maybe one day when we have more goods for the people we will be able to change

some of these aspects. When we make more progress in all domains, these questions will be solved. And in socialism this private ownership should not be a problem. If it is a problem, it will be a small problem.

The most important thing is the education of the masses to understand the direction toward socialism. The masses have to be aware of it. If they are not aware of it, we cannot do it. □

Kampuchea appeals for rice

Harvest reduced by drought, floods

By Steve Clark and Diane Wang

PHNOM PENH — Representatives of the People's Republic of Kampuchea have appealed to the United Nations for 300,000 tons of rice to help deal with a shortfall in this year's harvest.

For the first time in more than a decade, Kampuchea produced almost enough rice to feed its own population last year. This marked a major step toward recovery from the famine of 1979-80, the forced labor and starvation under Pol Pot from 1975 to 1979, and the devastation caused by U.S. bombing in the early 1970s.

Seed, fertilizer, and other materials were distributed throughout the country, and 1.5 million hectares (about 3.7 million acres) were put under cultivation. But a drought during the first two months of the monsoon season last spring delayed planting and killed work animals. Three typhoons followed in October, destroying one-tenth of the total planted area. The flood especially hurt Battambang and other northwestern provinces, normally the most fertile and productive region of the country. Now Kampuchea is suffering the hottest dry season in 40 years.

The disastrous weather, combined with a severe shortage of pesticides and fertilizer, has resulted in the projected 300,000-ton shortage in this year's rice harvest. This is equivalent to three months' food supply for the country.

There is still rice in Phnom Penh's markets now, and the riverside market in the provincial capital of Kompong Chhnang that we visited had plenty of rice, vegetables, and fish. But shortages are expected to appear by summer, following the end of the dry season harvest.

The danger is not only a reduced food supply. Peasants may have to resort to using valuable seed rice for food, leaving nothing to plant for next year's crop.

Pol Pot's labor camps

The previous years of hunger and famine from 1975 to 1979 were not due to weather, but to the murderous Khmer Rouge regime of Pol Pot. Kampuchea's entire population was forced into virtual slave-labor camps where everyone worked 15-hour days or longer. Millions were evacuated from their villages and cities to distant parts of the country. Kampuchians told us how whole work brigades often



Diane Wang/IP

Dry-season irrigation in Chhong Prek village.

shared only one tin of rice per day, and how they ate leaves and insects to survive.

In 1979, when Pol Pot was finally driven out of the country with the aid of Vietnam, retreating Khmer Rouge forces burned one-fourth of the rice stock and slaughtered one-third of the draft animals. The entire population roamed the countryside in search of their home villages and families. No rice was planted, and people ate whatever was on hand, including the seed rice for the next year's crop.

Only international aid saved Kampuchea from starvation that year. The initial aid came from Vietnam, itself suffering from several consecutive drought years, and from the Soviet Union. Only after the Kampuchean and Viet-

namese governments and their supporters succeeded in focusing world attention on the suffering in Kampuchea did international relief agencies, the United Nations, and even the U.S. government finally contribute emergency food aid.

Legacy of U.S. bombing

The forced labor and starvation of the Pol Pot years were the culmination of years of misery. Previously, from 1970 to 1975, U.S. carpet-bombing had driven peasants off the land. The U.S. government dropped half a million tons of bombs on Kampuchea.

Even before that, in the relatively more peaceful years of the 1960s when Kampuchea, then called Cambodia, was exporting 390,000 tons of rice per year, cultivation was done largely with manual labor and a minimum of fertilizer and irrigation. Peasants were usually in serious debt.

Since liberation from Pol Pot in 1979, Kampuchea has made rapid progress. The land under cultivation is still far short of the acreage in production prior to 1970, but it is twice the area cultivated in 1979.

While the country still has fewer cattle than in the 1960s, it has almost 50 percent more than in 1979. In addition, Kampuchea is expanding the use of tractors, especially in the most fertile regions such as Battambang province.

Last year Kampuchea produced twice as many vegetables and three times as much sugar as five years ago. There was almost five times as much poultry raised and almost 20 times as many pigs, compared with 1979.

International aid needed

Of course, these impressive figures do not change the fact that Kampuchea remains desperately poor. And the fragile recovery achieved is threatened by the shortfall in this year's harvest. International assistance is crucial.

The United Nations, however, does not recognize the People's Republic of Kampuchea. Instead, the UN has seated a coalition made up of Pol Pot, Norodom Sihanouk, and Son Sann — discredited former leaders who operate from military camps on the Thai border.

Most international aid is sent to these right-wing forces in the guise of aid to refugee camps. In addition to UN aid, some 140 international agencies direct assistance to these camps.

By contrast, only 30 international agencies from capitalist countries maintain programs inside Kampuchea. The U.S. government applies the "Trade with the Enemy Act" to prohibit aid shipments from U.S.-based private agencies. Last year Washington even tried to prevent U.S. school children from sending pencils and notebooks to Kampuchea.

Vietnam, the Soviet Union, Cuba, and other workers states now provide nearly all the agricultural, medical, and technical aid Kampuchea receives. □

Pierre Frank: 1905–1984

Leader of Fourth International dies in Paris

[Pierre Frank, a longtime leader of the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR) of France and of the Fourth International, died in Paris in the early morning of April 18.

[Born in 1905, Frank was won to revolutionary communism when he was 15. He became an activist in the Union of Technicians in Industry, Commerce, and Agriculture (US-TICA) and in 1925 joined the French Communist Party.

[Two years later, in 1927, he learned about the platform of the supporters of Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky within the Soviet Communist Party. Frank supported this program, which defended the proletarian internationalism of the Communist International in its first five years under the leadership of Lenin. With other French communists, Frank helped launch, in 1929, the first Trotskyist periodical in France, *La Vérité*.

[The following year, Frank helped found the Communist League, and in 1931 he became a member of the International Secretariat of the International Left Opposition led by Trotsky. In 1932, he served as one of Trotsky's secretaries in Prinkipo, Turkey, and later helped prepare for Trotsky's move to exile in France.

[In late 1934, the Communist League decided to send its members into the Socialist Party, where they formed the Bolshevik-Leninist Group (GB-L); but a few months later Frank and others were expelled from the Socialist Party. Differences subsequently emerged within the French Trotskyist movement, and Frank, along with Raymond Molinier, formed the Internationalist Communist Party (PCI). Trotsky continued to back the GB-L, but attempted to get the two groups to reunify.

[But the wartime repression against the French Trotskyists and the assassination of Trotsky by the Stalinists in August 1940 undermined the efforts to heal the split. Both Frank and Molinier had been sentenced to 10 years in prison by the French government on the eve of World War II. Frank escaped to Britain, but in October 1940 was arrested and confined in a British detention camp until the end of 1943.

[After the war, the two French groups reunified, shortly before Frank's return to the country. In 1946, he attended a world conference of the Fourth International and was elected to the International Secretariat.

[While continuing to play a prominent role in the Fourth International until the time of his death, Frank was also active in building the French Trotskyist movement. He participated in struggles against French imperialism's wars

in Indochina and Algeria and was jailed by the French government for his solidarity activities with the Algerian National Liberation Front.

[During the massive May–June 1968 revolt of students and workers in France, Frank was again jailed for 10 days, on charges of plotting against state security. The Internationalist Communist Party and the Revolutionary Communist Youth, which had been outlawed during the revolt, fused the following year to form the Communist League, the forerunner of today's LCR. Until his death on April 18, Frank helped build and lead the LCR.

[We are reprinting below two statements on Frank's death. The first was issued on April 18 by the Bureau of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International and the Political Bureau of the LCR. The second is a solidarity message sent to the LCR from the National Committee of the U.S. Socialist Workers Party, meeting in New York City on April 24.]

* * *

The United Secretariat of the Fourth International and its French section are in mourning. With the death of Pierre Frank we have lost one of our most valiant members, one of our best leaders.

Pierre Frank was a companion of Leon Trotsky and with him a cofounder of the Fourth International and of its French section. He was in the thick of every battle. His life is an example of a militant in the service of the revolution and the working class. He never faltered, right to the last, even during those terrible years when there were only a handful of isolated Trotskyists who denounced Stalin's crimes as well as the abominations of imperialism.

Pierre Frank, along with the generation of militants who shared his commitment, passed on to us an irreplaceable heritage — the heritage of Marxism and the revolutionary tradition of Lenin and Trotsky. Against the social democratic and Stalinist betrayals he was in the front ranks of those who kept alive the revolutionary experience which is the cornerstone of our struggle today. We benefited from his vast knowledge of the French workers movement and his acute understanding of its debates and traditions.

Throughout his life Pierre Frank placed internationalism and building the Fourth International at the centre of his political activity. In all the debates and when there were big political and organisational choices to be made he taught us that — as Rosa Luxembourg said — “the center of gravity of the class organisation of the proletariat rests on internationalism.”

The United Secretariat of the Fourth International and its French section pay their respects to the memory of this workers militant, of this exemplary revolutionary leader. We call on our members and sympathisers to pay him solemn homage on Friday the 27th of April. At this difficult time the LCR especially sends its militant solidarity to his companion Marguerite, who was deported to Ravensbrück [a Nazi concentration camp in Germany] for the same ideal and was at his side in all his battles.

* * *

The Socialist Workers Party extends warmest fraternal solidarity to the comrades of the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire at this time when you are paying tribute to our longtime leader, comrade, and friend, Pierre Frank. We celebrate with you his long and productive political life and pay homage to what he contributed to our movement both in France and internationally.

Pierre became a revolutionary communist when he was 15, and for more than 60 years, neither imperialist jails, political isolation, nor any of the many other pressures that sap the staying power of those who choose revolutionary proletarian politics as their vocation forced him to flinch or deviate from that course. His steadfastness and his confidence in the capacity of the exploited to overturn capitalist rule has inspired several generations of younger fighters in our movement.

He was a high school rebel, a young activist in the newly-born French Communist Party, a pioneer leader of French Trotskyism, secretary to Leon Trotsky, a prisoner in a British detention camp during World War II, and a longtime member of the elected leadership bodies of the Fourth International.

Pierre was a first-rate communist journalist, and most comrades in the SWP and the International know him best through the many articles that he wrote for the press of the world movement. When *World Outlook*, the predecessor of *Intercontinental Press* and *Inprecor*, began publishing in Paris in 1963, he was one of its contributing editors — as well as always ready to pitch in to assure its production on a shoestring budget. Over the years his many articles published in the pages of *Intercontinental Press* brought the important events of the class struggles in France alive and made them comprehensible for working-class fighters around the world.

Pierre's most indispensable contribution was undoubtedly his steadfast leadership throughout the difficult years of the post-World War II reaction, and his determination to reunify the Fourth International in the early 1960s. His efforts were essential in assuring that there was a party nucleus in France capable of winning a whole new generation of youth out of the revolutionary upsurge of 1968.

Pierre remained active until the very end of his life, writing, participating in meetings of the International, and following closely the

discussions and debates of the world movement.

Pierre served for decades on the International Executive Committee of the International, and at the 1979 World Congress this long service was given special recognition. It

was an honor for one of the delegates of the SWP to present the motion that was adopted, naming Pierre a consultative member of the IEC and paying tribute to his many contributions.

We know that Pierre's example will con-

tinue to serve as a source of strength to the party he helped to build.

Long live the LCR!

Long live the Fourth International!

Long live the world struggle for a communist future!

DOCUMENTS

'All Nicaraguans are at war'

Tomás Borge explains seriousness of U.S. aggression

[In the midst of the biggest imperialist military offensive since the victory of the 1979 insurrection, Nicaragua's minister of interior Tomás Borge spoke to a congress of judges and court personnel April 12, outlining the gravity of the situation and some of the steps that must be taken to share the burden of war more equitably. The section of the speech we are printing below was broadcast on radio and television and reprinted in the April 14 issue of the Sandinista daily *Barricada*. The translation and subheads are by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Imperialist aggression against Nicaragua compels us to refer in particular to the theme of war. Sometimes "justice for times of war" is spoken of as if we were talking about a war between the galaxies.

Has it perhaps not been understood that we are in a full-scale war? This is not a war against the National Guard but rather against an army of mercenaries of Mr. Allpowerful in the White House, who believes he has been anointed with special powers to decide the destiny of Nicaragua. It may be true that the great majority of the members of Mr. Reagan's mercenary army formerly belonged to the National Guard. But they have been armed and trained to levels never attained by Somoza's praetorian guard. This is a mercenary army with enormous logistical support, including electronic espionage capable of interfering with our communications, ships, planes, and helicopters that violate our territorial waters and airspace.

What "wartime" justice are we referring to?

Wasn't setting fire to Corinto* an act of war?

What is the mining of our ports, if not an act of war?

Is it or is it not a war that has caused us immeasurable losses, including the virtual destruction of our fishing industry and of agricul-

tural production in the border regions?

And what is to be said about the peasant cooperatives that have been burnt to the ground, about the schools, warehouses, and bridges that have been destroyed?

In the months of January and February alone, the physical losses caused by the CIA mercenaries totals more than 280 million *córdobas* [US\$28 million]. This, combined with previous damages, gives us a total of more than 2.5 billion *córdobas* [US\$250 million].

And if we add the costs of defense, of the mobilization and transportation of militia members, the lost income, the cost of ships being diverted, we would surely arrive at an astronomical sum. And if we had to set a price for our dead — who have no price — we would surely be able to demand several billion dollars from the U.S. government, just as they did for the dead and the hostages in Iran.

Is it or is it not war, the sacrifice of 219 combatants who have fallen in defense of our country in just the last few weeks, to which we must add 204 wounded.

During the Second World War, England fought with its armies on the European continent, not on its own territory; but it was a country in a state of war, just as the United States was. The Soviet Union had part of its territory occupied by the Nazi army, but the entire country was in a state of war. Here we hear talk about "zones of war." But there is only one single war zone, and it is called Nicaragua. All Nicaraguans are at war against imperialism and its mercenary army.

Biggest offensive yet

As the heads of the Sandinista People's Army and the Ministry of Interior explained in a news conference just a few hours ago, the increase in aggression in the last few weeks has taken on ominous and dangerous dimensions.

This offensive, the biggest that has been mounted to date, includes the participation of 8,000 CIA mercenaries, who are inside the country, and numerous groups have penetrated into the central zones of Nicaragua. Fighting is going on in the departments of Matagalpa, Jinotega, Nueva Segovia, in northern and southern Zelaya, and we are still talking about "proposals for time of war."

For this operation the CIA has set up an enormous apparatus of logistical support, so as to provide its mercenary army with a continuous supply of arms, ammunition, food, information, and communication. Just in the last few weeks we have detected 18 radio-electronic spy flights, and dozens of supply flights for the mercenaries.

We are in a situation of war against an invading force organized and led by the strongest power in the capitalist world.

U.S. Congress's complicity

Concerning the participation of the U.S. government in this mercenary invasion, there can no longer be the slightest doubt.

The same U.S. senators who a few days ago approved \$21 million to step up the war against Nicaragua are now red in the face about the mining of the ports. But what did these senators think? — not all of them, because there were exceptions, like Edward Kennedy. That these millions of dollars were to be used to plant flowers and vegetables in our fertile land? They are alarmed by the worldwide repudiation of the mining of our ports, but they show no embarrassment over the grief, blood, and tears of a people who have never caused the slightest harm to North Americans, and who are the victims of their complicity with a crime organized by their government, against a country whose only offense is the search for justice and peace.

We are, brothers, at war, living in the Pacific region with a normality that is artificial and subsidized.

At this very moment, while the sun is warming the backs of people at the beach, while we walk in tranquility through the streets and complain about the shortages in the supermarket, thousands, hundreds of thousands of Nicaraguans are suffering the direct consequences of the aggression, fighting not for housing and for food but to keep from being murdered. While we talk in the future tense about a war that may come, thousands of young people are defending the right to be Nicaraguans, are defending with arms in hand the right of survival as a nation.

Defense of the homeland has already been a

*On October 10, 1983, a counterrevolutionary commando squad operating from high-speed launches shelled the port of Corinto, setting fire to four fuel storage tanks holding 3.2 million gallons of diesel fuel. — IP



Lynda Joyce/IP

Militia members in Bluefields, on Atlantic Coast.

heavy burden for our weak economy. As the aggression increases, this burden is going to become heavier and heavier. Supporting this burden and marching firmly toward victory is possible only if we distribute it equally. There is no alternative but to redouble the effort. There is no alternative but definitive triumph over our enemies.

Resources shifted to defense

This is a war in defense of the homeland, and this defense must be assumed by all Nicaraguans. Production, distribution, the entire resources of the country, the energy of the entire people must be channeled toward meeting as a first priority the necessities of those who are risking their lives in the front lines of combat. In large part, a great portion of the country's resources has already been shifted to defense, and this explains most situations of relative shortage of basic consumer goods.

I believe that up until now this objective situation has not been sufficiently explained to our people. Defense requires thousands, tens of thousands of uniforms and boots, it requires food and medicine for the thousands and thousands of young combatants. Of necessity, priority for distribution of such items has been to our battalions involved in direct confrontation. This situation has meant, moreover, that many of the country's development projects have been severely affected by the criminal aggression. We have stopped building housing, hospitals, schools, recreation centers, highways. The government has been forced to suspend projects for improving the infrastructure in the cities, construction of work centers, programs of agricultural and industrial development.

When all is said and done, the intent of the enemies of Nicaragua is to destabilize us, to provoke unrest among the people. And when I speak of the enemies of Nicaragua I refer not only to the market gardener but also to his trained dogs who bark by remote control — those who have taken advantage of the difficulties and privations our people are suffering to mount internal campaigns from the pulpits, newspapers, radio stations, and through direct propaganda — attributing to the revolution re-

sponsibility for shortages that stem directly from the aggression.

Imperialism and its acolytes are wounding us, and then telling the victim he is responsible for his own injuries. It is a violation of the most elemental norms of justice and logic to increase the burden of privations and risks already shouldered by the combatants and the residents of the war zones. Effort, sacrifice, thrift, austerity, and revolutionary enthusiasm must be shared by all Nicaraguans. Anyone who does not grasp this truth is unworthy of being considered a Nicaraguan. Patriotic Military Service must recruit, and recruit not just workers and peasants but also young people from all social sectors, for we are defending not only the interests of workers and peasants but the interests of the entire nation.

In other words, there can be no delay in socializing the defense of the country.

To be sure, the explanations [of the military situation] that were given today are going to encourage the hopes of those who see in the criminal decisions of the U.S. government a final salvation. How little they know our people and its inexhaustible patriotism and capacity for struggle!

In any event, the enormous effort represented by the U.S. government's use of its millions in resources to try to defeat our revolution shows in and of itself the formidable strength a revolutionary people is capable of.

One by one, their rooks and bishops are being toppled in this sinister game of chess. One by one, the offensives of their murderous mercenaries are being neutralized. And if they insist, in defiance of worldwide repudiation, to continue with their plans of destruction, one after another their political decisions and military offensives will continue being defeated, regardless of the scope they attain.

How little they know this people of panthers and goldfinches!

Every child-care center destroyed by Reagan's mercenaries will be rebuilt with the voluntary labor of our people. Every construction project required for defense will be supported by our people with voluntary labor. Every cooperative that is destroyed will be raised anew through the labor of our people.

Those wounded in war must receive the vis-

its and affection of our entire people. The cultural brigades, which have played an extraordinary role in providing encouragement, must assume this task anew, at the front lines and in the hospitals. Our people will respond through direct participation in combat, collection of funds, voluntary labor, donation of blood, raising banners that reflect their pride for combatants who should be known by name and considered as heroes in every locality, in the *barrios* of the cities, in the rural districts. The parents and spouses of the fallen must receive preferential attention in housing and health-care programs, and in pensions.

'We are not alone'

We are not alone in this struggle. Alongside the Nicaraguan people are all the peoples of the world. And many governments, on all continents and of different ideologies, have expressed their solidarity with the justice of our cause. It is certain that we are paying a high price for the defense of our homeland. But our enemies will pay the price of a historic defeat of unpredictable consequences, perhaps the price of the liquidation of the injustices that still travel along the impoverished roads of Latin America.

We are going to come out ahead and emerge victorious from this challenge. We are going to defeat the enemies of the people in ideological and military confrontation, just as we will emerge victorious in face of all obstacles and difficulties, just as we will emerge victorious in the project of institutionalizing the revolutionary process, just as we will emerge victorious in the construction of a new society.

Let us go forward, audacious and joyful, toward the conquest of new victories, sweeping out of the way the mummies, the criminals, the sellouts, the cowards, those who have betrayed their country, Reagan's mercenaries, and his fat and ridiculous ideologues who dream of a past that will never return.

Someday history will place on trial, if humanity has not already rendered its verdict, those who are guilty of the blood shed by this people who will never be conquered again.

Someday history will place on trial those who are responsible for the destruction of workplaces, for the ships that have been sunk or damaged, for the costs this impoverished country has had to assume to defend its land.

Someday history will judge the pride of this people who have decided not to surrender, of this people who have chosen patriotism, of this people who would prefer to return to the Stone Age rather than surrender, and who are capable of beginning from ruins to rebuild their future.

Neither mines, nor aircraft carriers, nor mercenaries, nor marines, nor privations, nor lies, nor traitors are going to force a surrender from the Nicaraguan people, a people who made a revolution in order to explore audaciously new horizons.

May law and justice place itself in a firm position, prepared to obey the orders of the homeland and the revolution.

Free homeland or death!

ANC: 'The struggle will continue'

Liberation group responds to Mozambique-South Africa treaty

[On March 16, Mozambican President Samora Machel and South African Prime Minister Pieter Botha signed a formal nonaggression treaty between the two countries during a ceremony at the Nkomati River along the border.

[The treaty commits both sides to prevent their territory, waters, or air space from being "used as a base, thoroughfare or in any other way by another state, government, foreign military forces, organizations or individuals which plan or prepare acts of violence, terrorism or aggression" against the other.

[The Mozambican government signed the treaty after coming under intense pressure from the apartheid regime in Pretoria, which over the past few years has launched several air strikes into Mozambique and provided training, arms, and logistical support for pro-South African terrorist bands known as the Mozambique National Resistance (Renamo, also called the MNR).

[As of mid-April, significant fighting was still going on between Mozambican troops and Renamo forces. By signing the treaty, however, the Mozambican authorities hope that Pretoria will rein in Renamo. At a mass rally of 70,000 in Maputo, the Mozambican capital, on March 17, President Machel hailed the accord as a "victory" that had "turned off the tap" on the Renamo gangs.

Interview with Mfanafuthi Makatini

[The following is an interview with Mfanafuthi Makatini, the director for international affairs of the African National Congress (ANC) of South Africa and a member of the ANC's National Executive Committee. He was also the ANC's representative to the United Nations from 1978 to 1984. The interview was obtained by Ernest Harsch in New York City on April 11.]

* * *

Question. The Botha regime of South Africa has recently carried out a series of negotiations and concluded several agreements: with Angola around the South African withdrawal from southern Angola and with Mozambique, with which it signed a mutual nonaggression pact on March 16. What is the apartheid regime hoping to achieve through this diplomatic drive?

Answer. First, we should stress that it is a culmination of its policy of destabilization, aggression, and gun-boat diplomacy. This problem has been further aggravated by the drought in southern Africa and other natural calamities.

[According to the treaty, the Mozambican government, which has long provided political and material support to the African National Congress (ANC) of South Africa, is to place restrictions on the liberation movement's activities in Mozambique. While the ANC does not have guerrilla bases in Mozambique, its fighters have used the country as a thoroughfare in the past.

[On March 24, Mozambican police staged armed raids on at least 12 residences in Mozambique used by ANC members. Some weapons were seized, and four ANC members were detained.

[Several weeks later, over the weekend of April 14-15, about 25 ANC members left Maputo for Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania. They were the first of at least 200 adults and 50 children expected to leave the country. Any South Africans who now wish to remain in Mozambique must register as refugees, live in camps run by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, and break off all contacts with the ANC.

[Below, we are publishing several documents outlining the ANC's position on the Mozambique-South Africa security pact and on Pretoria's overall offensive in southern Africa. The footnotes are by *Intercontinental Press*.]

As to what the regime hopes to achieve, I think it is the following:

It hopes to cause these countries to abandon their traditional positions, positions they have proclaimed for a long time, in order to enable the reestablishment of a buffer zone that would stretch right across from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean, for the preservation of the apartheid system.

It also hopes to reduce the revolutionary status of these countries to that of client states, in preparation for the imposition of the so-called constellation of southern African states.¹

And, of course, it hopes that this will help it to seal off the ANC, because it believes that the mounting armed struggle inside the country can be stopped if the ANC is denied transit facilities through other countries.

Those are the three main objectives of the regime.

1. The "constellation of states" was a proposal first put forward by Botha in 1979 for the establishment of a regional grouping dominated by South Africa.



Ernest Harsch/IP

MFANAFUTHI MAKATINI

Q. What has been the role of the U.S. government in this South African effort?

A. The role of the U.S. government is key. Without the U.S., the regime would not have succeeded in doing this.

Pretoria's policy of undeclared war against Mozambique and Angola and destabilization against the rest of the frontline states² can be traced to the statement by Ronald Reagan in which he said that South Africa is a friend and ally of the U.S. and that the U.S. would never leave South Africa in the lurch.

Once the South African regime was assured of diplomatic protection through the U.S. abuse of its veto in the UN Security Council, Pretoria then escalated its acts of aggression. On several occasions, attempts in the Security Council to impose punitive measures on South Africa for these breaches of the peace met with the veto of the United States. This, of course, emboldened the regime to undertake even more brazen acts of aggression and destabilization.

When the Reagan administration assumed office, some of Reagan's aides made it very clear that the policy of the United States in that region would be one of rewarding the African countries that befriend South Africa and punishing and even toppling those that assist

2. The frontline states — named for their proximity to South Africa — include Mozambique, Angola, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Zambia, and Tanzania.

the ANC. So "constructive engagement" — which to us is just a code name for alliance with the apartheid regime — took the form of reducing the U.S. assistance to these countries, destabilizing them, and then promising massive assistance to those countries that "normalized" relations with South Africa.

So the policies have been synchronized.

Q. What do you think were the main factors that led to the Mozambicans' decision to sign the security pact and agree to place restrictions on the ANC's activities within Mozambique?

A. First, I want to preface my response by saying that we know it was a very painful exercise for Mozambique to do this because of Frelimo's³ own experience, because of the Frelimo leadership's commitment to the struggle for majority rule in South Africa, a struggle that they see as inextricably linked with their own struggle. They know we have a common destiny. There can be no closer ally with the ANC than Mozambique under the leadership of Frelimo headed by Samora Machel.

But Mozambique has suffered destabilization by South Africa.

The Organization of African Unity (OAU) did not respond as it had promised to. I'm referring to its own resolution of 1976 in which it declared that aggression against one frontline state would be treated as aggression against all member states. That raised our hopes. But Mozambique — and Angola — have been alone, alone, alone.

The failure of the OAU to take this issue as the continent's problem sort of watered down the international community's mood towards the problem. The international community as a whole has not given adequate assistance to these countries, countries which are in fact spearheading what should be seen and treated as an international fight for the eradication of the system that everybody agrees is a crime against humanity, a threat to world peace.

So the apartheid regime had a full hand, in a situation where the population of Mozambique was ravaged by starvation. They would even give food to the MNR to distribute to the villages, so that people would tend to support or give shelter to the MNR.

We believe that Mozambique was placed in a situation where they had no option. To save their Mozambican revolution, they have had to do this.

Q. Do you think it is realistic to expect that the South African regime will stop its support to the MNR?

A. That's the unfortunate part. We are convinced that the regime will not stop its support of the MNR. You are dealing with a fascist regime that cannot honor written agreements.

3. The Mozambique Liberation Front (Frelimo) waged a long guerrilla struggle against Portuguese colonial rule and came to power when the country won its independence in 1975.

This is what the situation in South Africa is all about.

Also, these agreements do not address the central issue, which is the problem inside the country. That struggle will continue. The regime will still look for scapegoats to deal with that situation, to frighten the white constituency. So even if all the countries in the region were to capitulate and enter into such agreements, once the ANC goes into action, Pretoria will pick on some country to attack.

Q. What, specifically, has been the impact of the agreement so far on the ANC's activities within Mozambique?

A. We are now limited to about 10 people inside the country. The rest must either register as refugees — and then cannot even be in con-

tact with the ANC — or leave the country. And in leaving the country, they may not go to any country that shares a border with South Africa.

Q. What impact will this whole development have on the ANC's overall struggle?

A. There is no doubt that it is going to slow down the pace of the struggle. But it cannot be considered a fatal blow. It is serious, but not fatal.

We are inside South Africa and among the people. The ANC for some time now has had cells inside the country. So the struggle will continue. But, of course, the problem of logistics will arise.

It can only, I believe, lead to the radicalization of our armed struggle against the apartheid regime. □

A talk by Oliver Tambo

[On March 21 — the anniversary of the 1960 Sharpeville massacre in South Africa — ANC President Oliver Tambo spoke at a news conference in London, held under the auspices of the Labour Party-controlled Greater London Council (GLC). Later that day, he also spoke at an Antiracist Day meeting organized by the GLC. The following are excerpts from Tambo's news conference and subsequent speech, taken from a pamphlet published by the ANC entitled, *Clarion Call to All Opponents of Apartheid*.]

* * *

We owe this day to a massacre that took place in Sharpeville, South Africa, many years ago now. It shocked the world because although there had been killings, pursued in the interests of preserving the apartheid system, nothing on that scale had occurred since the accession to power of the apartheid regime.

The record of events in southern Africa from Sharpeville to, shall I say, Nkomati, is a record of killings, massacres, armed aggressions by the South African regime, the use of armed bandits in African independent states. It has included invasions of independent African states. It has involved the destruction and devastation of people, the economy, and property. And it has led in its own way to the agreement which was signed on the borders of South Africa and Mozambique a short while ago.

First of all, there is nothing in the agreement, and certainly nothing has been said by the Mozambican government, to suggest that the ANC is going to be thrown out of Mozambique. On the contrary, the Mozambican government has insisted that it will continue to support the struggle led by the ANC and support the ANC itself politically, diplomatically, and morally.

Secondly, it is not true, it simply is not true, that the African National Congress has been launching attacks on South Africa from Mozambique. There is not a single occasion when we did. Of course, we went through

Mozambique, an African country, as we have gone through other African countries to reach our own country. We were allowed to do so. But we launched nothing out of Mozambique. We have launched no attacks from any country into South Africa. This is South African propaganda.

What are we going to do about this nonaggression pact, which forbids Mozambique to allow transit to South Africans going back to their own country? Well, we have had many problems like that in the past, and that is how we relate to it — as a problem to be solved. What we do know is that our actions have been planned and staged in South Africa. We will continue to do that. We will find a way of intensifying those actions. In fact this agreement is a challenge to the victims of the apartheid system. Our people are ready to meet this challenge.

It has never been the policy of the African National Congress to burden the neighbouring states of southern Africa with sacrifices that have to be made in order to destroy the apartheid system. They hate that system, and they have supported us out of their hatred of that system, knowing that while it lasted there was no freedom for them, no independence, no sovereignty, no peace, no stability, no progress. And if they are placed under constraints which restrict their capacity to support that struggle, a just struggle, a struggle of the peoples of the world, then the ANC will not complain. We understand.

I don't feel disposed to discuss what the Mozambican government should or should not do in a given situation. They must take their own decision in the matter and take positions and pursue them as far as they think necessary from their point of view.

I am not sure that in their position I would have gone quite as far as they have, but it must be accepted that the South African government, the South African regime, had decided to destroy Mozambique, to kill it as a state, and got pretty close to doing so. Mozambique,

the leadership of Mozambique, were forced to choose, as it were, between life and death. They chose life, and life meant talking to the butchers of southern Africa, it meant hugging a hated hyena, and they had to do that.

For the rest of us, we must accept that position, but defend our own positions, defend our struggle.

The international community has to recognize that Mozambique felt that they had to do what they have done. The international community must not forget that this is not an agreement about the apartheid system in South Africa. That system is there, it is not a subject of this agreement.

From the point of view of Botha, the agreement seeks to protect apartheid and we must make sure that apartheid is placed under increasing attack. The Botha regime will want to use this agreement as a stepping-stone to other agreements in southern Africa, and use southern Africa as a stepping-stone into acceptance by the international community.

We must resist that. This is a new challenge, therefore, to the international community — to put the regime back into isolation. They are trying to climb out of it, they are trying to put the ANC into isolation instead, and we are calling on our friends to stop them. We are going to stop them by our actions inside South Africa, but we need much greater international support than we have had.

And the Frontline States need that too, because if they had been supported adequately politically, materially, militarily, they would not have had to do what they must hate doing. Therefore, this agreement is a clarion call to all those who are the friends of southern Africa, of the Frontline States, to all those who are the opponents of the apartheid system, to do what they have not done so far, that is to come out in solid support, to move their governments to act against the apartheid system and in defence of

the countries of southern Africa.

* * *

No agreements imposed on the independent countries of Africa will change the nature of the Botha regime nor create peace in southern Africa. For us to believe otherwise would be to entertain a dangerous illusion: to agree with Pretoria that what has been achieved through aggression constitutes a peaceful solution which the world must endorse and applaud. Such a position would be intolerable for us, and it would be as disastrous as its precedents have proved. For, by adopting such an erroneous stand, we would be encouraging the Pretoria regime to extend its zone of an oppressive peace by intensifying further its aggression.

Pretoria's objective remains unaltered: peace to preserve apartheid, and freedom to continue its war against the Namibian and South African people. For, whatever the immediate results of the current manoeuvres, there is not even the presence of peace or justice in South Africa and Namibia. In Angola, all that Pretoria has agreed to is the conditional withdrawal of its aggressive forces from the territory it still occupied. There is no offer of withdrawal from its illegal occupation of Namibia, nor to implement the unanimously agreed Resolution 435⁴ which remains the only basis for a peaceful solution.

For the people of South Africa, there is neither the prospect nor the promise of peace. The reasons for Pretoria's aggression and therefore for the wars in the region lie within South Africa, and there they still remain.

4. Resolution 435, which was adopted by the UN Security Council on Sept. 29, 1978, calls for the repeal of all repressive laws in Namibia, the holding of free elections under UN supervision and control, and the convoking of a constituent assembly to frame an independence constitution.

The regime's war against the South African people has been waged for many decades. Despite severe repression, torture, imprisonment, and death, resistance continues and even intensifies. The many attempts to purchase our right to self-determination have been rejected. Our people saw through the Bantustan⁵ fraud and continue to fight apartheid institutions even when they are manned by Africans clothed in the paraphernalia of pseudo-independence. "Coloured" and Indian⁶ South Africans are presently girding themselves to demonstrate their total rejection of the new constitution that seeks to divide them from the African people and offers participation in the left-overs of the oppressor's table.

Today, people of all races are united in a broad democratic front of millions, determined to fight for the realisation of a democratic, non-racial South Africa. Our country is now the site of a gathering mass struggle reinforced by armed action by units of the people's army, Umkhonto we Sizwe.⁷

Unable to come to terms with this reality, or to contain the situation inside South Africa, the regime has sought desperately for alternate solutions.

It is more comforting for it to attribute to external agitation the resistance that springs from our people's commitment to the cause of liberation. And it is more reassuring for Botha to see our national liberation movement as a transient force, having its roots on foreign soil and drawing its main support from forces outside our borders.

Pretoria, therefore, concentrates its energies on trying to clear southern Africa of the ANC. It hopes that thereafter it will be safe behind its buffer zones.

But whatever it or anyone else may wish, the ANC will not go away. The ANC is not some force external to South Africa. It does not owe its birth, its strength, and its survival for 72 years now to some foreign power. Our national liberation movement sprang from the loins of the people, fathered by their dispossession, oppression, and exploitation, nurtured by their belief in a just society, and tempered by years of struggle. So long as these conditions remain, so long will our people remain committed to liberate themselves and their country, and so long will the ANC grow in strength and effectiveness.

The apartheid regime has long failed to suppress us by terror. Everything it may try in the future will similarly fail to halt the struggle for the liberation of our country.

5. The Bantustans in South Africa are largely rural and impoverished areas set up by Pretoria. Four of the 10 Bantustans — the Transkei, BophuthaTswana, Venda, and Ciskei — have been declared "independent states" against the wishes of the Black majority.

6. Like the African majority, the Coloured (those of mixed ancestry) and Indian sectors of the Black population in South Africa also face segregation and other forms of national oppression.

7. "Spear of the Nation," the ANC's armed wing.

ANC refugees expelled from Swaziland

The government of Swaziland, a tiny country located between South Africa and Mozambique, has begun detaining and expelling South African refugees belonging to the African National Congress. This crackdown follows an announcement on March 30 that the Swazi monarchy had signed a security pact with Pretoria.

As of mid-April, some 30 ANC refugees had been arrested by Swazi troops and police. They have been accused of being guerrillas; some have been charged with entering Swaziland from Mozambique. Several gun battles have been reported in Mbabane and Manzini, and the Swazi authorities claim that ANC fighters killed one Swazi policeman.

Prime Minister Bhekimp Dlamini, seeking to justify this brutal crackdown, claimed in an April 17 radio broadcast that

the ANC members were a "scourge of foreign criminals."

An April 12 news release from the ANC Information Department reported that the Swazi government was moving to expel all ANC refugees. "All the intended deportees had proper refugee status in Swaziland," the release explained, "and include infants, children of school-going age and pensioners, some of whom have been resident in Swaziland for almost 20 years. Furthermore, no charges of improper conduct have been made against any of these refugees."

The ANC expressed "grave concern" over reports that "some of these refugees may be handed over to the police of the murderous Pretoria regime."

The ANC appealed for international support "to ensure the protection and humane treatment of these victims of apartheid terror."

In spite of recent events, we are convinced that the peoples of our region are not prepared to purchase for themselves a peace that is a snare and a delusion and at the expense of betraying the peoples in South Africa and Namibia.

Indeed, the peoples of southern Africa are

perfectly aware that the only guarantee of lasting peace and security for their countries is the liberation of South Africa and Namibia. Our inevitable victory will serve also the fundamental and permanent interests of all the peoples in our region, Africa, and the rest of the world. □

Statement by National Executive

[The following statement was issued by the ANC's National Executive Committee (NEC) on March 16, the same day the Mozambique-South Africa treaty was concluded. It was signed on behalf of the NEC by Alfred Nzo, the ANC's secretary-general.]

* * *

Over the last few weeks, the racist and colonial regime of South Africa has been involved in a frantic diplomatic, political, and propaganda counter-offensive in southern Africa.

Some of the principal objectives of this offensive are:

- To isolate the ANC throughout southern Africa and to compel the independent countries of our region to act as Pretoria's agents in emasculating the ANC, the vanguard movement of the South African struggle for national emancipation;

- To liquidate the armed struggle for the liberation of South Africa;

- To gain new bridgeheads for the Pretoria regime in its efforts to undermine the unity of the Frontline States, destroy the SADCC⁸ and replace it with a so-called constellation of states, and thus to transform the independent countries of southern Africa into its client states; and,

- To use the prestige of the Frontline States in the campaign of the white minority regime to reduce the international isolation of apartheid South Africa and to lend legitimacy to itself and its colonial and fascist state.

In pursuit of these aims, the Botha regime has sought to reduce the independent countries of our region to the level of its Bantustan creations by forcing them to join the Transkei, BophuthaTswana, Venda, and Ciskei Bantustans in entering into so-called non-aggression pacts with Pretoria.

Such accords, concluded as they are with a regime which has no moral or legal right to govern our country, cannot but help to perpetuate the illegitimate rule of the South African white settler minority. It is exactly for this reason that this minority has over the years sought to bind independent Africa to such agreements.

The African National Congress is profoundly conscious of the enormous political,

economic, and security problems that confront many of the peoples of our region. The blame for many of these problems must be laid squarely on the Pretoria regime, which has sought to define the limit of independence of the countries of our region through a policy of aggression and destabilization.

We are convinced that this regime, which is dripping from head to foot with the blood of thousands of people it has murdered throughout southern Africa, cannot be an architect of justice and peace in our region.

Neither can the ally of this regime, the Reagan administration of the United States, with its pro-apartheid policy of "constructive engagement," be an architect of justice and peace in this region, while it is an angel of war, reaction, and repression in other regions of the world, including the United States itself.

A just and lasting peace in our region is not possible while the fountainhead of war and instability in this area, the apartheid regime and the oppressive system it maintains in South Africa and Namibia, continues to exist. The Botha regime knows that no peace has broken out: rather, it has resorted to other means to continue its war for the domination of southern Africa.

The situation in our region continues to point to the correctness of the decisions of the Maputo Frontline States summit held in March 1982. That summit observed that: "Under the leadership of the ANC, the people, through strikes and armed action, are vigorously rising against apartheid." It went on to commit the Frontline States "to intensify their material and diplomatic support for the liberation movements, Swapo⁹ and ANC of South Africa, so that they can intensify the armed struggle for the attainment of the national independence of their people."

That statement was made in full recognition of the fact that the destruction of the apartheid regime and the liberation of South Africa and Namibia constituted the fundamental prerequisites for peace, stability, and uninterrupted progress in our area.

That commonly agreed position reaffirmed the obligation of the people of South Africa, under the leadership of the ANC, to escalate their offensive, using all means, including armed action, for the overthrow of the criminal apartheid regime and the transfer of power to

the masses. We remain and shall remain loyal to this perspective.

The Pretoria regime is acting in the manner that it is to try to extricate itself out of the crisis that confronts its racist and colonial system of apartheid. It hopes that after it has "pacified" our neighbors and driven the ANC out of our region, it will then have a free hand to suppress the mass democratic movement of our country and thus create the conditions for it to spin out its intricate web of measures for the refinement and entrenchment of the apartheid system.

Our principal task at the moment therefore is, and must be, to intensify our political and military offensive inside South Africa. This is the urgent call that we make to the masses of our people, to all democratic formations, and to all members of the units of the ANC and Umkhonto we Sizwe. Relying on our own strength, through action, we will frustrate the schemes of the enemy of the peoples of Africa and continue our forward march to the destruction of the system of white minority colonial domination in our country.

The central and immediate question of South African politics is the overthrow of the white minority regime, the seizure of power by the people, and the uprooting by these victorious masses of the entire apartheid system of colonial and racist domination, fascist tyranny, the superexploitation of the black majority, and imperialist aggression and expansionism.

This question will be and is being settled, in struggle, within the borders of our country and nowhere else. We are entitled to expect that all those anywhere in the world who count themselves among the anti-colonial and anti-racist forces will join hands with us to bring about this noble outcome.

The peoples of southern Africa know from their own experience that there can be no peaceful coexistence between freedom and independence on the one hand and colonialism on the other. We are confident that these masses, their parties, and governments which have over the years demonstrated their commitment to the cause of the total liberation of Africa will themselves remain loyal to this cause and firm in resolve to stand with our people until victory is won.

We are equally certain that the rest of Africa and the world progressive community will continue to deny the Botha regime the legitimacy it craves so desperately, adopt new measures to isolate it, and increase their political, diplomatic, moral, and material support to the ANC.

The struggle for the liberation of South Africa, under the leadership of the ANC, will continue and grow in scope and effectiveness until we have won our victory. Forward to a people's government! □

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8. The Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) is a grouping of nine Black-ruled countries (including the frontline states) that are seeking to lessen their economic dependence on South Africa.

9. The South West Africa People's Organisation, which is fighting for Namibia's independence from South African rule.

Miners call national strike

'This is a class war!'

By Jonathan Silberman

MANCHESTER April 30 — The seven-week-old British miners' strike entered a new phase with the decisions of the National Delegate Conference of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) held in Sheffield April 19.

By a 3-to-2 margin, the conference decided to turn the area-based strike into an all-out national one. A subsequent Nottingham area delegate conference voted for the first time to join the strike. Nottingham's 25 pits have been the center of the resistance to the strike call so far.

These moves by the union represent a major setback to the Conservative government's whole strategy, which was centered on forcing a secret ballot to reverse the strike call. The authoritative ruling-class journal the *Economist* commented April 21, "Is Mrs Thatcher likely to win her second battle to close uneconomic mines in Britain? As a full miners' strike moved a stage closer this Easter weekend, the answer is still yes, but a hesitant one.

"After five years of government, this is the biggest industrial challenge Britain's prime minister has faced. . . . All was predicated on enough miners drifting back to work or forcing Mr Scargill to have a strike ballot — and lose it.

"This has not happened."

The decisions of the conference have given a massive boost to the miners. In the week following Easter, picketing was stepped up in Nottinghamshire — with some success. In one incident at Ollerton colliery, one of the biggest mines in Nottinghamshire, the union's president Arthur Scargill himself led 500 pickets and managed to dissuade the whole shift from working.

'Tighten the knot'

At a mass rally in Cardiff, South Wales, April 28 Scargill called on all miners and their supporters to "tighten the knot" around other industries. "Cut the dispensations. The quicker other industries are affected, the quicker the government will change its policies," he said.

Appealing to all Nottinghamshire miners to stop working, Scargill said, "If Notts miners follow the delegate conference decisions we can win the battle in weeks." He concluded by paying tribute to young miners — "the finest example of trades unionism I have ever seen" — and to the women's support committees now springing up everywhere.

Scargill called on the 140,000-plus miners now striking to descend this week on Nottinghamshire to establish definitively the fighting union of all British coalfields. Such an initiative could be a turning point for the strike and

is reminiscent of the "Battle for Saltley Gates" in the miners strike in 1972, which has gone down in British trade union folklore as the beginning of the end of the previous Tory government of Edward Heath.

That massive mobilization of miners and thousands of other trade unionists succeeded, after a day-long battle with thousands of police, in closing the massive coal depot at Saltley in Birmingham. This victory signaled the miners' control over all movement of coal and was the turning point of the whole strike.

Meanwhile, solidarity actions from the rest of the trade union and labor movement are increasing.

Engineering workers in two Scottish towns, Dundee and Fife, both close to the Scottish coalfields, have already taken one-day strike action in solidarity.

Now the Scottish Trades Union Congress has responded to this rank-and-file solidarity by calling a day of action throughout Scottish industry for May 9. Fire Brigades' Union leader Ken Cameron summed up the overwhelming feeling of congress delegates when he said, "Let's wake up and realize this is a class war!" And Scottish secretary of the General, Municipal, Boilermakers, and Allied Trades Union, Jimmy Morrell, echoed, "We are all coal miners now — a victory for them is a victory for us all."

Already transport workers, railworkers, and seafarers have committed themselves at the highest levels of their unions to stop the movement of coal. The NUM has also received international solidarity to prevent imported coal from dockers and seafarers in France, Denmark, Norway, Poland, and Australia.

Labour Party donates funds

But a massive boost to solidarity action has come from a decision of the National Executive Committee of the British Labour Party. It decided to levy its 250,000 members 50 pence a week to assist the miners' fighting fund.

This unprecedented move, said to have been instigated by left-wing Labour Member of Parliament Tony Benn, was explained by a statement by the Labour Party leadership. "The strike is entering a new and decisive stage," it said. "The establishment of the Tory war cabinet, the buying of extra oil for the power stations, and the penal operation and manipulation of the social security payments system — all clearly indicate that the Tory government is trying to starve the miners back."

In welcoming this move, Arthur Scargill called for the levy to be extended to the entire labor movement, to every single union and work place.

Right-wing deputy Labour Party leader Roy Hattersley backed this move in a television interview April 29. He even went so far as to declare, "If I was a Nottinghamshire miner, I would be on strike." This is the sort of price the right-wing Labour and trade union leaders are having to pay for the continued intransigence of the Thatcher government in the face of the massive display of solidarity now being generated from the labor movement and trade union ranks.

In a strike that has already been on for seven weeks and has a long future, the question of finance is a crucial one. Strikers may claim state social security benefits for their dependents. But the government has arbitrarily ruled that £15 per week be deducted from these payments in lieu of alleged strike pay that the miners receive from their union. In reality, the miners receive no strike pay, and these government deductions are causing severe hardships.

Responding to this new situation, National Coal Board boss Ian MacGregor hinted at concessions for the miners that are now being prepared when he called for meetings with the NUM leadership offering to slow down the pace of pit closures.

Scargill struck out early in response to this offer of talks. "I want to make it perfectly clear," he said, "that, while we are prepared to meet at any time, the NUM is not prepared to negotiate a reduction in manpower or pit closures." The NUM leader's sharp response undermined the ability of the NCB to link up with any decisive section of the trade union leadership around this proposal. Even Labour Party leader Neil Kinnock, who had earlier given his own personal backing to the anti-strike ballot proposal, has been forced to describe the MacGregor offer as a gimmick.

The fact that MacGregor has chosen to reiterate this offer in Chicago on a visit there April 30 will do nothing to enhance his authority among the striking miners.

Bureaucrats turn backs on miners

Nonetheless, it is to be anticipated that such maneuverings will increase. The trade union and labor bureaucrats who have excelled themselves in selling out struggles like that of the printworkers earlier this year are itching to find some way to get the government off the hook, prevent the miners' victory, and therefore deflect the challenge to the subservient course they have hitherto followed during the whole life of this Tory government.

The right-wing leaders of the electricians, the steelworkers, and the engineers [machinists] are preparing to scab on the miners as well. Engineering workers leader Terry Duffy has appealed publicly to the Thatcher government to intervene to prevent what he described as "the catastrophe of a national miners' strike." Steelworkers General Secretary Bill Sirs has appealed to the miners not to stop coal going to the steelworks. Doing so, he alleges, threatens steelworkers' jobs. This week it is likely that a major steel plant, at Ravenscraig in Scotland, will be forced to

close down production.

The leadership of the electricians union, which organizes the overwhelming majority of workers in the strategic power supply industry, has sent a circular to all its branches instructing its members to cross picket lines.

The right-wing bureaucrats are seeking to exploit the divisions within the NUM, which

still remain despite recent developments. They are trying to engender the view within the rank and file of the labor movement that while some miners are still working they cannot do the miners' fighting for them — and similar such trash.

The battle for Nottingham will decide the outcome of these moves. □

West Germany

Unions fight for 35-hour week

Engineering workers take lead in struggle

By Søren Bech

[The following article is reprinted from the April 9 issue of *International Viewpoint*, a fortnightly review published in Paris under the auspices of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.]

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DUISBURG — Some 2.7 million organized engineering workers and 100,000 of their unorganized workmates are preparing for the most important labor struggle since the war. It is getting underway in the coming weeks.

The West German engineering workers union is demanding a 35-hour week with no cut in pay. But the workers face strong opposition from the government and the employers.

The background to the engineering union's demand for a shorter workweek is the growth of massive unemployment in West Germany. In 1980, a million people were out of work; now there are 2.5 million registered unemployed. Moreover, the upturn that began in 1983 has not brought any more jobs.

Travelling through the Ruhr region, it is obvious that industry has been cutting back. In Dortmund, the big Hoesch steelworks stands quiet and desolate, rusting away. The chimneys are smokeless, the blast furnaces cold.

On the broad highway leading into Duisburg, we crossed over the Ruhr River. The whole horizon was lined with factory chimneys. Smoke came from a lot of them, but by no means all.

"The highest smokestacks belong to Kupferhütte, a copperworks owned by the English concern Rio Tinto," Hermann Dirkes, a dockworker at the colossal Thyssen-Hamborn steelworks in Duisburg, told us.

"Around 1,200 copper foundry workers have been thrown on the streets, even though they put up a fight. Their struggle was unsuccessful because the chairman of the engineering workers union organization in Duisburg, Rainer Buhlitz, who is also the mayor, refused to support them.

"On the other hand, the workers at the Krupp-Rheinhausen steelworks here won. Krupp wanted to fire 4,500 of the 8,000 workers at the plant. But the workforce put up such

a strong fight that the company had to change its plans."

Dirkes went on to point out that "17 percent of the workers in Duisburg are without jobs. That is a record for the Ruhr region, where 10 million people live." The official unemployment rate is 10 percent.

So, something has to happen. If unemployment continues to spiral, this will have very grave consequences for the labor movement. Hermann Dirkes noted:

"In 1983, the engineering workers union (IG Metall) lost 100,000 members. These were all people who dropped out of the union after they lost their jobs. That represents a sharp decline in membership, and that is something that the union leadership understands. The leadership was also prodded by the threat that if they do not do something, they would lose their credibility and another 100,000 members could drop out. What use is a trade union that doesn't do anything?"

The unions take the offensive

So, at the end of 1983, the IG Metall top leadership in Frankfurt am Main launched an offensive for a 35-hour workweek. At loggerheads with the top leadership are the bureaucrats at the intermediate and somewhat lower levels, in particular in the Nordrhein-Westfalen district (which includes the Ruhr), who have traditionally been deeply mired in class collaborationism.

"The union functionaries here in the Ruhr want to do as little as possible. They know that if they get the 35-hour week fight going, that means the end of the cozy class-collaboration they have spent decades trying to build up with the bosses.

"Instinctively, they understand that this struggle will lead to a big mobilization in the union, and that then the membership could want to replace them with more active leaders. So, in the present case, the top leadership holds the initiative.

"Specifically, it is the IG Metall's new vice president, Franz Steinkuehler, a strong figure, who is for a more active line. On February 2, he gave a great speech here in Duisburg, one filled with a militant spirit. There were 600 people in the audience, and the class-col-

laborationist leaders got a real kick in the behind."

Dirkes continued: "Franz Steinkuehler said that unemployment makes the 35-hour week with no cut in pay an urgent necessity. What is needed to win this demand, he said, were trade unionists who do not subordinate themselves to the logic of capitalism or try to balance between the bosses and the workers. What was needed are people who consistently represent the workers' interests. That is what Franz Steinkuehler said. And strangely enough, the most pro-boss union leaders clapped loudly. They didn't dare do anything else, because new factory council elections were coming up in mid-March."

The majority of the West German engineering workers support the 35-hour week. They think that something has to be done about unemployment. But on the other hand, they have had bad experiences with IG Metall. So, they are skeptical and want to see some evidence that the IG Metall top leaders are really serious this time before they strike or demonstrate.

Andreas Kroker, an apprentice at the Gutehoffnungshuette in Sterkrade, where 3,000 people work, explained:

"During the weeks-long steel strike in December 1978–January 1979, IG Metall dropped the demand for a 35-hour week and agreed to a compromise that provided for six weeks vacation a year, something that the workers never asked for. Most of my fellow workers think that when IG Metall, for example, demands an 8 percent raise, it settles for 4 percent, and so a lot of people think that now that it is demanding 35 hours, it will settle for 39 hours or 35 with a cut in pay. And so they think that it's not worth going on strike and losing the money."

"On top of that, the local union leaders at the Gutehoffnungshuette works have done absolutely nothing to explain how the 35-hour week is to be introduced in practice. Does this mean that we will have to do in seven hours what we do in eight today? Will it be possible to bring in more workers after the introduction of the 35-hour week, how many and where? Most of the workers think that it is fine that the union magazine, *Metall*, is agitating for the 35-hour week, but at the same time they have a lot of questions in their minds."

Hermann Dirkes from Thyssen-Hamborn, where 32,000 people work, added:

"This time the IG Metall leadership has gone a long way. It has agitated strongly for the 35-hour week. There is no longer any way back. The leadership of the union knows that if they lose or accept an inadequate compromise, they will face a dim future. The bosses and the government are standing tough, and if they win, it will be decisive proof that the union is weak, and then they wouldn't give us a penny in next year's contract negotiations.

"So, there is no doubt that the IG Metall leadership wants to get strikes going in selected areas in the coming weeks, especially in the automotive industry. And if struggles really get started, then the mood among the workers can swing in a few days from skepticism to full support and militancy." □

U.S. left and the Iraq-Iran war

Why workers should defend revolution from imperialism, Iraqi attack

By Cindy Jaquith

[The following article, by an editor of the U.S. revolutionary socialist newsweekly *Militant*, is scheduled to appear in a forthcoming issue of that paper.]

* * *

Should workers be "neutral" in the war between Iraq and Iran? Most newspapers on the U.S. left today say yes. The *Militant* is virtually the only paper in the U.S. workers movement that defends Iran and the Iranian revolution against aggression from Iraq, the U.S. government, and its imperialist allies.

What stand to take on the war has become increasingly important in recent months. There has been a sharp escalation of both Iraqi and imperialist military intervention against Iran.

The Iraq-Iran war, in which the two contending sides are both nations oppressed by imperialism, has provoked discussion and debate. Washington's systematic effort to disguise its own role in the conflict has heightened confusion.

The war began in September 1980, when Iraqi President Saddam Hussein ordered an invasion of Iran, declaring his troops would swiftly get rid of the "maniac" Khomeini. Hussein's goal was not only to overthrow the government led by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, but to put an end to the revolutionary achievements of the Iranian masses, who had toppled the U.S.-backed shah in 1979 and inspired the workers and peasants throughout the region.

However, Hussein is far from accomplishing this objective. In the past three years, Iranian troops and volunteers have driven out most of the Iraqi forces occupying their territory. Yet the Iraqi government continues its bombardments of Iranian civilian centers and Iranian ships in the Persian Gulf.

In early February of this year, Hussein unleashed a new wave of bombings of Iranian cities and villages. Coupled with this, he announced plans to put a naval blockade around Kharg Island, Iran's main oil exporting facility in the gulf. He also renewed his threat to blow up the island altogether.

Iranian officials responded by mobilizing hundreds of thousands of volunteers and regular troops at the Iraqi border. They declared a final offensive was under way that would force Hussein to surrender. For the first time, Iran also carried out retaliatory bombing of Iraqi cities. The Iranian regime said that if Iraq destroyed Kharg Island, it would close the Strait of Hormuz, the only exit from the Persian Gulf.

The Iranian troops then moved into Iraq, capturing the Majnoon Islands, in an oil-rich

marshland area northwest of the Iraqi city of Basra. Despite extensive bombing and use of poison gas, the Iraqis have been unable thus far to dislodge the Iranians from the islands.

The U.S. rulers, while claiming to be neutral in the war, have favored the Iraqi aggression from the beginning. In recent months, they have stepped up their threats and provocations against Iran. In January, Iran was added to Washington's list of "terrorist nations," which also includes Cuba, Libya, Syria, and South Yemen.

In February, President Reagan threatened to use military force against Iran if the Strait of Hormuz were closed. A fleet of nearly 20 U.S. warships was dispatched to the gulf and surrounding waters. They fired on one Iranian plane.

In April, U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz raised the idea of preemptive military strikes against Iran, which he claimed was responsible for "state-supported terrorism" along with Libya, Syria, and North Korea.

'Civilization' versus 'fanaticism'?

The U.S. media has boosted the anti-Iranian campaign by portraying the Iraq-Iran war as a senseless, barbaric slaughter fueled by the "expansionism" and "fanaticism" of the Iranian revolution. The war endangers "our oil" and "our allies" in the Middle East, U.S. workers are told. The "civilized West" needs to intervene somehow in the conflict to prevent the spread of "ruthless repression" and "Islamic terrorism."

The Iranian combatants in the war are painted as frenzied religious zealots. "A Fever Bordering on Hysteria" was the title of a March 12 *Time* magazine article describing Iran. The reporter characterized Iranian volunteers for the war effort as "suicide-driven."

Even the way the press has covered the exposure of Iraqi use of chemical warfare is designed to confuse workers. Statements by the U.S. government against Iraq's use of poison gas have been played up to give the impression Washington is neutral in the war. Reagan's hypocritical grandstanding on the issue of chemical warfare has also been used to resurrect the phony charges that the Soviet Union, Vietnam, and other countries have used "yellow rain," an alleged chemical warfare agent. Washington, in fact, controls the world's largest stockpile of chemical weapons, and Reagan has pledged to build up this supply even bigger.

'Guardian' blames Iran

Proimperialist themes have increasingly

been echoed in the coverage of the Iraq-Iran war by the U.S. left. The *Guardian*, an independent radical weekly published in New York, ran an editorial entitled "Slaughter in the Gulf" in its March 14 issue. The thrust of the editorial was to blame Iran for aggression in the Persian Gulf area.

The *Guardian* editors claimed the attitude of U.S. and European imperialist powers has been, until recently, one of "relative indifference" toward the fighting between Iraq and Iran.

While stating, "Progressive people have little reason to take sides in this conflict," the editorial sharply attacked Iran, which, it said, "is not blameless at this stage, for it has refused to negotiate an end to the war."

"Ayatollah Khomeini knows that having an external enemy blunts popular opposition to his brutally repressive regime. He says Tehran will settle for nothing short of Hussein's downfall. In the meantime he sees nothing wrong with making martyrs of tens of thousands of poorly trained teenage 'volunteers,' thrown repeatedly against better-equipped forces."

'Workers World': 'strictly bourgeois interests'

Workers World, newspaper of the Workers World Party, argued in a February 23 editorial that the Iraq-Iran war "has only served to weaken both countries in relation to imperialism" and that it is "fought over strictly bourgeois interests."

The editorial focused on attacking repression in Iran (saying nothing about the Iraqi regime's attacks on workers and oppressed nationalities).

While acknowledging that "it is the duty of all workers and oppressed people to defend Iran against the attacks of imperialism," the editorial made no connection between imperialism and the Iraqi aggression.

In a follow-up editorial on March 8, *Workers World* asserted that Khomeini has "utilized the horrendous war with Iraq to whip up a religious and patriotic frenzy to distract the Iranian people from their own domestic struggle."

'Daily World': overthrow Khomeini

The U.S. Communist Party's position was outlined in a March 28 article in the *Daily World* by William Pomeroy. In 1980, when Hussein invaded Iran, he "was encouraged in his aggression and given military and economic assistance by the U.S., France, and Britain, which saw it as an opportunity to reverse the Iranian revolution," Pomeroy wrote.



Iranian fighters at the war front.

But today, Pomeroy continued, the war is no longer a defensive one on Iran's part: "The war is facilitating the conditions for a return to control by reactionary Iranian capitalist groups who are restoring links with imperialism and transnational corporations. They have savagely repressed the left-wing and bourgeois nationalist forces, in particular the Communist Tudeh Party."

Pomeroy hailed "revolutionary" forces who call for overthrowing both Hussein and Khomeini: "At the present stage of the Iraq-Iran war," he wrote, "the revolutionary and democratic movements in both countries vigorously oppose the war and work for the ouster of both regimes that oppress them as the only certain way to achieve a peace of independence and democracy."

The CP's call for overthrowing the Iranian government is relatively recent. For the first few years of the Iranian revolution, it politically supported the Khomeini regime, including its attacks on oppressed nationalities and other left groups, and it sided with Iran in the war.

'In These Times': war is a 'diversion'

The March 14-20 *In These Times*, a social-democratic weekly published in Chicago, ran an article by Fred Halliday, a British intellectual who has written extensively on Iran. Halliday reduced the war to a gimmick by the Iranian government, "a means of diverting attention from the failings of the Islamic Republic at home."

Halliday spelled out his views more fully in the December 1983 issue of *Marxism Today*, the theoretical magazine of the British CP. There he argued that "the Islamic revolution has continued to run its course, revealing an

immanent [intrinsic] repressive and antidemocratic character that was temporarily masked at the beginning."

Halliday charged that "a terror of truly fascist proportions has been deployed in Iran" by the Khomeini regime. He compared its repression of the Tudeh Party to Adolph Hitler's Germany of 1933. The lesson to be learned by the left, he concluded, is the danger of Islam: "For all that was positive in the overthrow of the Shah, it is now evident that the Islamic regime represents a force even more reactionary than the Shah's, one nearer fascism than socialism."

While Halliday presents the most extreme view of Iran today, the logic of the articles in the *Guardian*, *Workers World*, *Daily World*, and *In These Times* points in the same direction. All of them capitulate to the pressures of the imperialist propaganda campaign against the Iranian revolution, and all of them echo, to one degree or another, Washington's line that Iran is the source of aggression in the region.

Standpoint of the 'Militant'

The *Militant* has a completely different starting point in looking at the Iraq-Iran war. We view this war — and all wars today — from the standpoint of the international fight against imperialism and the struggle to advance the world socialist revolution. Iran is a semicolonial nation that had a deepgoing revolution against dictatorship and imperialist domination in 1979. That revolution succeeded in shattering the 25-year dictatorship of the shah installed by Washington. Ousting the shah opened the door to further mobilizations by the nation's toilers for social, economic, and political demands that posed the need for a workers and peasants government. The over-

throw of the shah weakened U.S. imperialism and strengthened the world working class. For this reason, imperialism has been trying to reverse the gains of the Iranian revolution ever since — through overt means and through proxy means, like the Iraqi war.

The Iraqi invasion of Iran helped serve the interests of U.S. imperialism, which was not in a position to carry out such a military attack itself. Washington hoped Hussein would be able to overturn the revolution. While he has failed, the three-and-a-half-year war has brought enormous destruction to Iran and taken the lives of many of the best revolutionary fighters.

An Iranian victory in the war would be an inspiration for all those fighting imperialist oppression in the Mideast; a defeat for Iran would be a big blow, not only for the Iranian revolution, but for the Iraqi masses, for the Palestinians, Lebanese, and other Arab peoples, as well as for working people around the world. Both Iraq and Iran are semicolonial nations oppressed by imperialism, and both are ruled by capitalist governments that are hostile to the interests of the workers and peasants. By attacking the rights of workers, peasants, oppressed nationalities, and women, the Iranian regime has dealt significant blows to the gains of the revolution. But it has not crushed the revolution, as can be seen by the massive mobilizations of Iranians today to defend their revolution from Iraqi attack.

The *Militant* believes this is decisive in determining which side to support in the war. The most important thing U.S. workers can do to aid the struggle of the Iranian workers for national independence, democratic rights, and an end to class exploitation is to condemn the moves of our own ruling class to crush their revolution.

Tied to this is the responsibility of U.S. labor — and above all, of those who consider themselves socialists — to tell the truth about the Iranian revolution and repudiate the lies of the imperialists.

'Worse than the shah'?

The most often repeated lie is that the 1979 revolution was a defeat for the Iranian masses, or as Fred Halliday puts it, inherently "repressive and antidemocratic."

What did happen in 1979? Did the Iranian masses end up with something "worse than the shah"?

In order to understand the current situation in Iran, including the meaning of the repression carried out by the government there, we need to first review what has happened in Iran over the five years of its revolution.

The 1979 revolution was and remains a giant blow to world imperialism. Next to Israel, the shah's monarchy was imperialism's strongest ally in the Mideast. Armed to the teeth by Washington and trained in the most sophisticated methods of torture by the CIA and the Israeli secret police, the shah's regime functioned as a cop not only against the Iranian workers and peasants, but against rebellions in

the region against imperialism and its allies among conservative Arab regimes.

Following his restoration to the Peacock Throne in 1953 through a CIA-organized coup, the shah opened Iran up to thousands of U.S. military personnel and corporate managers. Massive amounts of U.S. surveillance equipment aimed at the Soviet workers state were set up in Iran. U.S. "advisers" trained much of the shah's elite army units. U.S. and European oil corporations reaped huge profits from their plunder of Iranian oil reserves.

Catering to the imperialists, the shah carried out a "land reform" program in the 1960s that destroyed the country's agriculture. Iran was transformed from a nation self-sufficient in food to one that had to import 60 percent of its requirements. Huge numbers of peasants were driven off the land and forced into the cities.

The shah smashed the trade unions that had been established in the 1940s. Agents of SAVAK, the secret police, set up offices in the factories. Strikes were made illegal. All workers parties were forced underground, and most of their members were either jailed, killed, or forced to leave the country.

The shah sought to give his brutal regime an "enlightened" image, aping imperialist notions of civilization. Expensive consumer goods were imported from the United States and Europe for the shah, his court, and other wealthy families. U.S. "culture" — like American TV — began to dominate the country. Women were encouraged to become "liberated" by donning the latest Western fashions and covering their faces with makeup. Prostitution flourished in cities like Tehran for the pleasure of U.S. businessmen and local capitalists and landlords.

Attempts by Iran's oppressed nationalities — Azerbaijanis, Kurds, Turkmenis, Baluchis, and Arabs — to speak their own languages or practice their own cultures were ruthlessly suppressed.

The popular uprising against the shah's tyranny involved some of the most massive mobilizations in the history of the Middle East. In 1978 and 1979, millions of people took to the streets to demand "Death to the shah" and "Down with U.S. imperialism."

Proletarian methods of struggle

The Iranian masses fought for an end to the monarchy and imperialist domination with proletarian methods — street demonstrations, a general strike, and the formation of popular organs of struggle, such as strike committees in the factories and fuel distribution committees in the working-class neighborhoods. The antidictatorial struggle united various class forces — peasants, shopkeepers, students, intellectuals, and bourgeois opponents of the shah. But the working class, particularly the oil workers, was the decisive factor in bringing down the shah. In December 1978, the oil workers began a strike that shut down production, crippling the regime.

They not only raised economic demands, but also political demands against the govern-

ment — for the overthrow of the shah, for the release of all political prisoners, for freedom of speech and of the press, for a cutoff of all oil to Israel and South Africa.

Other workers joined in the strikes, which soon became universal. Bank workers occupied the banks and opened the books to reveal the gross corruption practiced under the shah's government.

Oppressed nationalities — particularly Azerbaijanis and Kurds — were also in the forefront of the fight. One of the first mass demonstrations calling for the overthrow of the shah took place in Tabriz, the center of the Azerbaijani population. In Kurdistan, peasants began seizing land owned by the shah while the monarchy was still in power.

Women joined in the demonstrations in numbers unprecedented in the Middle East. They often wore the black *chador* (Islamic veil) as a protest against the shah's version of "women's liberation."

Islamic 'reaction'?

The U.S. media attacked the protests from the beginning, echoing the shah's line that because the organized leadership of the demonstrations were figures in the Islamic hierarchy, the masses were really demanding a return to medieval society, reaction, and ignorance. The masses were too backward, the shah explained, to appreciate the benefits of his "modernization."

But when the demonstrators counterposed "Islam" to life under the shah, they were expressing the nationalism and hatred of imperialism felt by Muslims and other oppressed peoples throughout the Middle East. Religious leaders gained popularity among the demonstrators to the degree they gave voice to these nationalist and anti-imperialist sentiments.

A wing of the Islamic hierarchy led by Ayatollah Khomeini emerged as the leadership of the movement. It won deep influence among Shi'ite Muslims, especially workers, semiproletarians driven into the city by the shah's land reform, and peasants. The working class was not strong enough to offer an alternative political leadership. Trade unions had been smashed under the shah. Those groups calling themselves socialist and communist had been savagely repressed and were very weak. Most had been forced into exile, and all of them lacked real roots in the working class.

Some bourgeois forces opposing the shah, such as the National Front, grew increasingly alarmed at the revolutionary character of the demonstrations and sought to slow them down. Khomeini, however, urged the masses to continue their marches and strikes until the shah fell. He consistently denounced U.S. imperialism's role in keeping the shah in power.

Urban insurrection

After the shah fled the country in January 1979, leaving behind him a caretaker government, Khomeini was able to return to Iran from an exile of more than 15 years. He sought to convince the tottering dictatorship to peacefully transfer power to him, thus avoiding a revolutionary overthrow of the regime. But when elite troops were sent to attack Khomeini supporters at a Tehran air force barracks, the insurrection was on.

The airmen responded to the attack by arming themselves and people in the surrounding neighborhoods. The revolt spread, as regular troops retreated from confronting the masses or joined them. One by one, the people took over the army bases, seizing more weapons.

Crowds of thousands attacked hated symbols of the shah's regime. They stormed the



Anti-shah forces capture tank during February 1979 insurrection in Tehran.

central SAVAK office and tore up files on dissenters. They invaded the Israeli embassy, and renamed it the PLO embassy. They marched to the prisons and freed the thousands of detainees inside.

Independent defense committees sprouted up in the neighborhoods to protect liberated territory from government troops. Massive barricades were thrown up, particularly in the working-class parts of town.

In three days, the dictatorship had fallen. The army officer corps and caretaker government turned the reins over to Khomeini and his supporters.

The workers and semiproletarian masses in the cities had overthrown the shah's regime — practically with their bare hands. But they lacked the organization and leadership to forge an alliance with the peasantry and to take power. Instead of a workers and peasants government, a regime composed of businessmen and religious figures dedicated to preserving capitalist rule was established.

While the new regime's leaders intended to demobilize the masses and restore capitalist stability as quickly as possible, they faced a major problem: they had been brought to power by a massive revolution. A fundamental change in the relationship of class forces had occurred. The Iranian working class and peasantry had been strengthened in relation to the capitalists and landlords, and Iran as an oppressed nation had been strengthened in relation to world imperialism.

It is this change that has stamped Washington's attitude to Iran and its government ever since.

The U.S. government not only lost a valuable ally with the shah's overthrow. The Iranian revolution sent shock waves throughout the Mideast. The Iranian monarchy had been viewed as impregnable. Its ouster by the impoverished Iranian masses was an inspiration for the Palestinians fighting for a return to their homeland and for the millions of other Arabs suffering under conservative regimes. Its impact was also felt in Turkey and Pakistan.

The Iranian revolution was also hailed by oppressed peoples fighting U.S. puppets in other parts of the world, from Central America to the Philippines. And it had a big impact on working people in the imperialist countries.

The Iranian people effectively exposed for U.S. workers the character of the "democracy" Washington imposes on semicolonial countries. By bringing down the shah they weakened U.S. imperialism and strengthened the U.S. working class.

Far from the revolution being inherently antidemocratic, as Fred Halliday contends, democratic demands for the overthrow of monarchy and for national independence from imperialism were at its very center. Only by ridding themselves of the shah and his secret police, and the U.S. forces backing them up, could the Iranian masses effectively organize a struggle to rebuild their country after decades of backwardness imposed by imperialism.

Washington's fears about the Iranian revolu-

tion were confirmed by the explosion of social struggles that followed the shah's overthrow.

The struggle to bring the shah down had deeply affected the consciousness of the nation's workers and peasants. Having carried out the insurrection themselves, they knew *they* had made this revolution and they intended to use their power to drive it forward.

When the new government sought to disband the factory strike committees and appoint new leaders in the workplaces, the workers rejected this. They asserted their demands for major wage increases, for far-reaching social benefits, for workers control of production, and for a say in how industry should be reorganized to help reconstruct the country.

By July 1979, the government was forced to nationalize a large number of factories. It tripled the minimum wage and granted important concessions on social benefits. Worker-elected factory committees (called *shoras*) were allowed to function and spread.

Exploited peasants responded to the shah's overthrow by seizing land left vacant by counterrevolutionary landlords who had fled. While the government opposed the seizures, it was not strong enough to stop them all. Under pressure from the peasants, it began major construction projects in some parts of the countryside, spearheaded by revolutionary youth from the cities who formed the Reconstruction Crusade.

Oppressed nationalities, particularly the Kurds, took advantage of the new freedom to assert their right to control their own affairs and to rejuvenate their languages and cultures. Kurdish peasants accelerated land takeovers. The central government launched a direct offensive against the Kurds, sending in troops and bombing their villages.

But the attack on the Kurds backfired. Their guerrilla forces successfully resisted the army, provoking debate and opposition to the war among workers in the cities throughout Iran. The central government was forced to pull back from its occupation of Kurdistan in October 1979. It also retreated from attempts to impose full-scale censorship and prohibit legal functioning of workers parties.

U.S. embassy occupation

Mobilizations by workers and their allies reached a new high. The focus of their protests was the continued U.S. interference in Iran's affairs and conciliatory moves toward the imperialists by some officials in the Iranian government.

In October 1979, Washington allowed the shah, who had been living in exile, to move to the United States. Iranians poured into the streets to protest this blatantly provocative move. Revolutionary students took over the U.S. embassy and held the personnel inside hostage to their demand that the shah be returned to stand trial for his crimes.

Iranian officials caught carrying out secret negotiations with Washington were ousted from their posts on the demand of the Iranian people. The students began releasing CIA files

found in the embassy that showed a U.S. campaign to split and overthrow the Iranian government, as well as the complicity of some Iranian officials in Washington's plans.

Workers came to the forefront of defending the embassy occupation, linking the struggle against imperialist attacks on the revolution to their battles against employers and Labor Ministry officials who were trying to block the advance of the revolution. Those bosses who were sabotaging production or refusing to meet workers' demands were denounced as agents of imperialism. The factory shoras mushroomed throughout the country and began to raise broader social demands as well.

Peasants drove their tractors into the cities to show their solidarity with the embassy takeover and to seek support for their own demands.

In December, a united demonstration of all the factory shoras in Tehran marched to the embassy. There the workers presented a program of demands to meet the threat from imperialism and move the revolution forward. They called for resolute action against U.S. imperialism, including the military mobilization of the entire Iranian population. They urged the government to forge "deeper ties" with "other Islamic and anticolonial movements." The program linked stepped-up defense of the revolution with a call for sweeping measures against proimperialist capitalists, landlords, and government officials who were denying rights to the workers and peasants.

"Cut off the hands of the capitalists who are sabotaging production!" the program demanded. "Abolish capitalism and plunder. . . . The government should run all the factories in collaboration with the shora in each plant."

The shora program also called for land reform. The holdings of the big landlords with ties to the United States "should be confiscated and divided up. The land and its fruits belong to those who work it!"

Within the government, the shoras demanded immediate action against "traitors" and a purge, "in direct collaboration with the Islamic Workers Shoras," of counterrevolutionary elements in the labor ministries.

The upsurge around the embassy seizure thus saw the emergence of the workers, through their own independent organs, the shoras, attempting to take the lead in pushing the revolution forward.

The inability of the Iranian government to bring the situation under control led the Carter administration to launch its abortive commando raid against Iran in April 1980. Ostensibly a raid to free the U.S. hostages, the operation was clearly planned to spark a coup against the Khomeini regime.

Five months later, Iraqi President Saddam Hussein launched his massive invasion of Iran.

U.S. indifference to war?

The U.S. imperialists feigned "neutrality" on the war, and hoped Hussein could do their dirty work for them. Far from being "indifferent" to the war, Washington saw it as a major

opportunity to overthrow Khomeini and reverse the gains of the Iranian revolution without direct use of U.S. troops.

A parallel situation had occurred in the 1970s in the Horn of Africa. In 1974, as part of an upsurge of anti-imperialist forces in Africa, the Emperor Haile Selassie was overthrown in Ethiopia. Huge popular mobilizations resulted, compelling the new government, made up of younger army officers, to make major concessions to the masses, including a broad land reform and nationalization of the banks.

As in Iran, the new Ethiopian government was a capitalist regime that sought to demobilize the masses and curb democratic rights. It refused to grant national rights to the Eritreans, an oppressed people within Ethiopia, for example.

In 1977, Ethiopia was invaded by the army of President Siad Barre of Somalia. Barre claimed to be coming to the aid of Somalis living in the Ogaden region of Ethiopia, who also suffered national oppression under the Ethiopian regime.

But the "national liberation" of Somalis had nothing to do with Barre's war. Like Hussein of Iraq, he was seeking to roll back an antidictatorial revolution before it reached his doorstep.

Washington tried to appear neutral in this war also, all the while quietly encouraging Barre's aggression. The U.S. government looked favorably on anything that could push back the anti-imperialist upsurge in Africa, which had now swept Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, and other countries.

Washington sent two warships to the Red Sea as a warning to Ethiopia and to back up the Somalis. But with the aid of Cuban troops, Ethiopia defeated the Somali army shortly thereafter, regaining control of the Ogaden.

Many on the U.S. left were confused during the Ethiopia-Somalia war about which of these two oppressed nations to support and where U.S. imperialism's interests really lay. A similar confusion exists today on the Iraq-Iran war.

Washington's relations with Iraq

Prior to the Iranian revolution, Washington had had poor relations with the Iraqi government. Iraq had broken diplomatic relations with the United States over the 1967 Israeli war, and the Iraqi government had been an outspoken opponent of U.S. support to Israel. Iraq had been listed on Washington's roster of "terrorist" nations.

However the Iraqi regime had become more conciliatory toward the imperialists in recent years. In the mid-1970s, Hussein and the shah of Iran jointly stabbed Kurdish liberation fighters in the back and established more friendly relations. One result of this was that in 1978 Hussein expelled Khomeini from Iraq, where he had been living in exile and issuing calls for action against the shah. After the Iranians toppled the shah in 1979, Hussein began military provocations on Iran's border.

Hussein's fear of the Iranian revolution stemmed from its attractiveness to the Iraqi

population, which is 55 percent Shi'ite Muslim and 20 percent Kurdish. Monarchical rule was overturned in Iraq in 1958. But the Ba'ath Party, which has ruled ever since, has refused to solve the huge gap in income between the masses and the wealthy ruling families, despite the radical and sometimes socialist rhetoric employed by various Ba'athist rulers. They have also systematically suppressed the nationalist aspirations of the Kurdish population.

Today the country is run by a military dictatorship. Hussein rules by decree. Trade unions and opposition parties, such as the Communist Party, are severely repressed.

Hussein stepped up attacks on democratic rights when he launched the war against Iran. The Iraqi masses had no interest in fighting their Iranian brothers and sisters, and opposition to the war began to be voiced. Some 100,000 Shi'ite Muslims were expelled from the country by Hussein shortly after the war began. Most went to Iran. An estimated 500-600 Shi'ites have been executed on charges of supporting Iran.

But neither repression nor the fact that Iraq has far superior military equipment has enabled Hussein to win the war. On the contrary, the Iraqi forces have been steadily pushed back by Iranian troops, who *do* have a stake in winning the war. Those with the greatest stakes are the Iranian workers and peasants, who have been the driving force behind the defense effort from the beginning. When Iraq first invaded, the Iranian army officer corps, made up largely of remnants from the shah's regime, dragged its feet. The Iraqis seized a considerable amount of territory, including major cities like the port of Khorramshahr.

Impatient with the response of the army, the workers began organizing independently to beat back the invasion. They set up committees to aid the war effort in the factories. They called on the government to train the population in the use of weapons. They demanded harsh measures against capitalist speculators who were profiting off the war's effects on the economy. Peasants also began to mobilize, collecting huge amounts of food to be sent to the soldiers at the front.

Faced with the demand that it defend the nation, the Iranian government set up a volunteer corps, called the *baseej*. Hundreds of thousands of youth from the cities volunteered. They, along with the Revolutionary Guards established by the government after the revolution, began to push the army brass aside and play the major role on the battlefield. By 1982, the Iraqis had been forced out of much of the territory they had captured.

This has been done at the price of enormous sacrifice by the Iranian working people, who have borne the brunt of the war's destruction. Prior to the recent attacks by Hussein, 250,000 Iraqis had died in the war, and another 400,000 were wounded. Hundreds of thousands have been left homeless by bombing. An estimated 80,000 Iraqis — sent into battle against their will — have also been

killed.

The Iranian masses see the invasion as not only a violation of their sovereignty, but an attack aimed at undoing everything they have won with their revolution. They have no illusions that Washington is "neutral" in the conflict — they identified the invasion as imperialist-inspired from the start.

Imperialists step up aid to Iraq

As the Iraqi invasion has lost ground, the imperialists have made their support to Hussein more open. In 1983, the French government of François Mitterrand "loaned" jets and Exocet missiles to Iraq. Washington now provides Hussein with \$840 million in economic aid.

Reactionary Arab regimes in the region stepped in to lend their help too. Such staunch imperialist allies as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and other gulf governments now subsidize the Iraqi economy. The governments of Egypt, Jordan, Sudan, and North Yemen have provided soldiers to Iraq.

More naked backing of Iraq has occurred in recent months. This has been linked to the weakening of the rightist government in Lebanon. When the coalition regime established by Washington and Israel in Lebanon began to come unstuck in late 1983 and the U.S. Marines came under attack from the local population, the U.S. government sounded the alarm about "Shi'ite terrorists" in Beirut. It accused Iran of fomenting the attacks on the U.S. Marines, a charge the Iranian government denied.

The fact is that Shi'ite Muslims comprise more than 30 percent of Lebanon's population. The Iranian revolution is popular among Lebanese Shi'ites, who are the most impoverished workers and peasants in the country. Portraits of Khomeini dot houses and shops throughout Shi'ite neighborhoods.

Sensing the impending collapse of the Lebanese rightist regime, along with the steadily deteriorating position of Iraq in its war against Iran, Washington initiated a number of moves to prop up Hussein.

In November 1983, the U.S. Central Command drew up plans to move an armada of warships to the Persian Gulf region. The Central Command, originally called the Rapid Deployment Force, was established by President Carter in 1980 specifically in response to the Iranian revolution. In December 1983, U.S. diplomats visited Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, and Oman to inform them, according to the Jan. 1, 1984, *Washington Post*, that an Iranian victory in the war would be "contrary to U.S. interests."

The *Post* explained, "The decision to say the United States opposes the defeat of Iraq was described by officials as reflecting the relative decline of Iraq's fortunes compared with those of Iran as well as the disaster for U.S. interests if the Iranian revolution were to spread triumphantly in the strategic region."

That same month, U.S. Mideast envoy



Large crowds turn out in Tehran for celebration of fifth anniversary of revolution.

Donald Rumsfeld visited Iraq, after which Washington announced it was ready to exchange ambassadors with Baghdad.

On February 2, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Richard Murphy went to Iraq for another high-level meeting. By mid-February, U.S. warships were in place in the Persian Gulf and surrounding waters. The U.S. flotilla is far from passive. The April 1 *New York Times Magazine* reported that every morning the U.S. Central Command headquarters in Tampa, Florida, reviews satellite photos of the positions of Iranian troops, the location of Soviet ships and soldiers in the area, the location of U.S. ships, and weather conditions that might affect a military operation. CBS News has reported that satellite pictures of Iranian troop movements are regularly provided to Iraq.

The danger that the U.S. forces will launch a military strike against Iran is real. Washington is less concerned about saving the Hussein regime *per se* than it is about preventing more upsurges by the masses in the region, a danger it foresees if Iran wins the war.

As CIA Director William Casey put it in an interview in the April 23 *U.S. News and World Report*, "If Iran prevails and a radical Shiite regime is established in Baghdad similar to the Khomeini regime in Tehran, there are a lot of people they could turn loose against Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and the gulf states, which have supported Iraq."

A blind spot toward imperialism

Imperialism's goal of an Iraqi victory over Iran has never been clearer in the three and a half years of the war. Yet almost the entire U.S. radical press refuses to recognize this. The *Guardian* argues that the U.S. government and its allies have been "relatively indifferent" to which side wins, while *Workers*

World claims the imperialist attacks on Iran have no connection to the Iraqi aggression against Iran.

To cover their collapse under the pressure of the imperialist propaganda campaign, these petty-bourgeois radicals hold up other criteria to justify their stand. The *Guardian* complains that Khomeini refuses to negotiate for peace. But the *tactics* the Iranian government employs in the war — whatever one thinks of them — are hardly criteria for deciding which side to support. That decision must be based on what furthers the interests of the working class — in Iran and worldwide.

Nor is the severe repression carried out by *both* the Iranian and Iraqi governments decisive in determining which side working people should support in the war.

To believe most of the U.S. left, the war continues today for one and only one reason: to "divert" or "distract" the Iranian working masses from ruling-class attacks on their rights at home.

Naturally the Iranian rulers take advantage of the war situation to further their own interests. Capitalist speculators have made millions by hoarding food and raw materials to sell at inflated prices. Employers have urged workers to restrain their demands in the name of "national unity." The government uses the war as a pretext to further restrict democratic rights and persecute opponents of its policies.

But the Iranian workers have their own class interests to pursue in the war. In fact, it is precisely because the war is *not* fought over "strictly bourgeois interests" — contrary to *Workers World* — that Iranian working people are still willing to fight the Iraqis. They believe there are still gains of the Iranian revolution to defend — and indeed there are.

Most of the U.S. left fails to see the recent

events in Iran from the standpoint of the working class there. Disoriented by the mass media, they can only see the ruling-class attacks that have hit the workers and therefore conclude that most, if not all, gains of the revolution have been wiped out. The actual situation in the Iranian class struggle is far more contradictory. Let us review what has happened in the past three years.

The demands of the Iranian masses have increasingly come into conflict with the prerogatives of the ruling class. There has been resistance to moves by the government to take back concessions and erode the gains of the revolution.

The Iranian masses have been handicapped in this resistance by the absence of a working-class leadership that could chart a course independent of the ruling Islamic Republican Party (IRP). A layer of proletarian fighters has not yet come forward that is capable of mobilizing the workers and peasants to fight for their own interests and to break politically with the IRP. This has allowed Iran's rulers to deal significant blows to the revolution.

In 1981, the regime took advantage of a terrorist campaign against the revolution — led by a petty-bourgeois radical group called the Mujahedeen — to carry out sweeping arrests and executions. Many young people associated with leftist groups fell victim to the government drive, despite the fact they were not involved in the Mujahedeen's reactionary campaign.

The executions were unpopular with the working class, but they had no party of their own through which to voice their views. They refused to defend the Mujahedeen because they correctly saw its assassination campaign as aiding the imperialists and monarchists.

The government used the Mujahedeen terrorism to set a precedent restricting the demo-

cratic rights of everyone. Street demonstrations, except those officially called by the government, became illegal. Many newspapers were shut down. Militants in the workplace got fired and in some cases jailed. Women's rights were further restricted. Socialist groups supporting the revolution were victimized.

These measures did not succeed in stamping out the revolution, however. In 1982, the government attempted to adopt a labor law that contained reactionary planks against workers' rights. Factory shoras organized "seminars" where workers blasted the bill and demanded that the goals of the revolution be incorporated into it — things such as guarantees against arbitrary firings, insurance and unemployment benefits, women's rights, and measures to increase participation in the war against Iraq.

The government finally withdrew the bill under this pressure.

Peasants, meanwhile, stepped up their demands for land reform. They won the right to form peasant shoras in 1982. A bill that would have provided some land reform, however, was defeated.

Anti-Tudeh campaign

In early 1983, the regime carried out a major crackdown against the Tudeh Party. Its top leaders were arrested and forced to go on television to "confess" that they had spied for the Soviet Union. Thousands of rank-and-file Tudeh members were also jailed, and some Soviet diplomats were expelled. In February 1984, 10 Tudeh members in the armed forces were executed, and dozens of others are currently on trial.

The government coupled its reactionary attack on the Tudeh Party with sharpened polemics against communism and against the Soviet Union. It falsely charged that the Soviet Union is "imperialist" and a military threat to Iran. It argued that communism is inherently opposed to national liberation struggles. These spurious arguments were aimed not just at leftists, but at workers as a whole. They were a warning that anyone attracted to socialist revolution was a potential "spy" and "traitor" to the Iranian revolution.

The Iranian rulers took advantage of the fact that the Soviet Union currently sells arms to Iraq. Prior to the Iranian revolution, Iraq had a weapons contract with the Soviet Union. However, when Hussein invaded Iran in 1980, the Soviet government halted arms sales to Iraq. The arms contract was resumed in 1982 by the Soviet Union when the Iranian government sent troops across the border into Iraq. Statements by the Soviet government adopted an increasingly hostile tone toward Iran.

The Soviet arming of Iraq is neither in the interests of the Soviet working people nor in the interests of the Iranian and Iraqi workers. It is a blow to the Iranian revolution and undermines the international support needed to defend the Soviet workers state. It can only play into the hands of the imperialists and the Iranian rulers.

The Iranian government's anti-Soviet, anti-

communist campaign has undoubtedly confused the Iranian masses. But the Iranian workers have not mobilized in support of the regime's persecution of Tudeh members. Outspoken workers in the factories know that when they criticize government policy, they too are labelled "Tudeh" members.

Debate and discussion continue in the factories today. A new labor bill that seeks to extend membership in the shoras to management has been criticized by the workers. Even this bill, however, includes concessions, such as a ban on arbitrary firings.

Women office workers have initiated a fight for government-financed child-care centers.

This is an important sign that the drive by women to be full and equal members of society has not been extinguished, despite reactionary assaults on their democratic rights by the regime.

In the countryside, government efforts to help big landlords regain their property are spurring protests from the peasantry. According to the Iranian newspapers, landowners coming back from self-imposed exile have tried to retrieve land taken over by small peasants. Pliant judges have been ruling in favor of the landlords and have jailed some peasants who refuse to give up the land.

One group of peasants wrote a letter to the Tehran daily *Ettela'at*, in which they said:

"The famous feudal landlord of our region, who collaborated with the shah's regime, is back. . . . He has plowed 20 hectares of cultivated land and cultivated 60 hectares with the help of his monarchist friends."

Government's war policy

The fact that the Iranian government is a capitalist regime has also meant it cannot pursue a revolutionary policy on the war. Despite its rhetoric, the actions of the Iranian government weaken the struggle against Iraqi aggression instead of rallying the broadest possible support for victory.

The Iranian government's refusal to recognize the national rights of Kurds, for example, has allowed counterrevolutionary forces to win over some of the Kurdish population. Leaders of organizations like the Kurdish Democratic Party and the Komalah, who initially supported the revolution, are now against it and lean toward Iraq.

The government's attacks on democratic rights have been seized upon by proimperialist forces — from the Mujahedeen to the monarchists — as a rallying point. Raising the banner of "democracy," these groups have attracted significant layers of the urban middle classes away from support for the revolution.

The refusal to carry out land reform and to adopt a prolabor law also weakens the nation in the face of aggression. Carrying out such programs would inspire the masses with new enthusiasm and increase the mobilizations to defeat Iraq. Fresh gains for the Iranian workers and peasants would also have an impact on the Iraqi masses, undercutting Hussein's propaganda against the Iranian revolution.

The Iranian government does not politically motivate the war effort in this way. While it continues to aim its main fire at U.S. imperialism, the regime also raises reactionary arguments. Khomeini, for example, has sought to dilute the working-class and anti-imperialist thrust of the war effort by portraying the conflict as a religious one: "a war between Islam and blasphemy."

Recently, when the foreign minister of Turkey visited Iran, Iranian parliament speaker Hojatolislam Rafsanjani appealed to anticommunism in urging the Turkish dictatorship to support Iran in the war. Rafsanjani claimed that Iraqi aggression "will further Soviet goals in the region." Calling for an Islamic government in Iraq, he said this would "help eliminate the infiltration of communism into the region."

It is useful to note the difference between how the Iranian government attempts to combat imperialist-inspired aggression and the approach of the workers and peasants government in Nicaragua, which is engaged in a war with CIA-trained exiles and the Honduran army. The Sandinistas have sought to protect and expand the rights of oppressed national groupings in their country, such as the Miskito Indians. They have carried out extensive land reform, which has made clearer to the peasants their own stakes in defending the revolution. They have sided with the workers — not the bosses — in the factories and deepened the union organization of the working class. They have armed the people and organized territorial militias, a step the Iranian government has never taken.

In the international arena, the Nicaraguans have made crystal clear who is responsible for the conflict in Central America — the United States. They have appealed to the working people of Honduras and the world by pointing to the positive example of their revolution for oppressed masses everywhere. This has resulted in international condemnation of Washington's role and educated millions about the gains of the Nicaraguan revolution.

It is no surprise, in fact, that the Nicaraguan revolution is quite popular in Iran today. Sentiment runs deep among the Iranian workers against the CIA war on this small Central American country.

Internationalism

The internationalism and anti-imperialism of the Iranian masses, in fact, remains one of the major gains of the revolution that neither Washington nor the native ruling class has been able to stamp out. It finds its reflection in many of the stands the Iranian government adopts on foreign policy.

The Iranian government has established friendly ties with the Nicaraguan government and denounces the U.S.-sponsored aggression against the Sandinistas. In March, Nicaraguan junta member Sergio Ramírez was invited to visit Iran, where he discussed trade and diplomatic ties between the two nations.

A joint communiqué by Ramírez and Ira-

nian officials condemned imperialist attacks on Iran and on Nicaragua. It also denounced "the supplying to Iraq . . . of destructive, lethal, mutilating chemical weapons, both on the front lines of the imposed war and in civilian residential areas, which represents an escalation of the imposed war."

The Sandinista daily *Barricada* quoted Ramírez as saying, "the Iranians hold U.S. imperialism directly responsible for the aggression they are suffering. This nation knows that the bombs that are being dropped on Iranian towns . . . are the direct responsibility of the expansionist ambitions of U.S. imperialism in this region, and this has intensified even more their identification with the struggle of our own people."

The Iranian government also recognizes the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front of El Salvador. Two FMLN representatives were guests of honor at the celebration of the fifth anniversary of the Iranian revolution in February.

In the Mideast, where many Arab regimes are seeking a deal with Israel, the Iranian government continues to call for the dismantling of the colonial-settler state in Israel. During the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, Khomeini sent Iranian troops to aid the Lebanese and Palestinian resistance. The troops are still there.

The regime in Iran is also outspoken against apartheid in South Africa and British colonial rule in Ireland.

It has supported struggles by workers in imperialist countries, such as the strikes by immigrant auto workers in France, the British coal miners fighting union-busting, and the battles of U.S. Blacks against racist discrimination and police brutality.

As a bourgeois government that refuses to break with the capitalists and landlords, the Iranian regime cannot chart a consistently anti-imperialist course, however. It inevitably comes into conflict with the masses as it tries to carry out measures demanded by owners of industry and the land. Ultimately, it must openly turn to the imperialists for support against the workers and peasants.

This conflict has been unfolding in Iran ever since the revolution. The outcome is not yet decided. How the war with Iraq ends up will play an important role in the fate of the revolution.

Iranian workers will be in a *stronger* position to defend democratic rights, social and economic gains, and national self-determination if they can defeat the Iraqi aggression and return their country to peace. Victory in the war would deepen the self-confidence of the masses and raise their expectations for completion of the tasks they overthrew the shah to accomplish. The conditions would be more favorable for advancing the struggle to replace the current bourgeois government with a workers and peasants government in Iran.

A defeat for Iran in the war would spell the decisive defeat of the Iranian revolution. It would mean a bloodbath in both the cities and the countryside to crush the backbone of the

revolution — the workers and poor peasants. A proimperialist regime complete with a new SAVAK-style police network would be imposed on the Iranian people. This would be a big setback for the toilers of the entire Mideast.

Marxists oppose the overthrow of the current Iranian government by Washington, Hussein, proshah forces, or petty-bourgeois, proimperialist Iranian groups like the Mujahedeen. The Khomeini regime is *not* worse than the shah. It is a bourgeois government, but it is not a proimperialist monarchy. The workers are in a stronger position to fight for their interests today — under the Islamic Republic — than they were under the shah's dynasty. Under conditions where the Iranian masses are not ready to replace the current regime with a workers and peasants government of their own, overthrow of Khomeini can only be in the interests of imperialism and have reactionary consequences for the entire region.

Defense of the current Iranian government from overthrow has nothing to do with giving *political support* to its antilabor policies or its strategy in the war. Marxists defend the current regime from imperialist attack within the framework of advancing the interests of the Iranian working masses, their fight for a revolutionary war policy, and their struggle for political power.

'Neutral' on side of Iraq

Those U.S. left groups that call for "neutrality" in the war have turned their backs on the Iranian toilers and their struggle. They have lost confidence in the Iranian masses and in the revolution itself. By opposing an Iranian victory and by rehashing the slanders of the bourgeois media against the revolution, they actually end up being "neutral" on the side of the Iraqi regime and its imperialist backers. They reject the idea that an Iranian victory in the war could open the road to the masses overturning the capitalist government. Instead, they counterpose the idea that defeat for Iran would enhance the prospects for revolution.

This call for "revolutionary defeatism" in Iran today is just as wrong as it was when some U.S. leftists raised this call during the Malvinas war of 1982. There, the Argentine dictatorship, under growing pressure from the workers, carried out an anti-imperialist act by reclaiming the Malvinas Islands, Argentine territory stolen by the British imperialists. Britain went to war against the Argentines to regain its colony. The British rulers sought to justify their aggression by portraying the war as one of "democracy" against "fascist dictatorship."

Some U.S. radicals fell for this line. They shrank from mobilizing to defend Argentina, an oppressed nation, from British imperialism and its U.S. allies. Instead, they argued that a defeat for Argentina could be progressive because of the repressive character of the Argentine regime.

The Argentine workers, however, did not call for "revolutionary defeatism." They knew the military attack by Britain was expressly

aimed at them. They mobilized against British aggression and condemned their own government for *failing* to adequately fight the war. Britain finally defeated Argentina. A victory for Argentina in the war would have put Argentine working people in a better position to overturn capitalist rule.

The Iraq-Iran war, like the Malvinas war, offers important lessons for U.S. workers, who will be confronted with more such wars in the future. The starting point for Marxists is the fact that imperialism is at war around the world against the advance of the socialist revolution. It is in the interests of U.S. workers to defend every step forward by workers and peasants in oppressed nations toward breaking the grip of imperialist domination, in order to seize political power in their own name. Every victory for the colonial revolution weakens imperialism and brings the day closer when working people in the United States will ourselves be able to replace the world's strongest imperialist government with a government of workers and farmers.

This means examining concretely imperialism's relationship to every war that breaks out. It means studying the specific relationship of class forces within each nation at war. Only by determining where the *workers'* interests lie in each case can a correct position be determined.

Will a defeat for Iran strengthen or weaken the workers in that country? Will it help or hurt the fight against dictatorship in Iraq? Will it advance or set back the national liberation struggle in the Middle East? Will imperialism emerge stronger, if Iran is defeated, in relation to its other wars around the globe? These are the decisive questions for us.

Role of U.S. workers

The principal contribution that U.S. workers can make to the struggle of Iranian working people is helping them get the imperialists off their backs. The U.S. labor movement and those parties claiming to speak in its interests should be demanding the immediate withdrawal of the U.S. warships from Iran's coasts and an end to U.S. aid to the Iraqi regime. We should demand full restoration of U.S. trade and diplomatic ties with Iran. We should expose and demand a halt to the Reagan administration's efforts to overthrow the government of Ayatollah Khomeini.

In this context of *defending* the Iranian revolution from imperialist attack, U.S. labor should also support workers and peasants in Iran whose democratic rights are under attack from the government there. These attacks weaken the revolution in the face of imperialist-inspired aggression. The repression against the Tudeh Party, supporters of the Fourth International, and other currents in the working class must be opposed.

Finally, the U.S. workers movement should go on a campaign to repudiate the lies about the Iranian revolution and its goals. Spreading the truth about the revolution is the best aid U.S. workers can give to advancing it. □

Iran, Nicaragua: united against imperialism

Joint communiqué following Sandinista visit to Tehran

[A Nicaraguan government delegation, headed by junta member Sergio Ramírez Mercado and including Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto, paid a five-day visit to Iran in March. The delegation discussed a number of trade agreements and visited the war zone in the western part of the country.]

[In regard to the Iraqi war against Iran, Ramírez stated during his visit to Tehran:

["In speaking with various officials and with the people, we learned that the Iranians hold U.S. imperialism directly responsible for the aggression they are suffering.

["This nation knows that the bombs that are being dropped on Iranian towns, as well as the dead, the wounded, and the mutilated, are the direct responsibility of the expansionist ambitions of U.S. imperialism in this region, and this has intensified even more their identification with the struggle of our own people" (*Barricada*, March 16).

[In Tehran, March 15, the Nicaraguan and Iranian governments issued the following joint communiqué. We have taken the text from the March 17 issue of the Sandinista daily *Barricada*, omitting only the full list of Nicaraguan ministers who accompanied Ramírez. The translation from Spanish, and the subheads, are by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Responding to the invitations extended by His Excellency Mr. Mir Hussein Musavi, prime minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, His Excellency Dr. Sergio Ramírez Mercado, member of the Junta of the Government of National Reconstruction of the Republic of Nicaragua, made an official and friendly visit March 12-17, 1984, to the Islamic Republic of Iran and received a warm welcome from the officials of the host country.

His Excellency Dr. Ramírez, during two conversations with His Excellency Mr. Mir Hussein Musavi, in a cordial and fraternal atmosphere of complete understanding, discussed bilateral relations as well as international and regional themes.

In addition, the members of both parties held detailed and fruitful discussions on themes of mutual interest.

His Excellency Dr. Sergio Ramírez Mercado and his delegation, during their stay in Tehran, also met and conferred with His Excellency Hojatolislam Val-Muslemin Seyyed Ali Khamenei, president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and with His Excellency Hojatolislam Hashemi Rafsanjani, president of the Islamic Consultative Assembly.

In the discussions between the two parties, political and economic relations between the

two countries were explored in more detail.

The two parties, while indicating the political similarities and agreement of both countries in their anti-imperialist, anticolonialist struggles, emphasized their desire for more fruitful and constructive cooperation in international organizations.

Condemn U.S. conspiracies

The two parties expressed their deepest desires to expand and consolidate close and cordial links between the two countries in the political, economic, and cultural arenas, and condemned U.S. imperialism's conspiracy against the Islamic Revolution of Iran and the Sandinista People's Revolution of Nicaragua. They also emphasized the firm pledge of the nations of Iran and Nicaragua to stand up to and defeat all aggression, no matter where it originates.

Regarding this, they condemned the military presence and the joint military maneuvers of the armed forces of the United States and other countries, both in the Persian Gulf and in Central America, considering these to be direct threats against the revolutions of the two countries as well as a threat to international peace and security. The two parties vigorously condemned the presence of the U.S. fleet in the Persian Gulf, as well as the alert and special warning by the United States forbidding any ships or planes from approaching the U.S. fleet in the Persian Gulf. They pointed out that this violated relevant international regulations and conventions and that it also violated the sovereignty of the countries of that region.

Stressing the independence and right to sovereignty of all countries, the two parties expressed once again the full support of their respective governments for the actions of other nations and governments aimed at safeguarding the gains of their revolutions and at confronting the aggression and plots of global arrogance carried out by the U.S. government in the Persian Gulf and the region of Central America.

Iraq's use of chemical weapons

Following the explanation provided by His Excellency Mr. Mir Hussein Musavi concerning the multiple aspects of the war imposed on Iran by Iraq, including the massacre of the civilian population, the destruction of homes and the bombing of cities and nonmilitary installations, and the use of chemical and biological weapons both on the front lines of the imposed war and in residential areas — evidence of which has been submitted to international organizations — both parties condemned the

supplying to Iraq, as well as the use, of destructive, lethal, mutilating chemical weapons, both on the front lines of the imposed war and in civilian residential areas, which represents an escalation of the imposed war.

Following the report provided by His Excellency Dr. Sergio Ramírez Mercado on the efforts for peace that have been made in Central America, His Excellency Mr. Mir Hussein Musavi applauded the efforts made by Nicaragua for the establishment of a just and durable peace in Central America, based on respect for the sovereignty of nations and their right to determine their destiny.

With respect to the counterrevolutionary activities carried out by CIA mercenaries based in Honduras, the two parties condemned the mining of the ports of El Bluff and Corinto, which, in addition to constituting a military blockade, represents a threat to international maritime traffic, the consequences of which will be the responsibility of the Reagan administration.

Support for Palestinians

After exchanging points of view on the problems of the Middle East, both parties condemned the aggressive and hegemonistic policies of the Israeli occupation regime as well as U.S. support for these. They stressed the necessity of liberating all occupied territories and of respect for the sovereignty of the struggling Palestinians over their homeland.

Also in respect to the Middle East, the present situations in Lebanon and Palestine were discussed, along with the aggression and crimes committed by the Israeli occupation regime and its defenders, principally the United States. Both parties reviewed the role of the multinational force, particularly the aggressive role played by U.S. forces in Lebanon, which are trying to safeguard the illegitimate sovereignty of the dependent Phalangist regime, which serves the imperialist and Zionist conspiracies. In regard to the latter, the two parties stressed the necessities of ending the presence of these forces in Lebanon and reaffirmed the implacable struggle against the Israeli occupation regime, as well as the necessity of eliminating the vestiges of this aggression, including the illegal and illegitimate Phalangist rule over Lebanon. In this connection, both parties condemned any Zionist plot aimed at the division and disintegration of Lebanon and stressed the unity and territorial integrity of that nation.

In respect to the Palestinian cause, both parties took note of the entire history of aggres-

sion and crimes by the Israeli occupation regime against the Muslim and Arab nations of the region. In particular, they took note of the wounded Palestinian nation and rejected the plans for an imposed peace that have been proposed to stabilize and legitimize aggression, including the fruits of Zionist aggression from 1948 to the present. They emphasized that there can be no genuine peace in this part of the world until deprived and oppressed Palestine gains all its legitimate rights, including return to the homeland, self-determination, and an independent Palestinian government throughout the occupied Palestinian territories.

In this respect, both parties expressed their support to the struggles of the combative Palestinian and Muslim nations in the occupied territories and condemned the expansionist policies adopted by the Zionists, particularly the Israeli occupation state's official and open annexation of the Golan Heights, the West Bank, and the Gaza strip.

From Latin America to Africa

In taking into consideration the situation in Latin America, officials of the two countries strongly condemned U.S. military intervention in independent Grenada.

They once again expressed their support to the anti-imperialist and liberation struggles of the nations of Latin America, including especially in this regard the revolutionaries fighting for the freedom of El Salvador, under the leadership of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front—Revolutionary Democratic Front (FMLN-FDR) against the U.S.-supported Salvadoran regime.

They also condemned the repressive and interventionist policy of the Reagan administration in other parts of Latin America, as well as the inhuman methods practiced by the subservient regimes, particularly by the military regime of Augusto Pinochet against the fighting and freedom-seeking people of Chile.

Both parties condemned the tyrannical and fascist actions carried out by the racist regime in South Africa. They called for the independence of Namibia and for the withdrawal of South African forces from Angola and expressed their support for the struggles for independence and liberation in this region.

Both parties expressed their support for the struggles of the Muslim nation of the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic, aimed at the conquest of independence and freedom and led by the Polisario Front. They called for a halt to the military occupation of that country, according to the position adopted by the 19th summit meeting of the Organization of African Unity and by the United Nations.

Both parties expressed their support for a united and independent Africa, free of domination by colonial governments. They also condemned neocolonialism in all its forms in that oppressed continent.

In discussing the activities of the Nonaligned Movement, officials of the two countries concluded that this movement — born out of the struggle against imperialism,

colonialism, apartheid, and Zionism, as well as out of the need for various nations to free themselves from the yoke of military pacts and maintain full independence from the great powers — has played a significant role in consolidating relations between member states and in confronting polarization. The two sides stressed the need to strengthen the Nonaligned Movement and to protect it from the infiltration of elements of the great powers.

His Excellency Dr. Sergio Ramírez expressed his sincere gratitude and appreciation to his Excellency Mr. Mir Hussein Musavi for

the warm welcome and hospitality extended to him and his delegation by the people and government of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

His Excellency Dr. Sergio Ramírez Mercado, member of the Junta of Government of National Reconstruction of Nicaragua, extended an invitation to His Excellency Mr. Mir Hussein Musavi, prime minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, to pay an official visit to Nicaragua. The invitation was accepted with pleasure by His Excellency Mr. Musavi. The date of the visit will be arranged later through diplomatic channels. □

SELECTIONS FROM THE LEFT

[The following selections are devoted to assessments of the Iranian revolution and government and of the war between Iran and Iraq.]

Socialist Action

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

The March 9 issue carried two articles on Iran, both by Helen Sheridan. The first pointed to stepped-up military threats against Iran by the Reagan administration "as Iranian troops mounted a major offensive aimed at expelling Iraqi forces occupying the western part of their country."

"US propaganda is aimed at portraying Iran as the source of aggression in the Persian Gulf," Sheridan said. "The truth is, however, that it is the victim."

"Since February 1979, when the Iranian people overthrew the US-backed dictatorship of the shah, they have experienced the unrelenting hostility of the United States and its imperialist allies. Imperialism fears the powerful class forces of the workers and peasants that have been unleashed. . . ."

The Iraqi regime shared this fear, Sheridan went on, and therefore launched its war against Iran. "But after 42 months . . . the Iraqi forces have been unable to overturn the revolution and have been pushed back, although they continue to occupy some Iranian border territory."

"A decisive defeat for Iraq, coming on top of the setbacks for imperialism in Lebanon, has Washington greatly worried."

In the second article, Sheridan took up anti-working-class repression in Iran, which, she said, reflects the fact that the Khomeini government "is a capitalist government, seeking to represent the interests of the capitalists and the landlords and restore capitalist stability to Iran."

Actions such as the frame-up trials and executions of Tudeh Party members, Sheridan said, not only lay the basis "for severe repression against others in the Tudeh Party and other working-class organisations, but [have]

the effect of further intimidating all revolutionary-minded Iranians, whether in the factories, villages, army, or schools.

"Despite these anti-working-class measures, the imperialists are opposed to the Khomeini government. Given its origin in the revolution, they have no confidence in its ability to rein in the Iranian masses, and they see it as an obstacle to crushing the revolution. As part of their attacks against the Iranian revolution itself, they have also sought to overthrow the Khomeini regime."

"The workers and peasants of Iran would not benefit if the imperialists were successful in this aim. It would merely be the prelude to greater repression and the rolling back of every gain the people have won in the last five years. Recognition of this fact lies behind the continuing majority support in Iran for the war effort against Iraq."

COMBATE

"Combat," weekly organ of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist League, section of the Fourth International in the Spanish state.

An article in the March 8 issue pointed to the growing danger of imperialist intervention around the Strait of Hormuz at the entrance to the Persian Gulf. *Combat* pointed out that both sides of the strait are dotted with antagonistic naval and air bases, including a U.S. base under construction on the Omani island of Masirah.

In addition, "the nearby waters are patrolled by 36 ships of the U.S. Seventh Fleet, with the aircraft carrier *Midway* leading the pack, by various British ships accompanying the aircraft carrier *Invincible* (a veteran of the Malvinas War), and 26 ships of the Soviet navy."

Combat said that Saddam Hussein's regime, "which began the war 41 months ago," is at an impasse. "Using the argument of taking back certain territories that had been ceded to the Shah of Persia, the Iraqi government launched its aggression to stop the revolutionary thrust generated by the overthrow of the

proimperialist Pahlavi regime in Iran."

To achieve this aim, according to *Combate*, the Iraqi regime "got financial aid and arms shipments from the most reactionary Arab regimes, France, Britain, the United States, and even the Soviet Union."

But Hussein's calculation "was mistaken. Thanks to the war, Khomeinism, the expression of the Iranian nationalist small and middle bourgeoisie, has been able to establish control over the revolutionary process, which had awakened great enthusiasm among the Arab masses and which was the thing the Arab bourgeoisies and their imperialist allies feared most."

Today, "the new Islamic regime in Tehran maintains sufficient populist and anti-imperialist features to still represent a serious threat to the established order in the region."

If the U.S. government were to try to prevent Iran from closing the strait, *Combate* said, it would have "no alternative but to occupy a wide sector of the Iranian coast; its forces are already prepared. What is more: it would have to reduce the Iranian revolution to ashes."

"We are facing a new imperialist intervention that threatens the gains of a revolution — deformed, betrayed, but still preserving many healthy elements of people's emancipation against imperialism — and that could be the spark that ignites the whole Middle East powderkeg," *Combate* concluded.

International VIEWPOINT

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

Writing in the March 12 issue, Gerry Foley noted that with the "stepped-up Iranian military pressure on Iraq" the U.S. State Department had informed governments in the Persian Gulf area "that the US considered an Iranian victory contrary to its interests."

In fact, Foley said, "the social and economic situation in Iran has been evolving in a favorable way for the imperialists for some time. . . ."

"There is no doubt that the Khomeini regime remains a serious annoyance and worry to the imperialist powers involved in the Middle East. However, in the long run, such a regime represents no fundamental danger to them. It has effectively halted and turned back the growth of independent mass organization in Iran and imposed a reactionary authoritarian regime. . . ."

"The combination of the atomization of the masses, the extreme backwardness of a good part of the country, and the oil income allow the Khomeini regime to maintain this setup for some time. If it breaks down slowly, as the imperialists have every right to expect, it will leave a deeper depoliticization of the masses in its wake than Nasserism did in Egypt."

Foley concluded that "the interest of the masses in both countries is to weaken both regimes and keep the imperialists out. . . ."

"If the imperialists are kept out, growing mass revulsion against this senseless slaughter in both countries will give genuine anti-imperialist forces better opportunities to disarm both murderous regimes."

In a more extensive article in the March 26 *International Viewpoint*, Salah Jaber and Saber Nickbeen reviewed the Iran-Iraq war. "The bourgeois nationalist regime in Iraq," they said, "began this war in the attempt to halt the advance of the Khomeini faction toward taking total control of the Iranian state. . . ."

"Things turned out differently, however, than Saddam Hussein expected. Riding on a wave of nationalism, the Khomeini faction managed to oust the bourgeois liberal group from the government and rebuild the bourgeois state. It succeeded in strengthening the instruments of repression to an unheard of extent and to establish one of the most ruthless and dictatorial regimes seen in modern history."

After two years of fighting, "the Khomeini regime managed . . . to push the Iraqi army back behind its own borders." The Saddam Hussein regime "began to offer peace," but the Iranian rulers "refused to end the war. . . ."

In the view of Jaber and Nickbeen, "the imperialists have no reason to be anxious to see the war end as long as it remains in the present framework." However, "If Iran loses the war outright, the US and its friends in the Gulf stand to lose a great deal. The situation in Iran has been evolving favorably for the US, albeit slowly."

On the other hand, "If Iraq loses the war outright, it would be difficult to halt the adventures of Khomeini's exporters of 'Islamic Revolution.' And Saudi Arabia would be next in line."

Thus "the longer the war goes on, the more the dangers of direct intervention by the imperialists will increase. . . ."

"The quickest way to end the war is for one or both of the two murderous and reactionary regimes to fall. The toiling masses have no interest in seeing either side win."

Jaber and Nickbeen closed their article with three slogans:

"End the fighting now!

"Iranian and Iraqi soldiers turn your weapons against your own rulers!

"Imperialists out of the Gulf!"

Rouge

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

With the Iraqi use of chemical weapons on the battlefield, Christian Picquet wrote in the March 9-15 issue, "the Iran-Iraq war is turning decisively toward butchery."

Picquet contrasted the international con-

demnations of the use of chemical weapons with "the silence that accompanies the daily death of thousands of combatants in the two camps as a result of the use of 'classic' technology."

Such silence, he added, covers up "the sole question worth raising: who furnishes this military equipment to the belligerents? Asking this question would focus attention on the fact that the Western capitals are actively intervening in the conflict by delivering, directly or indirectly, matériel to both sides."

In fact, Picquet continued, "imperialism does not want the victory of either side. Such a result would upset the already precarious balance in the Middle East."

Picquet stated that "Israel is discreetly delivering arms to the Islamic Republic, while London and Paris support Baghdad."

The *Rouge* article pointed out that the French government "is the principal supporter of [Iraqi ruler] Sadam Hussein, to whom it delivered Super-Etendards equipped with Exocet missiles last year."

According to Picquet, "at a time when the economic crisis limits the export possibilities of the big companies, arms sales remain a blue-chip business, a source of juicy profits."

Socialist ACTION

A revolutionary socialist weekly, published in London.

In the March 2 issue, Phil Hearse assessed the course of the Iranian revolution since its beginning five years ago "in one of the most gigantic revolutionary upheavals since the Second World War."

"While the mass leadership of the anti-Shah movement was Islamic in inspiration," Hearse said, "the left looked to the massive participation of the working class in the movement, and hoped that the Islamic leadership would be rapidly outflanked."

"Five years later these hopes have been dashed. The Khomeini regime has ruthlessly carried through its objective of creating an 'Islamic Republic,' crushing all opposition in its wake. But the course of the Iranian revolution was not merely an 'unfortunate' development, a 'disappointing' turn of events. . . . While the working class and poor peasantry often mobilised for anti-capitalist demands, nonetheless Khomeini's movement mobilised millions for explicitly reactionary objectives. The left's failure to understand that a movement which fights some aspects of imperialist oppression can also be a *reactionary* movement was the source of its hopelessly optimistic illusions."

After the fall of the shah, Hearse said, "sections of the workers and peasants began to make demands which went well beyond the programme of Khomeini." Therefore, Khomeini "moved to utilise the mass Islamic movement to crush this aspect of the struggle. . . ."

When the Iraqi army invaded Iran in September 1980, most organizations on the left "supported the line of an independent mobilisation against Iraq," Hearse said. However, "once the independent mobilisation of the Iranian workers had been crushed the war became simply that of a struggle between two reactionary capitalist dictatorships, in which neither side could be supported."

Today, Hearse said, "there are no 'gains' of the revolution left to defend. The factory shoras [committees] have been either crushed or co-opted by the regime. The economic gains of the workers have largely been wiped out. The position of women has drastically deteriorated and the national minorities are under vicious attack. Khomeini has turned the war into one of Shi'ite expansionism."

The course of the Iranian revolution, Hearse concluded, "was determined at a very early stage." The "democratic and radical objectives" of the working class and the oppressed "never became the dominant or unifying themes of the revolution. . . ."

"The fate of the Iranian revolution shows that there can be no compromise with Islamic fundamentalism, even if fundamentalist move-

ments struggle against capitalist dictatorships of a traditional bourgeois or petty-bourgeois character. For fundamentalist Islam merely prepares its own form of capitalist dictatorship — one decked out with an extreme reactionary social code derived from the seventh century."

In the March 9 issue of *Socialist Action*, Alan Jones warned that "Britain, France, and the United States are rapidly stepping up their intervention in the Gulf War."

The British government, Jones said, "has been playing a particularly dirty role. While verbally stepping up its condemnation of Khomeini's executions and repression, Thatcher has been encouraging a rapid build up of British trade with Iran since 1979."

Any imperialist intervention in the Gulf war, Jones said, "would be aimed not at preventing Khomeini's repression but simply at shoring up US, British and French interests in the area. It would help recent Khomeini's popularity . . . and would be an actual obstacle to the Iranian people taking their revenge against his monstrous regime."

Therefore, British socialists "have to fight against any British or imperialist intervention against Iran and not stand aside from it."

DOCUMENTS

Resolution of Tudeh Party

Claims Iran regime a 'medieval dictatorship'

[We are reprinting below excerpts from a resolution on the international and domestic situation adopted by the 18th plenary session of the Central Committee of the Tudeh (Communist) Party of Iran in December 1983.

[This resolution makes explicit some substantial political shifts on the part of the Tudeh Party over the past two years. Prior to that, the Tudeh Party generally supported the policies of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and defended him against opponents within the government and within the working class. In a February 1982 Central Committee statement, for example, the Tudeh Party condemned "the conspiracy of the united counterrevolutionary front led by [ex-President Abolhassan] Bani Sadr." This front, it said then, involved "former members of SAVAK [the shah's secret police], monarchists, People's Mojahedin . . . and other alignments of a similar type."

[We have taken the text from the March 1984 issue of the English-language *Information Bulletin*, published in Toronto, Canada.]

* * *

The plenary session believes that the February revolution of the peoples of our homeland was an anti-imperialist, anti-monarchic, anti-dictatorial and popular revolution. The plenary session admits that despite the efforts by revolutionary and patriotic forces, the revolution could not achieve its socio-economic goals. . . .

After the establishment of the Islamic Republic and the eradication of the industrial corporations, the big capitalists, the commercial bourgeoisie in particular, and also the big landowners are, on the whole, ruling under the guise of abiding by "Divine Principles," on behalf of the "Moslem Masses." . . .

In the course of the revolutionary process the toiling masses, and Iran's industrial proletariat in particular, introduced their clear social, economic, and political demands. . . . But the ruling circles could not and would not fulfill the socio-economic responsibilities they had publicly undertaken before the people. The anti-imperialist, anti-dictatorial, and democratic revolution was transformed into a medieval dictatorship with the aim of restoring the dependent capitalist order.

With Bandisadr ousted as President, the political leadership of the revolution was in fact mainly put into the hands of Ayatollah Khomeini and his supporters in the ruling apparatus. In these conditions there were hopes of fundamental steps being taken toward solving the socio-economic problems of society to the working people's benefit. But instead there were qualitative changes in the policies of the regime, turning it more toward the right wing than before.

The shift to the right by the ruling circles in both domestic and foreign policies in the form of reviving the decadent dependent capitalist order; strengthening the financial power of the

commercial bourgeoisie; restoring the economic and eventually political positions of imperialism; and the ever more evident coordination and co-direction with imperialist governments has faced society with a socio-economic and political crisis. . . .

Putting an end to the devastating Iran-Iraq war is the demand of the decisive majority of working people who shoulder its heavy burdens. . . . Continuation of the war is to the benefit of imperialism. . . . It is the immediate responsibility of defenders of the country's national interests to fight for an end to the war between Iran and Iraq. . . .

The events in Iran have once again revealed the fact that the struggle against ruling reaction and imperialism cannot achieve the desired results without the unity of action of the revolutionary, democratic, and anti-imperialist forces. . . .

The plenary session recalls some misunderstandings and extreme reactions which have occurred in the relations between the Tudeh Party of Iran and the Organization of People's Mojahedeen of Iran (OPMI), which have produced problems detrimental to the popular anti-imperialist movement of our homeland. The plenary session asks for a positive reconsideration of these relations and recommends that the Politburo endeavor to build healthy and constructive relations with the OPMI as an anti-imperialist and popular force, toward the unity of all revolutionary and patriotic forces.

The Tudeh Party of Iran will undertake necessary measures to create understanding and close contacts with progressive revolutionary organizations of the Kurdish people. The plenary session of the Central Committee of the Tudeh Party of Iran supports the just struggle of the Kurdish people for autonomy within the framework of an independent and free Iran.

The militant Muslims . . . who still seek independence, freedom, and social justice will undoubtedly have their place within the ranks of the great unity of revolutionary forces demanding the fulfillment of such aspirations. This would also apply to all other anti-imperialist forces. . . .

The main objectives during the present stage of the struggle of the people of our homeland are the persistent struggle against the reactionary forces . . . and defending democratic freedoms and rights. . . .

The 18th plenary session of the Central Committee of the Tudeh Party of Iran firmly believes that all those demanding an end to reaction's domination in the ruling circles and the formation of a "government of national coalition" can find a common language and actively struggle to materialize these aims by compiling an agreed overall program. Whatever counter-revolution imagines, the revolution has not yet cooled down and the political and religious revolutionary, progressive, and anti-imperialist forces have broad material and moral roots within society and are able to attract, through unity and joint action, all working classes and strata who turn their backs on the reactionary ruling circles. □

SWP suit: no ruling 3 years after trial

Judge stalls, as government attacks continue

By Harry Ring

[The following article is taken from the April 20 issue of the U.S. revolutionary socialist newsweekly *Militant*.]

* * *

April 2 marked the third anniversary of the opening of the trial in the case of the Socialist Workers Party against the government for illegal political victimization. Testimony in the trial ended 12 weeks later, on June 25, 1981.

In the two years and nine months that have elapsed since then, the presiding federal judge in the case, Thomas P. Griesa, has refused to hand down a decision.

No explanation has been offered for this extreme delay.

The SWP suit was filed back in 1973, and there were eight years of pretrial litigation before it came to trial. Is the Socialist Workers Party supposed to wait an additional eight years — or even longer — before there is a decision?

In addition to seeking \$70 million damages, the socialists presented a motion that the court issue a permanent injunction against governmental abuses of its democratic rights.

The outcome of this case will affect not only the SWP but all organizations and individuals taking a stand against war, racism, sexism, and economic injustice and defending the rights and interests of working people against the owners of industries and banks.

Because of these stakes, the government throughout the history of the case has thrown up obstacle after obstacle to derail it. Judge Griesa's delaying actions are consistent with this pattern of stonewalling.

The important questions raised by this case remain to be answered:

Do the constitutionally guaranteed rights of free speech, press, and assembly apply to everyone without exception? Are all ideas — including revolutionary ideas like those of the SWP — secured by the Bill of Rights?

Do FBI agents and other federal cops have the right to infiltrate a legal political party, disrupt it, create provocations, and victimize its members on the sole ground that it sees the organization's *ideas* as "subversive"?

Background to case

Back in 1971, unknown individuals entered an FBI office in Media, Pennsylvania, and removed secret files that were then passed on to the press. These files revealed the story of "Cointelpro" (Counterintelligence Program), the FBI's ongoing program for illegally victimizing a broad array of organizations — labor, Black, Latino, women's, peace, civil

liberties, left-wing, and more.

The SWP was prominent among those targeted for Cointelpro treatment. It responded to these revelations by filing its landmark suit against the FBI, CIA, Department of Defense, Immigration and Naturalization Service, and other federal agencies.

In pretrial litigation, the SWP obtained tens of thousands of pages of previously secret government documents detailing an incredible range of illegal activities directed against it and others by federal political cops.

It was disclosed that the FBI had arranged for socialists to be illegally fired from their jobs. FBI agents composed and mailed anonymous red-baiting letters in the name of "concerned parents" to school authorities, demanding action against socialist teachers. Poisonous smear articles against socialist candidates were planted in the media.

The party's phones were tapped, its offices bugged, and files burglarized. Mail was opened, and garbage scrutinized.

Publicity about the SWP dossiers came in the context of the Pentagon Papers and Watergate revelations. Working people began questioning the activities of the secret political police.

They were still angry over how the government had dragooned working people into the Vietnam War.

This anger and distrust of government was fueled by the secret Pentagon Papers. Released to the media by former government employees Daniel Ellsberg and Anthony Russo, the papers told the inside story of how the government step by step involved the country in Vietnam's civil war on the side of the tyrannical South Vietnamese dictatorship. And it was workers, particularly Blacks, who died in the war.

Watergate stench

The Watergate revelations added to the growing questioning in the working class and population at large.

There were the disclosures about "Tricky Dick" Nixon's secret tape recordings. The plotting against those on the White House "enemies list." The burglaries and wiretapping, the planning of provocations against peace demonstrators, and a good deal more.

Such revelations, coupled with those resulting from the SWP suit, encouraged similar legal action by others who had been victimized.

Chicago Black Panthers, victims of a murderous federal-local police attack, demanded damages. The National Lawyers Guild and other organizations did likewise. Suits were

filed by prominent individuals like Jane Fonda. Local police departments were the target of additional court actions.

Responding to these mounting revelations, growing working-class distrust, and consequent political blows it was suffering, the government decided to clean up its public image — but not its act.

The Cointelpro program was falsely and hypocritically declared to be the unauthorized work of an overzealous FBI, not the capitalist government which is the real source of the threats to our basic liberties. The late J. Edgar Hoover, sire of the program, declared it had been ordered ended.

In 1976, then Attorney General Edward Levi issued a set of guidelines assertedly designed to ensure that the FBI would no longer trample on constitutional rights. The Cointelpro days, the government and media insisted, were over.

But it was sheer folly to believe that the government's political police, the FBI, could self-reform. That's what the SWP trial proved to be a total hoax.

From documents and from the mouths of witnesses — including FBI "street agents" and top Justice Department officials — it was firmly established that Cointelpro was not an operation conducted behind the backs of higher government authorities. Nor was it, as officials had argued, a temporary going astray.

Standard procedure

Instead, the SWP established, Cointelpro was nothing more than a particular version of a body of illegal practices that had been going on at least since the 1930s, and likely since the FBI's inception. These activities, it was proven, were conducted with the knowledge of each successive president and his aides. In fact they originated in the very highest levels of government.

Government officials were forced to confirm from the witness stand that the FBI and other agencies systematically infiltrated organizations to disrupt and, if possible, destroy them, with the sole justification that such organizations espoused "subversive" ideas.

One such witness was Raymond Wannall, a former assistant director of the Intelligence Division of the FBI.

"The goals in counterintelligence," he testified, "are simply to know who they are, to know what they are doing, and to prevent their being successful by instituting disruptive practices or any other legal [!] means permissible."

It was on the basis of such evidence and more, that the SWP pressed for a court order prohibiting all such patently illegal secret

police activity.

This demand is not limited to the FBI, but all federal agencies engaging in secret police activity.

For instance, during the trial it was established that the Immigration and Naturalization Service spies on and seeks to deport immigrants, again on the sole basis of their holding "undesirable" ideas.

During the period of the Watergate revelations and the SWP trial, the FBI and other agencies curbed some of their illegal activity against the SWP — that is, they conducted it more furtively.

But since the close of the trial, there has been a sharp escalation of government-initiated or -inspired attacks on the rights of working people — attempts to undermine voting rights, to reverse affirmative action gains, to bust unions through bankruptcy laws, and to push back abortion rights.

The turning point was formally marked with the March 1983 announcement by the Justice Department that the Levi guidelines were being scrapped and replaced with ones assertedly needed to conduct "Domestic Security/Terrorism Investigations."

The switch to a hard-cop approach was not simply an initiative by right-wing Reaganites. The scrapping of the Levi guidelines was a bipartisan move, enjoying the support of the key leaders of both major parties.

It was a product of the steadily developing two-sided crisis of U.S. capitalism.

One side is the inexorable drive toward war, toward direct troop involvement in El Salvador's civil war and against the Nicaraguan revolution.

The converse side is the continuing, escalating employer drive against the living standards of working people in this country. Ultimately the survival of the profit system is contingent on the success of the war drive abroad and the antilabor offensive at home.

In that kind of a fight, it becomes necessary that curbs on democratic rights be increased and an atmosphere of intimidation created aimed at muzzling dissenting voices.

The Levi guidelines purported to curb illegal political activity by police. The new "antiterrorist" guidelines have the function of making the illegal activities "legal."

In fact, Attorney General William French Smith asserted that a function of the new guidelines was "to help to eliminate any perception that actual or imminent commission of a violent crime is a prerequisite to investigation."

Or, to put it more plainly, people and organizations can be targeted for their ideas.

One of the crassest recent examples of such illegal political victimization has been the activity of the Defense Investigative Service (DIS) of the Department of Defense.

The DIS is delegated by the Pentagon to issue — or revoke — the "security clearances" required by the thousands of workers employed by companies that have contracts with the Pentagon.

DIS agents are charged with ferreting out "security risks." The term is not a euphemism for spy. The DIS targets are political dissidents. People who may be militant unionists and/or opponents of U.S. foreign policy. They may, for instance, be workers opposed to Washington's intervention in Central America. Or who think that socialism is better than capitalism.

In a number of plants, members and supporters of the SWP — real and alleged — have been victimized by the DIS. Two current cases illustrate this.

One is that of Thomas Tomasko. He is a machinist at the Lockheed Missiles and Space Company in northern California.

The other is Sally Goodman, who works as an electrician at the Martin Marietta plant in Denver.

Tomasko has been subjected to DIS harassment and interrogation since shortly after the SWP trial ended in 1981.

The questions directed to Tomasko have revolved around his political ideas, his association with the SWP, and his distribution of the *Militant*. There has been no question of any illegal activity on his part.

Solely on the basis of his beliefs and associations, the DIS has advised the Defense Department it cannot vouch that Tomasko's continued employment is consistent with "national security."

His job, therefore, is in jeopardy.

Goodman came under scrutiny in 1982 when she supported a coworker who was the Colorado SWP candidate for the U.S. Senate.

Again, the interrogation of Goodman has focused on her political views and relations with the SWP.

The DIS has also sought to grill Goodman about the most intimate details of her personal life, focusing on possible lesbian relationships.

In the course of its probe, the DIS inadvertently provided Goodman with a document authored either by the Department of Defense or Justice Department.

While conceding that membership in the SWP is not legal grounds for disqualifying a worker for security clearance, the document then simply asserts that the DIS does have the right, and obligation, to investigate individuals who are members or supporters of the party!

It was precisely to expose such outrageously illegal, undemocratic practices that the SWP took the government and its political police to court.

Griesa's refusal to rule on the important questions in this case is further evidence that the democratic rights of workers and farmers will only be fully protected when the minority rule of the capitalists and all their tools — cops, courts, media, two-party system — are replaced by the political rule of working people. □

Gelfand disruption campaign

While federal Judge Thomas Griesa delays ruling on the Socialist Workers Party's lawsuit, the party remains open to attempts at harassment and disruption by the FBI, Immigration and Naturalization Service, and the Defense Investigative Service, as well as others acting without official government sanction.

The most serious such disruption has come from a lawsuit against the SWP by Alan Gelfand, a Los Angeles County attorney. Gelfand, attempting to capitalize on the issue of FBI infiltration raised in the SWP's suit, charged that the leadership of the SWP was controlled by FBI agents. He claimed his expulsion from the party in 1979 was the work of the FBI, and he sued the party and the government, demanding his reinstatement as a member and a court-supervised reorganization of the SWP's leadership.

Although Gelfand never produced a shred of evidence, his suit served as the basis for a four-year-long campaign of disruption and harassment against the SWP. His efforts were financed by the Workers Revolutionary Party of Britain and its U.S. affiliate, the Workers League. The defense against this suit tied up considerable resources of the SWP.

Judge Mariana Pfaelzer ruled against Gelfand after a one-week trial in March 1983, telling his lawyers, "You have not proved anything that you said you were going to prove. Nothing." Nevertheless, the very hearing of this case by her court helped expand the power of the federal courts to investigate and supervise the internal activity of the SWP and other political groups that oppose government policies.

Moreover, the Gelfand suit legitimized the idea of political enemies of the SWP presenting their distorted view of its policies and activities to official governmental bodies and making them part of an "official court transcript." While the SWP's \$70 million suit is awaiting judgment from Judge Griesa, legal initiatives like that of Gelfand's could provide the government with a ready-made excuse to reopen the case based on "new evidence."

In order to discourage harassing lawsuits against the party and other organizations in the future, the SWP filed a motion with Judge Pfaelzer demanding that Gelfand's high-priced lawyers be held financially liable for the costs the party incurred in defending itself from their groundless suit. A hearing on this motion was held in October, but no ruling has been made yet.

Rebellion against austerity

60 killed as troops suppress anti-IMF upsurge

By Fred Murphy

Outraged by government-imposed hikes of up to 100 percent in the prices of essential food items, tens of thousands of workers, housewives, and unemployed youth took to the streets of cities and towns across the Dominican Republic April 23-25. It was the biggest popular upsurge in that country since 1965.

In the course of the largely spontaneous protests, many people helped themselves to foodstuffs and other consumer goods in stores and supermarkets. One bank was reported burned, and a police station was assaulted. In several provincial cities, the local headquarters of the ruling Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD) were sacked. Barricades of burning tires went up in the poor and working-class neighborhoods of Santo Domingo, the capital of the Caribbean nation of 5.7 million.

The regime of President Salvador Jorge Blanco responded with massive force. Army troops and police were deployed against the protesters. Indiscriminate firing by government forces took the lives of more than 60 Dominicans. Some 200 suffered gunshot wounds, and more than 4,000 arrests were reported.

Among those detained were Dominican Communist Party General Secretary Narciso Isa Conde and other leaders of the Dominican Left Front. Julio de Peña Valdez, general secretary of the General Workers Federation (CGT), was placed under house arrest.

The regime also moved against news media outlets that were providing on-the-spot coverage of the mass protests. Four radio stations and one television station were forced by the military to suspend broadcasting.

A one-day work stoppage called for April 25 by the CGT and four other union federations — including the PRD-affiliated General Union of Dominican Workers (UGTD) — attained widespread participation. But the regime's huge show of force succeeded in squelching further street protests on that day.

Plans by the CGT and other unions for a mass rally and a "march against hunger" in Santo Domingo on May 1 were cancelled after the regime warned it could not "guarantee the security" of participants. Instead, the CGT called on all Dominicans to remain in their homes between 6:00 a.m. and noon and to wear black armbands in memory of those gunned down by the armed forces.

IMF-imposed austerity

The rebellion by Dominican working people was touched off by a series of austerity measures announced April 19 by the Jorge Blanco regime. At the heart of these was a shift in currency-regulation policy that tripled the price of



most imported goods overnight. At the same time, government subsidies on essential food items were sharply reduced, forcing immediate price rises of 35 percent on bread, 40 percent on wheat flour, and 100 percent on cooking oil. Milk prices also rose substantially.

These measures had been demanded by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as preconditions for the disbursement of the second portion of a three-year, \$455 million loan designed to help the Dominican Republic keep up payments on its \$2.4 billion foreign debt.

Earlier IMF-imposed austerity moves — currency devaluations, wage cuts for public employees, import curbs, and tax hikes — had already been the target of protests. In February, tens of thousands took part in marches called by the CGT and other unions in the cities of Santo Domingo, Santiago, and San Francisco de Macoris.

President Jorge Blanco had sought to stave off the latest austerity measures by appealing for increased economic aid from Washington. In January, he wrote a letter to Ronald Reagan warning that if the IMF's terms were accepted, it "could undoubtedly provoke social tensions so strong that it could alter the peace and the most important functional democratic process in the Caribbean."

But instead of coughing up more aid, Reagan suspended \$80 million in scheduled assistance until the IMF's demands were accepted. Meanwhile, the U.S. Export-Import Bank and commercial banks also withheld further loans to the Dominican Republic.

Jorge Blanco made a state visit to Washington in early April. He listened to Reagan declare the Dominican Republic "a beacon for freedom loving people everywhere," but returned home empty-handed.

After suppressing the rebellion with brute force, Jorge Blanco went on nationwide television and radio to claim the protests were "systematically led and at the same time instigated" by the right-wing Reformist Party and the "extreme left." He renewed charges, long since discredited, that leaders of the Dominican Left Front had set up a "guerrilla training school." (Dozens of leftists had been jailed under this

accusation last August, but were soon released when the authorities could present no evidence.)

His government, Jorge Blanco declared, would not hesitate to use force to defend the Dominican Republic's "exemplary democracy." In face of the extensive police killings, he praised the "example of equanimity" and "professionalism" of the cops and the army.

Democratic facade crumbling

The austerity measures and the resort to heavy-handed repression have badly tarnished the democratic image of Jorge Blanco and his Dominican Revolutionary Party. The PRD is a party of bourgeois-nationalist origins and is affiliated to the Socialist International. In 1965, it played an important role in the popular rebellion against a U.S.-imposed rightist regime, an upsurge that was only suppressed through an invasion by 40,000 U.S. Marines.

The U.S.-backed dictatorship of Joaquín Balaguer and his Reformist Party came to an end in 1978 and was replaced by an elected PRD government. The PRD was reaffirmed in office in the 1982 elections, in which Jorge Blanco made a series of promises — land reform, housing construction, extension of trade-union rights, public-works programs — that have all remained unfulfilled.

Instead, the PRD has presided over mounting unemployment (now nearly 30 percent), harsh austerity measures, deteriorating living standards, and stepped-up repression. The result has been a sharp decline in its popularity among the Dominican masses. In this situation, the working-class political currents that make up the Dominican Left Front (FID)* have been able to grow and gain a wider hearing among the workers, peasants, and unemployed.

In a statement answering President Jorge Blanco's April 25 speech, the FID rejected his charges of a conspiracy and pointed out that "the real causes of the protest" were to be found in "an intolerable situation of hunger, unemployment, poverty, and mounting economic hardship for the vast majority of the population."

By unleashing the repressive forces against the people, the FID said, Jorge Blanco had confirmed "the definitive failure of the PRD leadership, which has become a government in the service of the big local bourgeoisie and the imperialist bourgeoisie."

Jorge Blanco's words, the FID continued, "deepen the crisis and do not intimidate anyone." Rather, they "make more compelling the need to place the entire people on a footing of struggle in order to say No to the government's arrogance, to its institutionalized crimes in the name of democracy, and to the hunger policies of the IMF." □

*The FID includes the Communist Party, the Dominican Workers Party, the Socialist Bloc, the Democratic People's Movement, the Patriotic Anti-Imperialist Union, and several other working-class political tendencies.