

INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS

combined
with **inprecor**

Vol. 22, No. 12

June 25, 1984

USA \$1.25 UK 50p

U.S., Saudis Widen Gulf War



U.S. AWACS planes guide Saudi jets against Iranian targets.

Protests Mark Reagan's Ireland Visit



Derek Speirs (Report)



Derek Speirs (Report)

Left: Dublin anti-Reagan march. Right: U.S. Socialist Mel Mason addresses Dublin meeting.

- **Sinn Féin EEC Election Platform**
- **People's Democracy Backs Sinn Féin Candidates**

U.S.-Saudi attack on Iran

By Fred Murphy

The downing of two Iranian planes over the Persian Gulf on June 5 by U.S.-directed Saudi Arabian fighter jets marks a dangerous new escalation of imperialist aggression against Iran. It is the first time that another country in the region has become directly involved in combat in the nearly four-year-old Iraqi war against Iran.

The Saudi attack was carried out in full collaboration with Washington. The Saudi planes were refueled in the air by a U.S. Air Force tanker plane and guided to their targets by U.S. surveillance aircraft. The Iranian jets were nowhere near the Saudi coastline, although the Saudi regime claimed they were over its territorial waters owing to their closeness to a tiny island in the middle of the gulf claimed by Saudi Arabia.

Coincident with the downing of the planes, the Pentagon warned that U.S. warships in the gulf would fire at any plane or ship that "threatened" oil tankers carrying fuel from gulf ports to U.S. vessels in the Arabian Sea. Washington has stationed four naval vessels in the Persian Gulf itself and some 20 — including an aircraft carrier — in the Arabian Sea near the entrance to the gulf (the Strait of Hormuz).

The June 5 attack on the Iranian planes also coincided with a step-up in Iraqi shelling of Iranian cities. More than 300 Iranians were killed when missiles struck the Kurdish city of Baneh; artillery fire also hit areas near Sanandaj and Qasr-e Shirin — more than 50 miles inside Iran.

Iraqi attacks on shipping

As the pretext for its current drive to bolster the Iraqi side in the Gulf War, the Reagan administration has pointed to a handful of alleged Iranian attacks on merchant vessels in the gulf in late May. But the U.S. rulers have long kept silent about the bombing and strafing of more than 70 ships by Iraqi jets in the course of the war. Such attacks have been stepped up in recent months with tankers loading oil at Iran's Kharg Island terminal being singled out as targets.

Iraqi planes destroyed a Turkish tanker bound for Kharg Island on June 3, prompting the Turkish government to suspend its oil imports from Iran. The Iraqi attacks have reportedly caused a 50 percent reduction in Iran's oil exports in recent months.

The attack on the Turkish ship came less than 48 hours after the United Nations Security Council voted 13 to 0 (with 2 abstentions — Nicaragua and Zimbabwe) for a one-sided resolution condemning Iran for attacks on shipping in the Persian Gulf. Iran's official news agency declared that by having failed to condemn Iraq's repeated and brazen attacks on

gulf shipping, the Security Council "has provided the Iraqi government with an official permission to continue its attacks on the oil tankers."

The Iraqi regime followed up the June 3 attack with fresh threats against Iran. *Al-Thawra*, the newspaper of Baghdad's ruling Baath Party, vowed to "tighten the blockade of Kharg Island until the Tehran rulers choke to death because they can no longer breathe through their only lung, Kharg."

U.S. moves long-planned

The major imperialist powers have more and more openly backed Iraq in the war, out of fear that an Iranian victory would inspire the Arab and Muslim masses throughout the Gulf region to revolt against their proimperialist rulers. Saddam Hussein launched his 1980 invasion with the aim of putting an end to the Iranian revolution, but Iran's workers and peasants mobilized and fought back, eventually driving the Iraqi forces out of most areas they had occupied.

In mid-1983, according to the June 4 *Washington Post*, the U.S. National Security Council's Crisis Pre-Planning Group began "high-priority contingency planning" for stepped-up U.S. involvement in support of Iraq. This decision, the *Post* said, "was touched off by Iraq's assessment . . . that it was losing a 'war of attrition' to Iran.

A series of decisions were reached by the Reagan administration in subsequent months. These included increased U.S. and allied stockpiling of petroleum; aid to Iraq in boosting its oil exports through pipelines across Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan; a diplomatic drive to shut off Iran's arms supplies from European and Asian countries; and pressure on the governments of Saudi Arabia and other gulf states to allow the Pentagon to use their territory for direct intervention against Iran.

The *Post* article cited a May 21 letter from Reagan to Saudi King Fahd, which it described as follows:

U.S. deportation ruling leaves Marroquín case pending

By Will Reissner

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled unanimously June 5 that immigrants seeking political refuge in the United States must show "clear probability" of persecution in their native country to avoid deportation.

The ruling, made in the case of anticommunist Yugoslav Predrag Stevic, marks a tightening of the criteria and is a harsh blow to

"If the Saudis and others wish direct U.S. military involvement in their defense, they will need to request it publicly, they were told. For such involvement to be effective on any but the most temporary missions, U.S. military forces would have to be granted access to such facilities as airfields, logistical depots and ports."

Gulf rulers wary of Pentagon role

The Saudi monarchy and the royal rulers of the lesser oil-rich gulf states have long backed Iraq in the war out of fear that their own thrones could be endangered by the spread of the Iranian revolution. They have provided Baghdad with some \$35 billion in financial aid since the conflict began.

While these rulers also welcome Washington's mounting efforts to bolster Iraq, they are nervous about becoming too closely identified as cat's paws for U.S. imperialist aggression. They rightly fear that the workers and peasants of their own countries will not look kindly on such open subordination to Washington's dictates.

Hence the Saudi rulers sought to play down the June 5 air battle over the gulf and made no mention in their public statements of the instrumental U.S. Air Force role. Commentaries in the Saudi press stressed the regime's claim to be a "mediator" in the war and the supposed defensive nature of the Saudi air force's actions. "We do not shed the blood of a Muslim brother unless he publicly enters our borders or our territorial waters," said the newspaper *al-Riyadh* in the Saudi capital.

The Iranian government has responded to the U.S.-Saudi air attack in a cautious fashion, seeking to take advantage of any second thoughts the Saudi rulers may be having about the deepening imperialist intervention. Iranian President Ali Khamenei called on the gulf states June 8 to "put pressure on Iraq so that it stops setting the Persian Gulf alight.

"If you find that after all the help you have given it, Iraq refuses to listen to you," Khamenei continued, "then stop helping it. Stop making available your ports, your money, your propaganda."

Khamenei said that Iran has "nothing against" the gulf states, but that "if you continue, then we will have the right to act with firmness against all who oppose us." □

gled out for persecution if deported. Few applicants can prove "clear probability."

The Supreme Court, while ruling on the standard for withholding deportation, did not, however, rule on what standard is to be applied to those seeking political asylum in the United States.

Left pending by the court's decision is the case of Héctor Marroquín, a Mexican-born socialist whose request for political asylum was turned down by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) in December 1978. Marroquín is a member of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party and a leader of the Young Socialist Alliance. The Supreme Court could rule on Marroquín's appeal at any time.

On June 11, attorneys for Marroquín won a round in federal court in Newark, New Jersey, by forcing the INS to acknowledge that Marroquín cannot be immediately deported even if the Supreme Court rules against him.

In addition to his request for political asylum, Marroquín has a pending application for permanent resident status in the United States based on his marriage to a U.S. citizen. Permanent resident status is routinely granted to spouses of U.S. citizens in most cases, but the INS has stalled on Marroquín's application because of his outspoken opposition to Washington's wars in Central America and its attacks on the rights of working people in the United States.

In court on June 11, Marroquín was requesting that if the Supreme Court rules against him he be allowed to stay in the United States to pursue his application for permanent residency. The INS admitted that Marroquín will have 72 hours notice in which to voluntarily leave the United States for the country of his choice before any deportation order against him could be carried out. This means that he would have time to go back to court to seek further legal action to prevent deportation while his request for permanent residency is being processed.

While Marroquín's case continues its way through the courts, important new forces have come out in support of his right to remain in the United States.

At the May 28-June 1 convention of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), numerous leaders of the Canadian union movement endorsed Marroquín's fight against deportation.

John Fryer, president of the National Union of Provincial Government Employees, Canada's second-largest union, sent a message to INS Commissioner Alan Nelson "on behalf of the 240,000 members" of the NUPGE urging Nelson "to allow Héctor Marroquín to remain in the United States."

Ed Broadbent, head of the New Democratic Party, Canada's labor party, sent a telegram to the INS urging it "to grant political asylum on humanitarian grounds to Héctor Marroquín, a Mexican national whose case is now before the U.S. Supreme Court."

Gérard Docquier, national director for Canada of the United Steelworkers of Ameri-

ca, sent a message to Nelson stating: "On humanitarian grounds, our organization strongly supports the request of Héctor Marroquín, a Mexican national, for political asylum."

A message was also sent by Guy Cousineau, general secretary of the Montreal Labor Council (CTM). It read: "The Montreal Labor Council (Quebec Labor Federation), which encompasses 100,000 workers in the Montreal region, opposes the deportation of Héctor Marroquín and has backed his appeal to obtain political asylum in the United States."

Jean Claude Parrot, president of the Cana-

dian Union of Postal Workers, also agreed to send a telegram in support of Marroquín's fight.

The Political Rights Defense Fund, which is organizing Marroquín's defense, also received a message from the Socialist Workers Party (PSO/SAP) of Belgium, stating "our party opposes the deportation of Héctor Marroquín and endorses his appeal for political asylum in the U.S." The message added that the PSO/SAP has written to other political parties and organizations in Belgium asking them to express their solidarity with Marroquín's fight. □

—IN THIS ISSUE—

Closing news date: June 11, 1984

IRELAND	372	Reagan greeted by protests — by Margaret Jayko
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	377	Rebellion against the IMF — by Octavio Rivera
NICARAGUA	379	New steps in agrarian reform — by Michael Baumann
AUSTRALIA	383	Bishop speeches have impact — by Lee Walkington
BRITAIN	386	Miners battle Thatcher's cops — by Clive Turnbull and Martin Hill
USA	388	Toledo strike an example — by Steve Craine
FRANCE	389	For unity against austerity — by Jean Lantier
NEW ZEALAND	391	Crisis of capitalist agriculture (part 1) — by Jim Pearson
BRAZIL	396	Mass movement for direct elections — by Marcelo Zugadi
DOCUMENTS	373	Sinn Féin's EEC election platform
	376	People's Democracy calls for vote for Sinn Féin
	381	FMLN's May Day message
	382	New party in Grenada
	384	Interview with Vietnam's prime minister
	398	"Em Tempo" discusses direct-election strategy
	399	Mexican PRT on U.S. elections

Intercontinental Press specializes in political analysis and interpretation of events of particular interest to the labor, socialist, colonial independence, Black, and women's liberation movements.

Signed articles represent the views of the authors, which may not necessarily coincide with those of Intercontinental Press. Insofar as it re-

Editor: Steve Clark.
Contributing Editors: Livio Maitan, Ernest Mandel, George Novack.

Managing Editor: David Frankel.
Editorial Staff: Steve Craine, Ernest Harsch, Fred Murphy, Will Reissner, Steve Wattenmaker.

Business Manager: Sandi Sherman.

INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS (ISSN 0162-5594) is published every other Monday except the first in January and the third and fourth in August for \$25 per year by Intercontinental Press, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014. Second-class postage paid at New York, NY. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

flects editorial opinion, unsigned material stands on the program of the Fourth International.

To Subscribe: For one-year subscriptions in the U.S. or Canada send US\$25.00. Subscription correspondence should be addressed to: Intercontinental Press, 410 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014. Telephone: (212) 929-6933.

For airmail subscriptions to Britain, Ireland, and continental Europe send US\$35.00 for one year; US\$17.50 for six months. Write for subscription rates to all other countries.

For air-speeded subscriptions to Australia: Write to Pathfinder Press, P.O. Box 515, Broadway 2007. In New Zealand: Write to Socialist Books, P.O. Box 8852, Auckland.

We prefer payment in bank drafts or postal checks payable in U.S. dollars because of the charges involved in clearing personal checks drawn on other currencies. However, personal checks will be accepted, with an additional 5 percent added for clearing charges.

Please allow five weeks for change of address. Include your old address, and, if possible, an address label from a recent issue.

Intercontinental Press is published by the 408 Printing and Publishing Corporation, 408 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014. Offices at 408 West Street, New York, N.Y.

Reagan greeted with protests

U.S. socialist candidate receives warm response

By Margaret Jayko

DUBLIN — Thousands of people participated in a variety of protests against U.S. President Ronald Reagan's June 1-4 trip to Ireland. Opposition to the U.S. war against the people of Nicaragua and El Salvador was the central focus of these actions.

Even before Reagan arrived, more than 3,000 people marched through the streets of this city May 26 to protest his policies in Central America. The march was led off by a contingent of nuns carrying a coffin bearing the names of four U.S. church women raped and murdered by the military in El Salvador in 1980.

More than 500 demonstrators were on hand when Reagan landed at Shannon Airport on June 1. Protesters carried signs reading, "Hands off Central America," "Reagan — Stop military aid to the fascist regime in Chile," and "U.S. multi-nationals exploit the poor of the world."

The U.S. president's June 2 trip to Galway to receive a Doctorate of Laws degree from the National University of Ireland was marked by a 1,500-strong protest. When Reagan was given the award, 20 percent of the academic staff boycotted the ceremony. Many were incensed at the hypocrisy of giving Reagan a law degree after his administration rejected the recent World Court call for an end to U.S. aggression against Nicaragua.

On June 3, some 600 people protested Reagan's visit to Ballyporeen, a tiny town now famous because it was decided, quite arbitrarily, that Reagan's ancestors once lived there.

That evening, thousands, including many priests and nuns, marched through Dublin to protest Reagan's policies.

Throughout his visit, the size of the crowds that turned out to see and cheer Reagan were smaller and less enthusiastic than the major media here had predicted.

Even before Reagan arrived in Ireland, the Irish Campaign Against Reagan's Foreign Policy announced that more than 30,000 people had signed petitions opposing Reagan's foreign policy.

A number of trade unions took part in the protests, as did church organizations, the Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement, the Irish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, and numerous left-wing and nationalist organizations.

Mel Mason in Ireland

Reagan was not the only candidate for the U.S. presidency in Ireland at that time. Mel Mason, the Socialist Workers Party candidate, arrived in Ireland on May 25 at the invitation of People's Democracy, the Irish socialist or-



Mel Mason and Sinn Féin's Christy Burke campaigning for candidate John Noonan in Dublin.

ganization affiliated to the Fourth International.

The socialist candidate participated in the anti-Reagan protests and provided the Irish people with an opportunity to hear the truth about Washington's aggression in Central America — conducted jointly by the Democratic and Republican parties.

In addition to taking part in the protest marches, Mason spoke at rallies in British-occupied Northern Ireland as well as in the formally independent 26 counties of the south.

On May 25, Mason took part in a meeting of 150 people organized by People's Democracy in Dublin. At the meeting, chaired by PD National Secretary Anne Speed, People's Democracy announced its support for Sinn Féin's candidates in the June 14 elections for the European Economic Community parliament.

Sinn Féin is the largest of the organizations that support armed struggle to end British rule in Northern Ireland and reunify the entire country.

The Dublin meeting was also addressed by Joe Duffy, outgoing president of the Union of Students of Ireland, Sean Crowe, election director for Sinn Féin's EEC candidate from Dublin; Eddie Conlon from the Reagan Reception Campaign; and Bernadette Devlin, a longtime leader of the nationalist struggle in Northern Ireland.

Conlon told the crowd, "We're against the American ruling class — whether it has a Republican or Democratic tag. The anti-Reagan actions," he added, "are a mark of solidarity with those suffering from Reagan's policies."

On May 27, Mason spoke at an anti-Reagan-visit meeting in Belfast in British-occupied Northern Ireland, also sponsored by People's Democracy.

Joe Austin, chairperson of the Belfast Regional Executive of Sinn Féin, reminded the audience that when Bobby Sands died in the 1981 hunger strike of nationalist prisoners,

"the Sandinista government of Nicaragua pledged its support both for the hunger strike and for the Irish people's right to resist British domination."

Austin also denounced the U.S.-sponsored warfare in El Salvador and Guatemala and the U.S. invasion of Grenada.

Bernadette Devlin pointed out that the struggle of the Irish people is part of the same fight being waged by the people of Nicaragua and El Salvador, the striking coal miners in Britain, and Blacks in the United States.

Blacks and the Irish struggle

Mel Mason, whose presence in Belfast was reported in newspapers and on the radio, got a warm response when he stepped to the podium. He told of the similarities between the struggle of Blacks for their rights in the United States and the fight of the oppressed nationalist population in the north of Ireland.

Noting that he had seen Blacks "wearing British army uniforms" on the streets of the nationalist ghetto of West Belfast, the SWP candidate stated, "Blacks have no business in the uniforms of an occupying army." If they want to fight, he continued, they should "fight against racism, poverty, and oppression of Black people in Brixton," a Black ghetto in London.

"Blacks have every stake in fighting for freedom. They should get the hell out of British uniforms! If they are going to be in Ireland, they should fight with the Irish people against the British," Mason said to thunderous applause.

Also speaking at the Belfast meeting were Sue Pentel of People's Democracy, Gerry Ruddy of the Irish Republican Socialist Party, Eamon McCann of the Socialist Workers Movement, Peter Emerson of the Belfast Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, and Joe Duffy. The meeting was chaired by Fergus O'Hare, a PD member who is on the Belfast

Mason visits Kelly in prison

While in Ireland, Mel Mason visited Portlaoise prison outside of Dublin to talk with Nicky Kelly, a leader of the Irish Republican Socialist Party serving a 12-year sentence for a mail-train robbery he did not commit.

Kelly has been in prison since 1980 and in 1983 was on a 38-day hunger strike. His case has attracted mass support in Ireland and internationally, but the Dublin government refuses to reopen it and keeps Kelly in prison.

Kelly had heard Mason on the radio and was interested in learning more about his campaign. Mason promised to make the fight for Kelly's freedom a part of his election campaign when he returns to the United States.

city council.

In Limerick, Mason went to the Krups appliance assembly plant to talk to the 1,200 workers about why they should attend the Shannon airport demonstration against Reagan.

Mason also addressed a public meeting in Limerick, together with Patrick Malone of Sinn Féin and Joe Harrington of People's Democracy.

Bipartisan war drive

Malone hit hard on the bipartisan nature of U.S. foreign policy, noting that the war against Nicaragua will not be ended if a Democrat is elected president of the United States. Malone reminded the audience that Democrat Lyndon Johnson escalated the U.S. war in Southeast Asia, and Democrat John Kennedy launched the CIA-organized invasion of Cuba, which the Cubans repulsed, giving Kennedy "a pretty bloody nose."

"Every Democratic and Republican administration will defend U.S. imperialism," the Sinn Féin member stressed.

He added that although many people had

thought the U.S. government would back Ireland in any confrontation with Britain, Reagan's support for British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher during the hunger strike showed that was a myth.

But, added Malone, "Mel Mason shows us that there is another America," an "America of working people fighting for trade-union rights," of Black people fighting for democratic rights, of Spanish-speaking people, of Indians, of Puerto Ricans "involved in an independence struggle similar to ours."

This, Malone said, "is an America that our people can feel in solidarity with."

PD member Joe Harrington reported that two striking British miners were in Ireland to win support for their struggle, and he stressed the importance of the outcome of that battle for working people in Ireland.

Campaigning with Sinn Féin

While in Dublin, Mel Mason spent an afternoon campaigning with John Noonan, Sinn Féin's candidate from Dublin in the EEC elections. Mason went door-to-door through the most impoverished housing projects in Dub-

lin's inner city with candidate Noonan and Christy Burke, a prominent Sinn Féin community activist. Mason received a warm response as he urged people to support Sinn Féin's campaign.

Because the Irish Broadcasting Act prohibits any mention of Sinn Féin on the state-run radio and television networks, Sinn Féin has produced its own 15-minute videotape explaining the party's opposition to Ireland's membership in the EEC, its support for the freedom struggle in the north, and for workers' struggles in the south. This videotape is being shown in as many pubs and community centers as possible.

After canvassing with Noonan, Mason attended the premier showing of the tape in a nearby pub.

Later that afternoon, Mason and the Sinn Féin candidate took part in a solidarity march with the Ranks Flour Mill workers, who have been occupying the mill for more than a year in an attempt to prevent it from being shut down.

Mason also met with independent socialist Tony Gregory, who is a member of Ireland's parliament representing the inner city district of Dublin. □

DOCUMENTS

Sinn Féin's EEC election platform

'One Ireland, one people — the only alternative'

[At its 1983 convention, Sinn Féin, the largest organization in Ireland that supports armed struggle to end British rule in Northern Ireland and reunify the entire country, decided to run candidates in the June 14, 1984, elections for the European Economic Community parliament.

[Sinn Féin is running nine candidates in the five EEC districts in Ireland. All are running on the platform reprinted below.

[The election platform, entitled "One Ireland, one people — the only alternative," is reprinted from the May 24 issue of *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, the weekly newspaper of Sinn Féin. The footnotes and bracketed material are by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Sinn Féin is contesting the EEC [European Economic Community] elections in all five constituencies in the 32 Counties,¹ putting before the people a real alternative.

We are the only all-Ireland party with an unapologetic stand in support of national reunification and in defence of the right of the Irish people to resist British occupation.

1. In 1921, following a hard-fought struggle for independence from Britain, Ireland was partitioned, with 26 Counties in the south achieving formal independence while British rule was maintained over 6 Counties in the north.

Sinn Féin has consistently opposed membership of the EEC, arguing against it in 1973, at the EEC parliament election in 1979, and we do so again in this election.

It is more than ever obvious that the EEC has not only failed to produce the economic miracle promised on entry, but has proved disastrous for Irish industry and agriculture and been the most significant contributor to high unemployment and inflation in Ireland.

It is also clear that EEC membership has subjugated national sovereignty to the interests of the bigger and richer EEC states, only shifting the balance of colonial and neo-colonial dependency on Britain to dependency on Brussels. Far from reducing the effects of the border in Ireland, EEC economic policies have re-emphasised partition.

The slavish attitude of the Dublin government has also led this island into closer foreign policy and defence co-operation with the NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] nuclear military alliance, to which the nine other EEC states belong.

Irish culture has also been adversely affected by membership of a soulless capitalist club which places a negative economic value on nationality.

During this election campaign we will be putting forward our analysis of all of these ef-

fects and our proposals for the very real alternative outside of EEC membership.

The involvement of Sinn Féin in this election, on a national scale, reflects the growing support for our principled policies and our determination to continue to place them before the people at every opportunity, whatever obstacles are placed in our way.

This electoral strategy is part of the important politicisation of the struggle for Irish freedom. In the North, the question of who speaks for the nationalist people draws nearer to a definite answer.² In the South, Sinn Féin is showing that it is not a one-issue party, that it does offer a political alternative and that it is also determined to reap the organisational benefits which electoral involvement presents.

Sinn Féin candidates elected in these elections will attend the EEC parliament under the direction of the Sinn Féin ard chomhairle [na-

2. Since 1981, Sinn Féin has cut sharply into the traditional electoral support the Social Democratic and Labour Party received from the Catholic, nationalist population of the north. The SDLP is totally opposed to the armed struggle against British rule.

In the EEC constituency for Northern Ireland, Sinn Féin's Danny Morrison is challenging the SDLP's John Hume, who is now a member of the EEC parliament.

tional committee].³

Sinn Féin will urge a negotiated withdrawal from the EEC with the substitution of external trading agreements. In the meantime, Sinn Féin will campaign unflinchingly for the maximum benefits available and against all detrimental measures. The Strasbourg parliament will also be used to highlight, outside Ireland, the brutal reality of British rule and loyalist sectarianism and repression in all parts of Ireland, including the censorship of Sinn Féin on RTE and the disgraceful extradition policy of the Dublin government.⁴ Sinn Féin will campaign for the repatriation of Irish political prisoners from British jails and against the system of paid perjurers and show-trials.

We are campaigning for a united independent Ireland, a democratic socialist republic, free from foreign occupation and dependency. We are confident that the Irish people, with full control of their affairs, can plan a way out of the present failure.

National sovereignty

On joining the EEC in 1973, the 26 counties, by constitutional amendment, subjected its laws to EEC legislation and its courts to the Euro court. The Dublin government, because of its weakness and size, has constantly to compromise its interests adversely in the EEC Council and Commission in favour of the bigger and richer powers.

The 6 Counties is considered by the EEC to be British territory, represented by the London government. It has no voice at decision-making level within the EEC.

The Dublin government can only appoint one member out of 14 on the EEC Commission, and it only has three votes out of 63 on the EEC Council. There are only 18 members from the whole of Ireland in the 434-member EEC parliament.

The Haagerup report on the North, presented to the EEC parliament, refuses to confront the paramount problem — it upholds the loyalist veto⁵ and accepts partition and British rule.

Sinn Féin is striving for a 32-County independent Irish republic with sovereign control of all its policies, unfettered by decisions made by other states.

3. Members of Sinn Féin elected to the Irish and British parliaments refuse to take their seats. But Sinn Féin has decided to take seats in the EEC body if elected.

4. Under provisions of Section 31 of the Broadcasting Act, RTE, the government radio and television network in the south, is prohibited from mentioning Sinn Féin or the Irish Republican Army. Recently the Dublin government has begun turning Irish freedom fighters over to the British authorities through extradition.

5. A reference to British government policy of refusing to consider any change in the status of Northern Ireland unless it is acceptable to the pro-British segment of the population.

Nine out of the ten member states of the EEC are members of the NATO military alliance.

Through the closed meeting of EEC foreign ministers, the Dublin government has been drawn further and further into discussion of Western security policy indistinguishable from NATO interests.

The Dublin government has also taken part in common EEC foreign policy actions including the pro-British sanctions against Argentina in the Falklands/Malvinas conflict.

Irish members of the EEC parliament have joined in, or been ineffective in preventing, a wide range of common EEC foreign policy resolutions, including pro-NATO and pro-Cruise missile motions which make nonsense of claims to neutrality.

Membership of the EEC includes membership of the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom).

On the EEC agenda immediately after these elections is a completely new treaty of membership which includes proposals for compulsory political and security co-operation.

Sinn Féin believes that a united Ireland must be neutral and non-aligned outside of any military alliances whether of the EEC or of any of the power-blocs.

Economic consequences

Although in financial terms it is claimed that Ireland, North and South, has received much more money from the EEC than it has contributed, the real costs of membership are hidden in the damaging economic effects which far outweigh the much-proclaimed benefits.

The EEC represents a capitalist power-bloc set up to serve the needs of multinational capital and not the interests of any small country.

The gap between rich and poor economies within the EEC is growing in terms of unemployment and incomes. The 6 Counties is the second worst region in the EEC; only Calabria in Italy is worse. The 26 Counties is fourth from the bottom — out of 130 designated regions.

The EEC's regional fund, meant to eliminate differences between the developed and underdeveloped areas, has had little or no effect, in spite of the claims made on its behalf. Because it is paid into the central exchequer [treasury] of the state involved and is in the form of reimbursement, its effect in the North has merely been to reduce London's subvention [subsidy] and in the South, where it only amounts to 3% of capital expenditure, its effects are concentrated on the east coast because there is no internal regional policy.

Unemployment

Unemployment, in all of Ireland, on entry to the EEC in 1973 stood at 82,000; it is now 334,000 and increasing.

EEC membership has opened up the economies, North and South, more than ever, to the free competition of richer nations and has decimated Irish-based industries, particularly clothing, textiles, footwear, leather, fur-

niture, and food-processing.

There has been no growth in other indigenous industries, particularly those with export potential, to replace the losses in the traditional sector. Where native capitalists have been successful, in industries not easily penetrated by imports, they have not chosen to diversify into manufacturing enterprises in Ireland, but, instead, have invested their profits in similar firms abroad.

Policy control

In abandoning economic sovereignty to the EEC, the Dublin government has lost the possibility of using many economic tools to control its economy. The most important decisions are taken in Brussels.

The economic controls lost are extremely comprehensive and include the loss of powers to sign trade agreements with other states; to protect and develop domestic industry; to create incentives for exports; to selectively control imports; to plan the development of natural resources; and to make variations in exchange rates.

The aim of the EEC is to create a free trade area where all barriers to the free flow of goods, capital, and labour are removed.

Although limited regional aid is available for underdeveloped regions, if it does not generate economic development the ultimate answer is seen as labour migration, not continued investment. With the whole of Ireland just an underdeveloped region in EEC terms, this underlying philosophy is disastrous.

A "Buy Irish" campaign is illegal within the EEC.

The Dublin government cannot supply cheap gas or oil (if found) to Irish industry unless it sells it to other EEC industries at the same price. Consumer prices in the 26 Counties have risen by almost 500% since entry into the EEC.

Agriculture

It was in agriculture above all that the greatest benefits were to accrue from EEC membership. There were promised unlimited markets, lucrative prices, and increased employment in processing industries.

EEC agricultural policy has operated in favour of large commercial farms or ranches and against the high-labour small family farms.

Since EEC entry, 84,000 Irish farmers have left the land. Numbers employed in agriculture have fallen by an amazing 25% in the period.

Employment in food-processing has fallen by 10,000 in the past five years as EEC rules opened the way for European companies.

In 1983, the 26 Counties imported over £200 million [£1 = US\$1.14] worth of food products which could have been produced at home, including 80,000 tons of potatoes.

The short-term benefits of EEC membership lasted only five years and favoured the large rather than small farmers. It also encouraged borrowing by farmers keen to develop. More than 10,000 of them are now in serious debt

because of crippling interest rates, and many are in danger of losing their farms.

Irish farmers are worse off in real terms today than they were in 1972.

The high food-price strategy of the EEC's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) has meant a transfer of resources from consumer to farmer in a totally regressive manner. Subsidising agricultural development in this way, rather than from the central budget, puts a heavier burden on the poorer sections, contributes heavily to inflation, and this rebounds back again on the farmer as well as the consumer. The larger farmer benefits from higher prices to a greater degree than the small farmer, who requires subsidies.

The CAP has obviously proved detrimental to Irish farmers who have major development potential as opposed to the top-production European agricultural enterprises.

The CAP price structure which subsidises exports has caused the massive increases in live cattle exports and the loss of thousands of meat processing jobs and the closure of meat factories.

The milk super-levy, the very limited exemption for Irish farmers, North and South, and the uncertain future has thwarted the main area of development promised on EEC entry. Half of those farmers who have already left the land were from that sector. The small developing dairy farmer is now halted at scarcely more than one-third of his potential development.

Instead of purchase and division of land in congested areas by the Land Commission, the Dublin government propose a new land-leasing system — the return of landlordism.

Fisheries

On entry to the EEC in 1973, the 26-County fishing fleet was small and undeveloped, but the fastest growing in Western Europe. Today the industry is struggling to survive and catches are falling.

The EEC's common fisheries policy allocated quotas in accordance with the strength of the fleets, not their potential.

The quotas for 1983 gave the 26 Counties a mere 4.6% of the total EEC catch although having 25% of all EEC waters within its 200-mile economic zone; Britain, with 30% of the waters gets 37% of the EEC catch.

Even within the 12-mile limit, Southern fishermen are only allowed to take 21% of the catch.

Fish prices are now 15% lower in real terms than in 1973.

The fish-processing industry is totally underdeveloped and only of an unprofitable, very basic nature.

In comparison, Denmark, with a population of five million, has the second largest fishing fleet in the EEC, catches five times the 26-County total, but processes up to 40 times the amount of fish and over 200 times the amount of by-products.

The North's fishermen, of course, have to share their waters with the large British fleet as well as those of other member states.

When Spain and Portugal join the EEC, it will double the number of fishermen who will have rights in Irish waters. Two-thirds of the Spanish fishing fleet already fishes outside Spanish waters.

Sinn Féin urges that job-creation should concentrate in the areas of the most obvious potential development: natural resources; processing food for the neglected home market and for export; expanding the fishing fleet and processing industry to the level of other small countries like Denmark and Iceland; diversifying from the secure industries to manufacturing industry with export potential; developing agriculture through selective subsidies and land restructuring, particularly in its labour-intensive areas, such as market gardening; as well as providing the necessary social services through planned public spending programmes, particularly in the construction industry with its spin-off potential.

To do this requires economic control in Ireland, not in Brussels, so as to establish a planned economy, maximise state enterprise, and utilise all the tools of fiscal management. Such independent economic control is impossible within the EEC.

Social issues

The EEC treaty does not allow aid to alleviate the most crushing social problems such as housing and health care, and contributions to the education area are severely limited.

The much-valued £60 million three-year "housing programme" for Belfast is in fact no such thing: housing is expressly excluded from expenditure which must be spent on "urban renewal" projects — roads, bridges, etc. The British government "agreed" that in return they will expand their housing programme in Belfast, but have in fact cut back funds to the Housing Executive.

The EEC's social fund is directly related to its overall economic objectives; thus it finances job-training schemes, integration of migrant workers (but not the Irish travelling community), and up-dating of new technology skills. It does not create jobs but aims to provide a workforce trained to capital's requirements.

The same cold economic motive lies behind other areas of apparently progressive EEC social reform. Equal pay for women, for example, was introduced because it already existed in some of the richer member states who were anxious to exclude the possibility of competition by low-wage economies.

There are many loop-holes in the women's equality legislation, as there are in EEC directives on equal social welfare entitlements.

EEC financial support in education ignores the first-level education which is most in need of funding, just as governments have neglected it. EEC funds instead provide exchange travel in higher education, computer training, and job-experience programmes.

The EEC is dominated by right-wing conservative governments and parties whose inter-

ests are totally opposed to radical social improvements.

The EEC funding of various job-training schemes for youth has been seized on by Dublin and Belfast administrations as a cheap way of disguising unemployment without actually providing more jobs.

Sinn Féin believes that social rights should not be subject to economic interests. Cosmetic EEC programmes have provided governments with an easy excuse to abdicate their responsibilities. Sinn Féin sees public social spending as an absolute necessity not only to alleviate present human suffering, but as a positive job-creation programme.

Culture

The standardising economic philosophy of the EEC runs counter to the development of a strong independent Irish culture.

Irish is not one of the official working languages of the EEC. On entry the Dublin government agreed that Irish translation of secondary community legislation would cause "practical difficulties."

There is no right to correspond with the EEC institutions in Irish.

There are no provisions for simultaneous translation of Irish in the EEC parliament.

In the Gaeltacht [Gaelic-speaking] areas, the extension of land ownership rights to all EEC citizens has helped to break up the linguistic unity of the communities.

In 1982, £250 million was spent on official language-related costs, which did not include Irish. In 1983, following the token Arfe report, a budget of a mere £70,000 was allocated for the encouragement of minority cultures and languages.

As in all other aspects of the EEC, the stronger cultures will dominate and finally smother the weaker ones.

Sinn Féin believes that Irish culture, embracing language, music, history, folklore, games, art, local customs, people's organisations, common philosophy, and all the other elements, can only strengthen and develop where the Irish people themselves feel independent and confident and relate to other cultures on equal terms. The EEC has had the opposite effect.

The alternative

The EEC is obviously not working for Ireland. It has not only failed to produce the promised economic miracle that lured us in, but has actually left us worse off than before entry.

The 26-County referendum held prior to joining the EEC, in 1972, recorded 84% in favour of entry; the latest Euro-barometer opinion poll puts satisfaction with membership at 42%. Separate figures are not given for the 6 Counties, but they will certainly not be more than that.

The alternative to membership is not to hide behind high tariff barriers — that is obviously counter-productive — but the first benefit of

withdrawal would be the opening up of the domestic market to Irish producers.

The members of the European Free Trade Area (EFTA), which did not join the EEC, all have individual trading agreements with the EEC, including guaranteed agricultural markets, which do not affect their trading agreements with non-EEC countries or interfere with domestic economic policy.

European countries outside the EEC, such as Austria, Finland, Norway, and Sweden,

have had higher levels of employment and lower levels of inflation than EEC countries.

Greenland, which joined the EEC as part of Denmark, has this year completed a negotiated withdrawal on favourable terms.

Sinn Féin advocates withdrawal from the EEC and the negotiation of trading agreements with it, but also advocates the implementation of a radical socialist economic programme in a united Ireland. □

People's Democracy calls for vote for Sinn Féin

[People's Democracy (PD), the Irish affiliate of the Fourth International, is campaigning for Sinn Féin's candidates in the June 14 elections to the European Economic Community (EEC) parliament.

[The June issue of PD's newspaper, *Socialist Republic*, explains:

["Only Sinn Féin of all the parties in this election stands in total opposition to the EEC's imperialist policies and for withdrawal. It is the only party firmly committed to Irish unity and independence. For these reasons, People's Democracy strongly urges a vote for Sinn Féin as a demonstration of resistance to EEC rule and the offensive of Irish capitalism. A massive vote would lay the groundwork for the campaign of united mass action necessary to defeat the imperialists.

["So give FitzGerald, Haughey, Hume and Spring¹ a shock! Give [British Prime Minister Margaret] Thatcher a kick in the teeth! And give a thumbs down to a Europe of the bomb, mass unemployment, austerity and capitalist aggression.

["VOTE SINN FEIN."

[The April issue of *Socialist Republic* published a statement by the National Committee of People's Democracy outlining the group's attitude toward the EEC elections, which is reprinted below. Footnotes and bracketed material are by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

The upcoming June EEC elections will have an important significance for the struggle against Britain, and for their Irish puppets throughout the 32 Counties. The elections will be used by all the capitalist politicians to bolster their declining credibility among working people already impoverished by unemployment and cuts.

1. Garret FitzGerald, leader of the Fine Gael party, is the prime minister of the formally independent southern 26 counties of Ireland. Charles Haughey is leader of the Fianna Fail party. John Hume is leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party. Dick Spring is head of the Irish Labour Party.

Thatcher's Tory [Conservative Party] programme offers only increased unemployment and repression for workers in the [British-ruled] 6 Counties. The Coalition [government of Fine Gael and the Labour Party in the south] offers exactly the same. A further feature of the contest will be the flagging attempt of the SDLP [Social Democratic and Labour Party] to mislead the anti-unionist population in the 6 Counties into supporting a restructuring and strengthening of imperialism through the Dublin Forum.²

Twelve years ago Fianna Fail and Fine Gael³ would have us believe that EEC membership would lead to Irish unity. We know now that other capitalist states would only become involved if they felt Britain was falling down on the job of preserving capitalism in Ireland.

In the same way the U.S. intervened in Vietnam and Grenada when lesser capitalist powers were unable to maintain imperialist rule in those regions, so NATO is already looking on anxiously at the political instability throughout the 32 Counties. Reagan's upcoming Irish tour coupled with the Coalition's undermining of

2. On May 2, 1984, after 11 months of deliberations, the New Ireland Forum issued its final report in Dublin. The forum was composed of the leaders of four major electoral parties in the north and south — Fianna Fail, Fine Gael, the Labour Party, and the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP).

The convening of the forum had been widely viewed as an attempt to bolster the flagging prospects of the SDLP, the traditional electoral vehicle of the nationalist voters in Northern Ireland. The SDLP is threatened with being eclipsed by Sinn Féin.

Although boosted by its participants as a plan for Irish reunification, the Forum report contains no mention of a call for British withdrawal from the north and no suggestion of how nationalists should proceed when the British government turns down the Forum's proposals.

3. Fianna Fail and Fine Gael are the largest bourgeois parties in the south. Fianna Fail has traditionally positioned itself as the more nationalist of the two.

Irish neutrality is already opening up that door. It would not be surprising if NATO military aircraft were the first to inaugurate Knock Airport runway.

We were also told 12 years ago that EEC membership would foster prosperity among the Irish people and break our economic dependence on British markets. Instead, joining the EEC has led to chaos. Industrial development has ground to a halt, and almost total reliance on multinationals has meant massive unemployment, deskilling of workers, and destruction of indigenous Irish industry.

Agriculture is also in a mess, and EEC membership is responsible. It was supposed to bring a bonanza. Instead it has created financial ruin among small farmers, indebtedness, and bankruptcy. The crisis of the milk superlevy indicates that the major EEC powers don't give a damn about Ireland's national economic interests. They have no qualms about shoving more Irish workers onto the dole [unemployment compensation] and more small farmers into bankruptcy.

Only a national economic plan based on the actual needs of Irish workers and small farmers will get us out of this mess. This means a socialist transformation of society. This is the practical necessity facing the Irish working class today.

This is the kind of programme which the anti-imperialist movement has to formulate and fight for in the EEC elections. As the major anti-imperialist organisation, Sinn Féin, standing in all constituencies in the 32 Counties, has both an excellent opportunity and major responsibility to build all-Ireland workers unity against the twin evils of repression and austerity. None of the other parties offer any reason why Irish workers should put their trust in them. This includes those parties who are socialist in words and collaborators in action. Therefore Sinn Féin offers the only real alternative. In building support for their candidates, it will be important for Sinn Féin to turn their campaign outwards along the lines of the H-Block movement⁴ to gain the attention of the mass of organised workers. It will be necessary to involve the best activists in the campaign.

Fundamentally it will be vital to build an all-Ireland political fightback against partition and all its evils. In particular, fighting the SDLP in the 6 Counties means not only ousting them as the chief representatives of the nationalist people, it means counterposing to the sham Forum a concrete political alternative. This means an all-Ireland Constituent Assembly. This can provide the means by which all the workers, small farmers and oppressed people of Ireland can determine their future and the future of this island. □

4. During the 1981 hunger strike in the H-Blocks of Long Kesh prison in Northern Ireland, the National H-Block/Armagh Committee organized a mass movement throughout Ireland in support of the prisoners' demands.

Rebellion against the IMF

April protests mark turning point in class struggle

By Octavio Rivera

SANTO DOMINGO — On the morning of April 23, three neighborhoods in Santo Domingo's shantytowns (Capotillo, Simón Bolívar, and Gualey) began a strike accompanied by street mobilizations, a shutdown of commerce, and a transportation halt.

The first clashes between demonstrators and the police took place at 8:00 a.m. when a state-owned bus was set afire. Two hours later, the strike had encompassed virtually the entire city, paralyzing commerce, transportation, and services. Clouds of smoke from protest bonfires of rubber tires could be seen everywhere.

By the afternoon the factories had shut down as well, and the fires and street fighting had reached the financial district and residential neighborhoods. The strike — now an uprising — began to take on a nationwide character. By nightfall, the main trade-union federations had announced their support for the movement and called on the workers to continue to strike throughout the country the following day.

Evening news broadcasts acknowledged that six persons had been killed and dozens wounded by police bullets during the day's protests.

April 24 — a bloody day

April 24 marked the anniversary of the 1965 people's insurrection that was followed by this century's second Yankee military intervention in the Dominican Republic. By that day the strike was total. The demonstrations took on the character of a weaponless insurrection, forcing the police to retreat to their barracks. When army troops were deployed in the late afternoon, there was an immediate bloodbath on a scale never before seen against a civil protest.

By day's end some 46 demonstrators had been killed and more than 200 wounded. The troops, ordered to shoot to kill (that is, to aim above the waist), created a situation of terror that continued the following day when at least 18 persons were seized in their homes and summarily executed.

On the evening of April 25, President Salvador Jorge Blanco made a nationally televised speech in which, besides congratulating the army on its "exemplary" behavior, he threatened to prosecute those who had played a leading role in the actions as well as the organizations that had spoken out in support of the protests. He focused his attack on the left, while also blaming the right-wing opposition for helping to foment the upsurge.

The president's speech served to heighten



popular indignation and sharpened the masses' repudiation of the government and the ruling Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD).

The tragic outcome of the repression was 60 known dead, more than 450 wounded, and more than 4,500 arrested. It was also reported, and not denied by the authorities, that an unspecified number of bodies were buried without being identified.

Waves of protest

The protest movement that culminated in the April uprising had gotten under way in mid-1983 and had come to focus more and more against the social and economic policies imposed on the government by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

At the end of 1982, the regime signed the first part of a three-year agreement with the IMF for a loan that was to alleviate the Dominican Republic's balance-of-payments difficulties. In return for the loan, the government agreed to an adjustment program centered around reducing the budget deficit. A further goal was to establish a single exchange rate for the peso by 1986.

Objections to this agreement were voiced by various political and social forces, among them the Dominican Left Front (FID) and the Dominican Liberation Party (PLD).¹ But at the time the pact did not create much of a stir among the masses owing to a lack of aware-

1. 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.

The PLD represents a split-off from the ruling PRD and is led by ex-President Juan Bosch, who was ousted in an imperialist-sponsored military coup in 1963. The April 1965 insurrection began as an attempt to restore Bosch to power. — IP

ness of the harsh austerity measures it would entail.

By mid-1983, however, when the budget cuts had begun to result in mounting unemployment and deteriorating services, the mass movement began to unfold. It first took the form of local strikes to demand public-works projects and improved services.

The first wave of protest was followed in August 1983 with the seizure of 26 Ministry of Agriculture offices around the country, including the ministry's headquarters, by thousands of peasants organized in the Independent Peasant Movement (MCI). Further local strikes took on a violent character involving head-on clashes with the police and armed forces. It could be said that the forms of struggle the masses were to make use of in April were learned from the detailed television news reports on the 1983 confrontations.

In November, a third wave of protests culminated in a one-day strike by 100,000 workers. Meanwhile, the government was beginning to impose and collect new taxes to offset the budget deficit, as it had pledged to the IMF. This touched off the first big round of inflation.

In January of this year the main trade-union federations announced the formation of a coordinating committee. The first point of its platform demanded that the government break with the IMF. By then discussions had been opened between the regime and the IMF for the second part of the accord.

The union federations included two with a progressive orientation, the CGT and CUT; one affiliated with the government party, the UGTD; and two others with right-wing leaderships, the CASC and CNTD.² They announced a plan for mobilizations that began February 4 with a militant march in Santo Domingo involving more than 30,000 persons.

This demonstration was followed up with 32 more in all parts of the country, plus 12 others sponsored by the PLD and its union federation (which had remained outside the coordinating committee).

The trade-union committee called for a national day of protest on April 7. Marches and other activities took place in more than 30 towns and cities across the country. In Santo Domingo protesters clashed with the police after having marched for several blocks through the heart of the neighborhoods where the April 23-24 upsurge would begin.

In the middle of the Holy Week vacation period, President Jorge Blanco addressed the country April 18 to report the results of his recent visit to Washington and of his talks with the IMF. He said pledges of aid had been obtained from President Reagan, and that an accord had been reached with the IMF calling for

2. CGT — General Confederation of Workers; CUT — United Confederation of Workers; UGTD — General Union of Dominican Workers; CASC — Autonomous Class-Struggle Confederation; CNTD — National Confederation of Dominican Workers. — IP

imported medicines, foodstuffs, and most other goods to be paid for at prices corresponding to a sharply devalued peso. Only petroleum products would continue to be imported at the old exchange rate for a short while.

The following day price hikes were announced on 16 basic consumer items, including bread, cooking oil, pasta, and other foodstuffs widely used by the people. Taken together, the price increases amounted to a more than 100 percent hike in living costs.

This provoked tremendous discontent. On April 22 popular assemblies were held simultaneously in the three neighborhoods that began the protests. Representatives from the trade unions, youth clubs, Christian base communities, and retail-merchants associations took part in each of these gatherings, along with many activists and revolutionary militants. The three assemblies decided unanimously to begin a strike in the neighborhoods the following day.

The resulting upsurge marked the high point of a process of accumulation of forces that had produced broader and broader waves of protests and found expression in growing coordination among different sectors of the people. The entire country was ready to respond to a call for action.

The movement continues

The May Day celebrations, which the trade-union coordinating committee had been planning since early April, became a focus for continuing the protest movement. The regime maintained the militarization of the country and banned further demonstrations. In face of



Protester under arrest in Santo Domingo in April.

this, the unions called for a national day of mourning on May Day. This resulted in a total halt in activities, expressing the people's repudiation of the government's crimes. The unions also presented a list of demands on May Day and gave the government one week to respond.

The government failed to act, so on May 8 the union federations called a general strike for the following day. The strike was partially successful, shutting down transportation and significant sectors of commerce and industry.

As an action held when the wave of protest was subsiding, this national strike lent continuity to the struggle and was widely supported.

The coordinating committee of the union federations played the preponderant political role in the upsurge, keeping the demand for a break with the IMF at the forefront. Certain conciliatory positions taken in negotiations with the regime were the result of a relationship of forces unfavorable to the progressive sectors within the coordinating committee. But such attitudes were offset by a commitment to ongoing mobilizations and by the clear overall confrontation with the imperialist policies of the IMF.

Toward a political recomposition

The popular uprising of April 23-25 is having enormous political repercussions.

It was a mortal blow to the ruling PRD's preponderant influence among the masses. Despite having long since betrayed the interests of the people, this party has always sought to present a nationalist, populist image based on its role in leading the April 1965 insurrection and patriotic war against U.S. intervention. In handing the country's sovereignty over to the IMF and unleashing bloody repression against the people, the PRD has seen its mass following sharply eroded.

Supposed differences between the PRD's representatives in the government and leaders of the party apparatus vanished in face of the mass upsurge. PRD General Secretary José Francisco Peña Gómez spoke out in support of the regime and in defense of its repressive policies.

The right-wing opposition, expressed almost exclusively in the Reformist Party (PR) led by ex-President Joaquín Balaguer, offers no coherent alternative to the IMF's program. While the PR demagogically claimed to back the protests, it also condemned the radical form these took on.

Balaguer's party has benefited from the PRD's loss of popularity, and this will be reflected especially in the next elections. It has taken a more aggressive stance and seeks to present itself as the system's principal alternative to the PRD.

The Dominican Liberation Party became in the 1982 elections the main channel through which the initial and still confused drift to the left by broad sections of the masses found expression. But it took little part in the April events. Pursuing its course of seeking support



SALVADOR JORGE BLANCO

among ruling-class sectors, the PLD failed to condemn the government for the repression and instead lined up with it by making the left the main target of its attacks.

The revolutionary left had been participating in the whole process that led to the April rebellion, but it was surprised by the scope and radical character of the upsurge. Its approach was to give unconditional support to the protests and take part fully in them.

As a result the regime unleashed its security forces against the left. Socialist Bloc leader Rafael Fafa Taveras and Communist Party General Secretary Narciso Isa Conde were both jailed, and the Socialist Bloc's headquarters were surrounded by the police for more than eight hours while the Dominican Left Front was holding a news conference there. Dozens of militants from the revolutionary left were detained throughout the country.

Deep political crisis

The principal conclusions the left has drawn from these experiences are the following:

- The mass uprising brought to an end the long period of quiescence achieved by imperialism's counterrevolutionary policies following the April 1965 war.
- The explosion of the masses onto the national political scene has transformed the current social and economic crisis into a political one that will be deepgoing and prolonged.
- The conditions are ripe for the action of a revolutionary vanguard to lead in bringing about a revolutionary situation in the country in a short period of time.

The preparation for more days of struggle and the setting out of new lines of action for the revolutionary movement are the main tasks the left is now taking up. Meanwhile, the government has announced further inflationary measures imposed by the IMF, to which the masses threaten to respond with a new wave of protests, perhaps even bigger than the preceding ones. □

New steps in agrarian reform

Ties between farmers and workers are strengthened

State power in the hands of one class, the proletariat, can and must become an instrument for winning to the side of the proletariat the non-proletarian working masses, an instrument for winning those masses from the bourgeoisie and from the petty-bourgeois parties. — Lenin¹

By Michael Baumann

MANAGUA — Land. More and better land, the dream of every small farmer, is rapidly becoming a reality in Nicaragua.

In 1984 despite pressures from abroad (war) and from within the country (howls of outrage from the bourgeoisie in an election year), the Nicaraguan revolution is deepening the use of the major means at its disposal — *distribution of confiscated and national land* — to strengthen ties between farmers and workers, between the countryside and city.

This year alone, working farmers will receive from the revolutionary government titles to more than 1.3 million acres.

This will bring to a total of 2.4 million acres (nearly a fifth of the country's farmland) the amount of land deeded to peasant families since 1981. In all, some 45,000 families are the beneficiaries, receiving an average of about 50 acres per family.

The rate at which land distribution to the poor peasantry — both members of cooperatives and individuals — is being speeded up reveals the increasing role of agrarian reform as an instrument of class struggle in Nicaragua:

1981-82	228,000 acres
1983	877,000 acres
1984	1,300,000 acres

Land to those who work it

Where will this new land come from in 1984? Here too the answer reflects the deepening class character of the agrarian reform.

350,000 acres, one of the biggest chunks, is being taken from those who can best afford it — the big landowners, those who own more than 850 acres. Their share of the nation's cultivated land is being cut back to about 1.5 million acres, or 11 percent of the total. (Before the revolution they controlled nearly four times what they have today.)

150,000 acres will come from "gentlemen" farmers who let others sweat and do the work but take their cut off the top. That is, land that is currently being sharecropped, tenant farmed, or worked under some other form of "irregular," insecure, or highly exploitive form of

tenancy. Yesterday's sharecroppers will become tomorrow's owners, with full legal title to land they have been working all along.

600,000 acres is not really being taken from anybody. What it represents is government grants, with full legal title, covering "national" land currently being worked by settlers in the interior of the country.

The final 170,000 acres will come from trimming back the state farms. Here work continues on reviewing and reorganizing optimal use of the land originally confiscated from supporters of the dictatorship.

So nearly half the land being distributed this year (500,000 acres) is coming from private owners. Likewise, about half will go to farmers organized in production cooperatives, who now work about one out of every 10 acres in the country.

Titles from formerly "national" land will go to the individual families now working these plots. "It is true," said Nicaragua's Agrarian Reform Ministry MIDINRA, "that this will not substantially affect patterns of land tenancy. But it does vindicate a historic right of the peasants. And it will strengthen the presence of the revolution in the countryside."

Shift in policy

"We are going to give more land to individual peasants," a high Sandinista official told the international press in a background briefing here May 22.

On the understanding that he would not be quoted by name, the official reported the outcome of recent discussions on agrarian reform and other topics in the leadership of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN).

He explained that at the present time the government did not have the resources required to initiate a large number of new cooperatives, which is what it would like to do. On the other hand, this is no reason to slow down the fulfillment of the historic Sandinista pledge that no peasant would be left without land.

"If you give 30 peasants 2,000 manzanas [about 3,500 acres] to farm as a cooperative, this naturally implies loans, seeds, technical help, maybe even a tractor," he said. But in many cases, "we just don't have these things to give out.

"An individual peasant, on the other hand, somehow — God knows how — works these things out himself. At least he can produce food for himself and his family, and take some of the pressure off the distribution system."

On the other end of the food chain, the official reported, stiff measures are planned to deal with merchants who hoard or speculate.

Shortly, he said, "the government is going to announce legal measures for improvement of the distribution of goods within the country. The state is not going to take over distribution, but it is going to work more closely in association with private merchants."

To give a concrete example, he explained that state marketing officials would go into a town or neighborhood, ask residents for the names of the ten most honest shopkeepers, channel all basic supplies through those ten, and "let the other 90 look for new jobs."

No "freeze" because of elections

1984 is an election year in Nicaragua, the first elections since the victory of the revolution. One of the factors that obviously was weighed in determining this year's agrarian reform plans was the political impact further confiscations would have on the big growers and their capitalist allies.

In an extensive report given in January and published in mid-May,² Agrarian Reform Minister Jaime Wheelock went over some of the "objections, problems, and in some cases contrary opinions" that had emerged in discussions on this and other questions related to the distribution of land.

Referring to the decision to continue confiscations, Wheelock noted: "Some say, 'It's dangerous to take a step like this now; things have to be frozen because of the elections.'

"I have one thing to say to them," Wheelock answered. "The electoral situation, no electoral situation, is going to stop us from carrying our agrarian reform through to the end.

"One of the main reasons we overthrew Somoza was precisely to carry out an agrarian reform. How can we stop now? Now that we are in power we have to deepen the agrarian reform we promised. . . .

"The program of the revolution is the program of agrarian reform. And when the *campesinos* who are going to serve as candidates raise their banner, what banner are they going to raise if not the banner of agrarian reform? Are they going to call for giving back land [to the big landowners]? No, that's the banner of other candidates."

The argument has also been raised,

2. *Sector Agropecuario: Resultados 1983, Plan de Trabajo 1984*. Report given by Agrarian Reform Minister Jaime Wheelock, January 27-28, 1984, to officials of MIDINRA and representatives of the FSLN, Association of Rural Workers (ATC), and National Union of Farmers and Ranchers (UNAG). Available from MIDINRA, Km. 8 1/2 Carretera a Masaya, Managua, Nicaragua. 180 córdobas (US\$18).

1. From "The Constituent Assembly Elections and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 262.

Wheelock said, that by continuing to give out so much land "we are going to affect the seasonal labor force" needed to harvest the export crops.

"This point of view is unacceptable," he replied. "We can sign an agreement with the wage workers who are going to become cooperative members — a contract arranging for them to work as pickers during the harvests. We can create belts of cooperatives around the state farms, giving us our own labor market."

Another argument, Wheelock said, is that "the cooperatives are debt-prone and inefficient." The fault here, he answered, really lies more with the government than with the cooperatives. "We have to give them adequate land and propose suitable crops. The real source of inefficiency is not the cooperatives."

Finally, Wheelock pointed out, there is a tendency to see the cooperatives as somehow separate and distinct from the "revolutionary and socialist thrust of the agrarian reform." That is, to view the state farms as the "only real collectivist aspect" of the agrarian reform.

This is a "dangerous distortion," Wheelock said, one that can lead to "schematic application" of agrarian reform policy. "I say that the People's Property Sector is made up of both the cooperatives and the state farms." In 1983, he pointed out, when the revolution reduced the amount of acreage held by the state farms in order to strengthen the cooperatives, it strengthened the *entire* People's Property Sector.

Food for cities — critical issue

1983 was a rough year for Nicaraguans — farmers and workers alike. Inflation hit 40 percent, on top of 29 percent the year before. In terms of the market basket of basic goods, Wheelock estimated, the real wages of working people dropped between 30 percent and 40 percent from December 1981 to July 1983.

By conventional standards of measurement, Nicaragua's economy grew by 5.1 percent last year — the highest increase in Latin America and one of the highest in the world. But this was accomplished by rigidly controlling the use of hard currency. Less food was imported; more inputs for agriculture and industry.

"To meet the costs of defense and social investment," Wheelock said, "we had to cut into consumption of nonessential goods, and at times of essential goods. . . . That is why the economic growth was neither seen nor felt in the people's market basket."

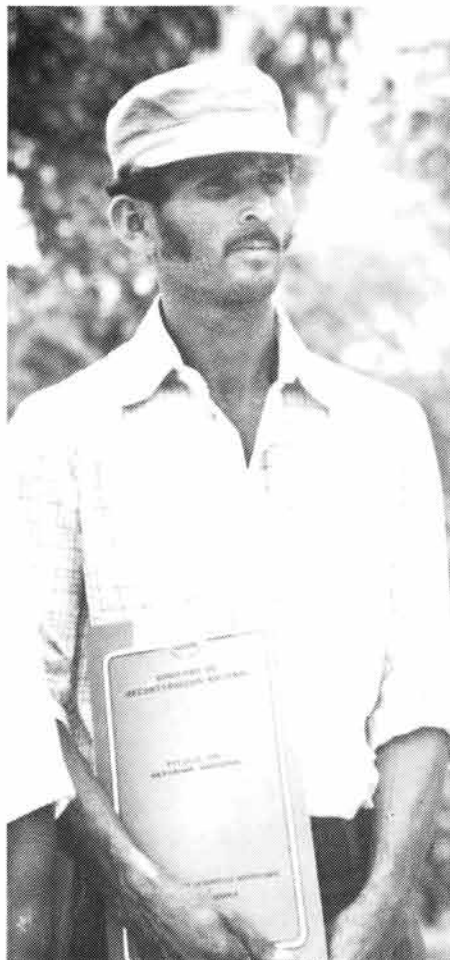
1984 promises to be even harder: "We have to continue to give priority first to defense and second to the production of basic goods, including indispensable items of food. And we have to do this within the even more complex framework of a year of even more proselytizing campaigns for the elections."

Reactionaries at home and abroad, he said, will not only "take advantage of our errors" but also blame the revolution for problems that were either inherited or caused by the war.

The situation is exacerbated by the fact that

Nicaragua will have to import \$34 million in food this year — 150,000 tons of beans, corn, and sorghum.

"Despite all our planning and all our work," Wheelock said, "this means that five years after the revolution we still have not achieved



Michael Baumann/IP

Peasant with land title.

self-sufficiency in food. . . . That \$34 million, which we don't have, represents greater indebtedness for the country. And if we cannot come up with it, it means aggravation of the social situation, making even more difficult and complex the political framework we have to face in the coming months."

The agricultural regions are being asked to make a special effort in food production, he said, because "this year it is a political necessity, not an additional or marginal responsibility. This has to be seen as their central responsibility."

Gains in 1983

Among the positive developments singled out in Wheelock's report, one ironically is a direct result of the war. That is the substantial increase in production cooperatives, largely because of the number of small farmers who had to move from the border regions and begin farming elsewhere on land provided by the

state. Most of the 175,000 acres coming from the state farms this year will go to these displaced families.

The production cooperatives, or Sandinista Agricultural Cooperatives (CAS) as they are also called, are made up of families who work the land in common, with no individual ownership of plots. They represent a higher degree of social organization than the other main form, the Credit and Service Cooperatives (CCS), where members retain individual title to their own land.

By the end of 1984 it is estimated that production cooperatives will total 30,000 families, working about 1.1 million acres, or nearly 9 percent of all farmland. Credit and Service Cooperatives will work a total of 1.4 million acres, a little more than 10 percent of total acreage.

The total number of all cooperatives remained roughly the same as in 1982 — about 3,000 — but improvements were made in organization. "We now have a sector of the cooperatives that is on the road to consolidation," Wheelock said. "They have a perspective of helping out, in the short term, with national production, of playing a role in the country's plans for development, and of exercising influence on the peasant sector as a whole."

Goals for 1984

Goals for this year, which Wheelock called "somewhat ambitious but not completely impossible," are to raise agricultural exports by 6.5 percent and food for domestic consumption by 15.5 percent. Despite the war and the shortage of funds, \$330 million in national and hard currency has been set aside this year for investment in agriculture. About two-thirds will go toward the development of agroindustry, the remaining third to food production and the cooperatives.

In preparing for the future, it is natural for Nicaragua's agronomists and planners to look longingly at the latest in technological developments, Wheelock said. But he urged a strong dose of realism as well.

One of our major tasks is to help "small producers shift from primitive to semi-primitive forms of cultivation. . . . We have to be clear that our human material is still in great measure stuck in backwardness. We cannot abandon the thousands of Nicaraguans who see in the agrarian reform and in the revolution the horizon and the door, really the only door, leading to the future."

To provide the indispensable ingredient — more land for the small farmer — Wheelock announced that the revolution will next be taking a hard look at the "smaller" big landowners. That is, at owners of properties between 350 and 850 acres, a sector that has so far been almost untouched by the agrarian reform.

The aim is to find out which of these properties are abandoned or underutilized, rented out under the table, or simply the result of a "paper" division of a larger property within a family. The revolution has better uses for such land. □

Salvadoran FMLN's May Day message

Hails workers' 'mounting militant actions'

[The following May Day message from the General Command of El Salvador's Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) is reprinted from the May 7-14 issue of *Guazapa*, a Salvadoran rebel newsweekly. The translation from Spanish is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

The General Command of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) salutes all Salvadoran workers on the occasion of May 1, International Workers Day.

May 1, 1984, will undoubtedly be an important occasion for Salvadoran workers to draw up a balance sheet on the hard-fought struggles they have waged over the past year, under the worst conditions of repression imposed by the dictatorship. It will also be a day to take account of all those struggles that are yet to be fought, in the framework of the heroic and historic revolutionary actions being carried out victoriously by our people, guided by their vanguard, the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front.

The FMLN highly values the mounting militant actions waged by the workers of the city and countryside to win their immediate economic and social demands, as well as their growing incorporation into the ranks of the revolutionary army, thereby bringing nearer the glorious day of the people's victory against the armed forces of the puppet government and its Yankee imperialist masters.

Thousands of workers have been murdered, kidnapped, or massacred — victims of the brutal repression of the security forces and the puppet army, whether acting openly or under the guise of the death squads.

These workers' only crime has been their demand — over the course of several decades — for jobs, better wages, fair treatment, freedom, and social justice. The Salvadoran workers have shed their blood in heroic and militant struggles in the front ranks of the people. Beloved working-class leaders head the list of the Salvadoran people's martyrs. Naturally and logically, many of the best leaders and activists of the labor movement are today exemplary fighters in the FMLN.

Our people's struggle has always been and still is long, hard, and filled with sacrifice. But such sacrifice, effort, sweat, and bloodshed have not been in vain. All this has powerfully contributed to building the people's movement that is now really contending for power.

The continual and mounting revolutionary military victories show that the FMLN has grown stronger in terms of both quantity and quality. At the head of the people, it has defeated one political and military plan of the

dictatorship and Yankee imperialism after another.

The flow of millions of dollars, of arms and military equipment, and the modern technology and U.S. military advisers — that is, the special counterinsurgency war the U.S. government and its puppets are waging against the Salvadoran people — is being defeated.

Here are some facts to prove this. From Jan. 10, 1981, to the present, we have inflicted more than 18,000 casualties on the enemy, including those killed in combat, wounded, or taken prisoner. We have captured more than 6,000 weapons and large quantities of ammunition and equipment. We have driven the dictatorship's armed forces from one-third of the nation's territory, which is now under the FMLN's control.

We have annihilated or broken up entire companies and battalions and even a whole brigade. All this is causing morale to collapse in the army's ranks. Hundreds of soldiers surrender and many more desert; more than a few join our combat units.

During the recent March 25 electoral farce, we disrupted at its earliest stages the vast military operation mounted for the same time, involving Honduran and U.S. forces, and we secured our control over a wide territory, as shown by the fact that voting did not take place in 86 municipalities.

We are a real alternative power! Decisive to this advance toward the triumph that is now taking place is the participation of the working people of city and countryside who make up the bulk of our ranks, as well as the participation of students, teachers, intellectuals, small and medium-sized merchants and industrialists of our country, who have been incorporated into various political and military tasks.

We must also recognize the contribution made to the advance of our people's war by the great international solidarity of the workers, of democratic governments, of political, social, and humanitarian organizations, and of figures from all the peoples of the world who have joined us in our struggle for freedom, independence, and a just peace.

While the Salvadoran oligarchs plunder billions of dollars from the country, the genocidal regime has imposed a war economy that drastically reduces the capacity to provide jobs, freezes wages, raises the price of goods consumed by the people to intolerable levels, increases taxes, and causes the bankruptcy of small and medium-sized companies.

In this way the dictatorship forces the workers to bear the economic burden of the war, a war the oligarchs and imperialists are waging precisely to go on exploiting and squeezing the workers.

The hundreds of millions of dollars of supposed military and economic "aid" from the United States government are loans that, according to Reagan's calculations, will have to be repaid by the Salvadoran people in the future, with interest.

To force the working people to bear the economic burden of the war and to prevent their just actions in support of their demands from helping to topple the dictatorship, the dictatorship bans and represses strikes and murders their leaders. But this hopeless and futile effort will not succeed either in stopping the workers.

The people have not let themselves be fooled. The people know perfectly well that the dictatorship is trying to force them to bear not only the economic but also the human burden of a war being waged against themselves. This is the meaning of the massive forced recruitment the puppet army uses to build up its tottering forces.

Compañeros — workers:

The enemies of our people are preparing a major escalation of foreign military intervention in our country. And to provide a political cover for this they have mounted the electoral farce, the second round of which will take place May 6. They hope to fool the people, to make them think that the elections are a step toward a political solution to the conflict, when in actual fact they are trying to dress up the dictatorship in legal clothing so as to prolong the war, invade our country, and trample our national sovereignty.

What perspective do the elections offer the workers?

Those competing for office are the same parties and figures that helped adopt the decrees freezing wages and banning strikes. They are the same ones who adopted a political constitution from which land reform was eliminated.

Those competing for office are the same parties and figures that have encouraged or tolerated the death squads. They are the ones who carried out or were accomplices to many crimes, including the murder of Archbishop Romero.

The FMLN and the FDR [Revolutionary Democratic Front] want to reduce the war's social costs and curtail its prolongation. They have presented a broad, flexible proposal for a political solution: the establishment, through negotiations, of a Provisional Government of Broad Participation, which would carry out the basic economic, political, and social changes that would make it possible to hold free, authentic, and democratic elections.

This government would be made up of rep-

representatives of the workers and peasants movement, of the public employees, the National University, the Central American University, the Professional Organizations, the political parties, a purged army, and the FMLN and FDR.

The FMLN wants to prevent intervention by foreign troops. But at the same time it is preparing to make the invaders eat the dust of defeat if they come to our country. In Vietnam they used chemical weapons and more bombs than all those dropped in the Second World War; they sent 500,000 Yankee soldiers. Despite all that, they were defeated. If they intervene in our country they will be defeated again.

In saluting the workers on this day, the FMLN calls on them to close ranks and get involved in the various struggles, both to press their legitimate economic and social demands, and to swell the ranks of the revolutionary army, in order to attain real objectives that can ensure freedom, justice, peace, and independence for our people.

Demand just wage increases!

Demand the right to organize!

Join the ranks of the FMLN!

Long live the heroic strikes of the Salvadoran workers!

Long live May 1, day of international workers' solidarity!

United to fight until the final victory!

Revolution or death, we will win!

El Salvador, May 1, 1984
 General Command of the FMLN
 Commander Fermán Cienfuegos
 Commander Leonel González
 Commander Joaquín Villalobos
 Commander Roberto Roca
 Commander Schafik J. Handal

DOCUMENTS

New party in Grenada

Bishop supporters continue struggle

[The following news release was issued May 30 by spokespeople for the Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement in Grenada.]

* * *

The Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement (MBPM) was launched at Victoria, St. Marks, Grenada on Sunday, 27 May 1984 at the rally marking the 14th annual celebration of African Liberation Day in Grenada, the 150th anniversary of the abolition of slavery, and in honor of the 40th birthday of Maurice Bishop.

This new political movement has been named in honor of Maurice Bishop as he provided the most outstanding leadership to our nation and was murdered defending the cause

of the freedom of our people. MBPM pledges to continue the struggle to bring bread, peace, and justice to the poor and working people, democratic and progressive forces, and to the nation as a whole.

In the immediate period a steering committee with Kenrick Radix as chairman has been set up to coordinate the activities of the party.

The rise of counterrevolution of the Coard clique in October 1983 and the murder of Maurice Bishop and other outstanding leaders led to the U.S. invasion and occupation of the sacred soil of Grenada and to the loss of our sovereignty and independence.

As a party of patriots and as the descendants of Fedon, Butler, and Marryshow, MBPM commits itself to join with the people to redeem our nation's honor and independence. We will make sure that the hard-won democratic gains made by our people are never surrendered. The unacceptable levels of unemployment, hunger, poverty, and genuine hardship today clearly exposes the bankruptcy of those who exercise temporary authority and their allies.

In the spirit of Maurice Bishop and the revolutionary heroes and martyrs of our nation, conscious of the command of history, dedicated in the service of our people, we issue an urgent call to all our citizens at home and abroad to rededicate ourselves in the just and noble cause of building a truly free, democrat-



KENRICK RADIX

Lou Howort/IP

MAURICE BISHOP SPEAKS

THE GRENADA REVOLUTION
 1979-83



SPECIAL OFFER TO IP SUBSCRIBERS 'Maurice Bishop Speaks'

This 400-page collection of interviews with and speeches by the slain prime minister of Grenada also includes an introduction by *IP* editor Steve Clark, explaining the events leading to the overthrow of the revolution, the assassination of Bishop, and the invasion by U.S. troops.

If you subscribe or extend your *IP* subscription, you can receive this book at the special price of only \$4 (a saving of \$2.95)! To get this book out to others, order 3 or more copies for only \$3.50 each!

Please begin renew extend my subscription

North and Central America/Caribbean: 6 months/US\$12.50 One year/US\$25

Europe/South America: 6 months/US\$17.50 One year/US\$35

Asia/Africa: 6 months/US\$22.50 One year/US\$45

Enclosed is an additional US\$4 for a copy of *Maurice Bishop Speaks.**

Enclosed is \$ _____ for _____ copies at \$3.50 each (minimum order 3 copies).*

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Postal code _____

*Includes shipping by surface or book rate. Write for added charges for books sent by air.

Intercontinental Press, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014

ic, and independent country.

We call also for the support, solidarity, and friendship of the peoples of the Caribbean, the nonaligned nations, and all the world. The strength of our nation lies in the consciousness, unity, and organization of its people. Maurice Bishop — the man and his ideas — best symbolize this. He is the rock upon which

we build our nation's political future.

Forward on our feet, not on our knees!

Long live the spirit of Maurice Bishop and the martyrs and heroes of the Grenadian people!

St. George's, Grenada
30 May 1984

Latin American and Caribbean intellectuals honor Maurice Bishop

Writers, artists, and intellectuals from throughout Latin America and the Caribbean gathered in Havana, Cuba, in late April to mark the 25th anniversary of the foundation of the Cuban publishing house Casa de las Americas.

One aspect of the event was to pay tribute to slain Grenadian Prime Minister Maurice Bishop. A new literary award was launched by Casa de las Americas to commemorate Bishop's memory.

Among those who participated in the week's series of presentations, literature readings, concerts, and discussions were Cuban Minister of Culture Armando Hart, Nicaraguan Minister of Culture Ernesto Cardenal, Cuban poet Nicolás Guillén, Uruguayan singer and guitarist Daniel Viglietti, Cuban Vice-president Carlos Rafael Rodríguez, and Barbadian writer George Lamming.

Alimenta Bishop, the late Grenadian prime minister's mother, was guest of honor. She also met with Fidel Castro during her stay in Cuba, and shared the platform with Castro and other Cuban leaders during the May Day celebration.

At the main ceremony for Casa's anniversary, George Lamming gave the closing address, which was published in the May 13 English-language weekly edition of *Granma*. In it, he described his first visit to Cuba nearly 20 years ago, the impact of the Cuban revolution on Caribbean intellectuals of his generation, and the role of Casa de las Americas in pro-

moting cultural development and solidarity among peoples throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.

At the end of his address, Lamming turned to Grenada:

"After the invasion of that small island by 6,000 American soldiers, the American Secretary of State Mr. Shultz arrived, and his first observation was simple and complete. He said: 'This is a delicious piece of real estate.' The anguish and tragedy of an island, of an entire region, was reduced to this simple and barbarous definition: 'a delicious piece of real estate.'

"Today these aggressors prepare for a tem-

porary feast over the corpse of the Grenada revolution.

"But it is a certainty they will not succeed in cannibalizing the spirit and tradition which created Maurice Bishop. For Bishop was the product of a certain political culture which had known slavery and the history of slave rebellions; a culture which has consistently fought to break the chain of colonial oppression and cultural insult.

"During those four short years of revolutionary struggle, Grenada became a name inseparable from Nicaragua, as Nicaragua is inseparable from Cuba. Fidel had welcomed Bishop in Havana with the same joy that Bishop welcomed Ernesto Cardenal in St. George's, Grenada. This small island, once anonymous and indecipherable on the ocean, created its own Ceremony of Souls where the spirits of the hemisphere (Cuba, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Jamaica, Trinidad, Guadeloupe, Mexico) met and discovered their own space for reconciling differences of language, history and culture.

"The defeat of the Grenada revolution has left a wound in the conscience of the hemisphere and a scar of infamy on all who contributed to its dissolution. But Maurice Bishop and the martyred of Grenada and Cuba who fell with him survive in our gratitude and esteem.

"Other armies will arise in his name." □

Australia

Bishop speeches have impact

Brisbane meeting promotes new book

By Lee Walkington

BRISBANE — Distribution of *Maurice Bishop Speaks* (Pathfinder Press, New York) in Australia received a further boost when over 30 labor movement activists gathered here on May 25 to launch the book.

This recently published volume of the former Grenadian prime minister's speeches was officially launched in Brisbane by Alan Muir, the assistant secretary of the Queensland branch of the Australian Telecommunications Employees Association (ATEA).

Muir spoke about the impact the book had on his own understanding of the events that led to the U.S. invasion of Grenada, and his appreciation of the achievements of the revolutionary government. He stressed the positive lessons to be drawn from the four and a half years of the Grenadian revolutionary experience, and even the lessons to be assimilated from the overturn of October 1983. Muir said that these lessons were of value to the working class movement in Australia, despite the many different political conditions faced.

The meeting also heard greetings from Queensland Senator George Georges, an Aus-

tralian Labor Party representative in Federal Parliament, who telegraphed his support to the meeting. "The book is an important contribution to our understanding of both Maurice Bishop the person and his ideals. It is also significant in that it shows us the dimension of the struggle which the peoples' movements face in Central America and the Caribbean," the senator said.

Labor member of Queensland State Parliament Anne Warner was to have addressed the meeting but last-minute illness prevented her from attending.

A screening of a videotape of an interview with former New Jewel activist and press secretary to Maurice Bishop, Don Rojas, followed the book launching.

The meeting was organized by New International Publications, the Australian distributors of *Maurice Bishop Speaks*, as part of an effort to achieve the widest possible distribution of the book in Australia. Ten copies were sold during the evening, and orders for further copies for bookshops and trade union office libraries were also placed. A similar meeting was organized by New International Publications in Melbourne in March. □



GEORGE LAMMING

Interview with Vietnam's prime minister

Pham Van Dong answers questions of 'Newsweek'

[The following interview with Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Van Dong was conducted by Patricia Sethi for *Newsweek* magazine. Excerpts appeared in the May 14 issue of *Newsweek*, published in New York. The full text was supplied by the Vietnamese mission to the United Nations.]

* * *

Question. There is an impression being created in the West that Vietnam has merely traded the presence of one superpower for another: the Russians are in your country today much the way the U.S. was in the 60s and early 70s. In fact some analysts are referring to you as a Soviet satellite because of your growing dependence on the Soviet Union. How do you answer such allegations?

Answer. President Ho Chi Minh once said that "Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom," and this is part of the psyche of our nation. For the sake of that freedom and independence the Vietnamese people have fought repeatedly to resist foreign aggression over the last 2,000 years. Does anyone truly believe that after having paid such an immense price for our freedom in blood, sweat, and tears we would hand over that newly won independence to someone else? It is precisely because we want to preserve that freedom and independence that we have friendly relations with the Soviet Union because the Soviet Union does respect our independence and has extended its hand of friendship to assist us in our defense and development. Everyone needs friends in life. Similarly, countries need friends too. It is but natural to do so. The Soviet Union is a friend.

Q. But how do you explain the presence of 6,000 Russian advisers in your country and the Soviet TU-16s at Cam Ranh Bay? Then the Soviet Union recently conducted joint amphibious exercises off your coast. Some in the U.S. believe that Da Nang and Cam Ranh Bay have become bases for the Soviet Union.

A. Let me assure you that there are no Soviet bases at Da Nang or Cam Ranh Bay or anywhere else in my country. Let me also assure you that we would never, I repeat never, grant any country the right to have bases in our country. The facilities we have given the Soviet Union in our airports and harbors is a procedure that any country grants another friendly country. Amphibious exercises are also routine and in line with the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation which we signed with the Soviet Union in 1978. Of course if someone is out to project the dark side of any



Diane Wang/IP

Destruction from 1979 Chinese attack in Lang Son.

issue, it is his problem. It doesn't bother me or my people. Vietnam is like a bird in the sky, flying free. It needs its flock for support and assistance — but it is always free.

As for the Soviet specialists in our country — they are mostly economic experts. They are helping especially in the construction of major projects like hydroelectric power stations and other large industrial projects. Upon our request, when the need arises, the Soviet government sends specialists to help us within specific limits and for the specific length of time needed. There are other specialists here too, from socialist as well as nonsocialist countries — Sweden, Denmark, France, India, Finland. Why does the United States worry only about the Soviet specialists and conveniently forget the rest? Is this another example of the double standard?

Q. Is normalization possible between the United States and Vietnam? What are your conditions for normalizations?

A. There are no conditions for normalization other than that both sides show eagerness and goodwill. We consider normalization as mutually beneficial. But the process has been hindered by the hostile policies of the U.S. government acting in connivance with Chinese expansionism with a view to weakening Vietnam. When the U.S. feels it necessary to see the benefits of normalization, it will take

place. Our door is always open, it is for the United States to pass through the threshold. We are a patient people. We can wait. Eventually the U.S. will come through that door.

Q. How has President Reagan's trip to China and [Secretary of Defense Caspar] Weinberger's analysis of the importance of U.S.-Chinese-Japanese-Korean ties impacted on your country? Such projections have totally excluded Vietnam.

A. It is not a good omen. It worries us because it could affect peace and stability in our region. At the same time, we must remember that the U.S. and China are not completely alike — they may sleep in the same bed but they have different dreams. And one day the U.S. will realize that.

Q. One of the major issues which must be resolved between the U.S. and Vietnam is that of the MIAs [missing in action]. The Reagan administration says it cannot exclude the possibility that there are GIs living as prisoners in your jungles to serve as your trump card in the normalization issue. Is an independent international verification process possible to determine that there are no American GIs living in Vietnam?

A. Vietnam considers the question of MIAs to be a humanitarian issue. During the past eleven years Vietnam has returned to the U.S. all

living Americans as well as all remains of MIAs and transmitted any relevant information we may have, without any conditions or linkage to normalization. There is no need for independent international verification. I can assure you categorically that there are no living Americans left in Vietnam, and anyone who believes so is daydreaming. First the U.S. had a hot war with us. Now it carries on psychological warfare against us using the MIA question.

Q. But what details can you share about the MIAs? How many are left? How exactly do you search for them?

A. The U.S. informs us that there are some 2,500 MIAs in Vietnam. We are doing our absolute best to find their remains. We have set up a commission which oversees forensic specialists and search-squad teams that go out into villages to find out if we can establish the presence of a U.S. MIA there. But there are so many problems. For one, the villagers are not enthusiastic about helping us. Why are you so concerned about the U.S. dead when they came in planes to kill us, they say. Why are you so concerned about U.S. MIAs when the U.S. continues its hostile policy towards Vietnam? Why should we help them, the villagers ask us.

Another difficulty is the lack of accurate data as to the whereabouts of the remains. Even the sophisticated U.S. computer that has documented the MIAs fails to be of help. For example, U.S. information given to us listed U.S. paratrooper Dominic Sonsane of the 82nd Airborne Division as an MIA over Da Nang in 1964, and we found his remains buried in a cemetery in Ho Chi Minh City. But we will continue to do our best despite the many prob-

lems. I can assure the American people of that fact. And in May, we will turn over to the U.S. government the remains of eight MIAs including that of paratrooper Dominic Sonsane.

Q. What of the fate of the Amerasian children? How many are there and when can they leave? There are reports that they are forced to suffer humiliation and discrimination because of their mixed parentage.

A. The Amerasian children, like all Vietnamese children, are the victims of the U.S. war in Vietnam. They are being treated humanely: in the difficult present conditions of our country we are doing our best for them to live as normal a life as all other Vietnamese children. We have about 15,000 Amerasian children in the South. The U.S. government can have these children tomorrow if it so wishes. Send a plane in tomorrow and we will put them on board so they can leave. You can tell the children by their faces, it is easy to pick them out. But no, the U.S. wants documentation. The U.S. wants us to detail their parentage. That takes time. And many of these children do not know their father and mother.

If the U.S. is so concerned about their fate why do they need all this documentation which takes so much time when you can tell the children by their faces? Because the Amerasian children are being used by the U.S. government as a tool against Vietnam. Recently Washington even further slowed down the process by incorporating the Amerasian children into a limited quota system for immigrants of Vietnamese origin, which is also affected as a consequence. By so doing, the U.S. authorities are dragging out the fate of the Amerasian children indefinitely.

New York solidarity meeting held for Vietnam

An important victory for political rights was won in New York, June 2, when Vietnam's ambassador to the United Nations, Hoang Bich Son, addressed a meeting in solidarity with the Vietnamese people.

The June 2 gathering, attended by more than 300 people, was the first public meeting in the United States to be addressed by a Vietnamese official without interference from rightist Vietnamese émigrés.

Although known rightist Vietnamese thugs were seen in the area of the meeting, they were dissuaded from attacking the gathering by a well-organized defense team as well as a substantial police presence.

The solidarity meeting was also addressed by *Intercontinental Press* editor Steve Clark, who recently returned from a fact-finding visit to Vietnam and Kampuchea; a representative of El Salvador's Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) and Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR); and Chan Bun Han, a Kampuchean activist in the United States.

The seriousness of the rightist Vietnamese threat was underscored only days before the

New York meeting. On May 28, two prominent members of the Association of Vietnamese in the United States were gunned down on a San Francisco street by a group calling itself the Vietnamese Organization to Exterminate the Communists and Restore the Nation.

Pham Thi Luu was killed in the attack. Her husband, Nguyen Van Luy, was gravely wounded. Luy was honorary president of the association, which seeks normalization of relations between Vietnam and the United States.

The Organization to Exterminate the Communists and Restore the Nation has also taken credit for the 1981 murder of Lam Trong Duong in San Francisco. Duong, too, was a well-known supporter of normalized relations between the United States and Vietnam.

The June 2 gathering, sponsored by the Militant Labor Forum, sent messages to San Francisco Mayor Diane Feinstein and U.S. Attorney General William French Smith demanding "an immediate and thorough investion into the terrorist attack on Nguyen Van Luy and the murder of Pham Thi Luu." □

Q. How serious is the border situation with China?

A. The situation is getting serious, with an increasing number of encroachments and border violations. This is the continuation of the Chinese war of aggression begun in February 1979 against the independence of Vietnam. We are prepared to fight and defeat an eventual large scale invasion from China.

There is another aspect to the present situation: China's unhappiness over the growing dialogue between Vietnam and ASEAN [Association of Southeast Asian Nations]. General Murdani, commander-in-chief of Indonesia's armed forces, recently visited Vietnam as did former Thai Prime Minister Kriangsak Chamanan. The dialogue was good, and China is informing Vietnam and ASEAN in a loud voice that we cannot deal without the Chinese. China also has to lift the sagging morale of the Pol Pot clique and show some support to the Thais after recent successful raids against the Khmer Rouge rebels in Kampuchea. How else to do it but by stirring up trouble on the Sino-Vietnamese border? On the other hand, could it be pure coincidence that the intensification of Chinese military operations along our border should happen while Reagan was visiting China?

Q. Do you expect rapprochement with China in the future? There are numerous reports that you are talking in Bucharest, Romania, at a low level.

A. The immediate future looks bleak, but in the long term anything is possible. I have learned that life is full of surprises. But before anything can happen, China will have to drop its support for the Pol Pot clique. We have on many occasions set forth proposals aimed at normalizing relations between our two countries including the proposal to sit down together no matter where, when, and at what level to discuss and settle mutual differences. Even to start with limited cultural and economic relations. But the Chinese have not responded. As for the Bucharest story. It is pure myth. Vietnam and China have their respective embassies in Peking and Hanoi. It is possible for both sides to talk to each other at any time right there. You must remember that there is the weight of past history here. For decades China has had hegemonistic designs on Vietnam: from the time of the ancient Chinese emperors to the present leadership in Peking.

Q. What is an acceptable solution in Kampuchea for Vietnam?

A. There can be total withdrawal by Vietnam once the Chinese ruling circles stop clinging to the genocidal Pol Pot clique and stop utilizing Thai territory as a steppingstone to undermine Kampuchea. We are prepared for many alternatives: a comprehensive settlement which rules out all foreign forces and all foreign bases in Southeast Asia.

Failing that, there are a bunch of partial solutions which are possible in the interim:

1. A treaty of nonaggression and noninter-

vention between Indochina and China.

2. A treaty of nonaggression and noninter-vention between Thailand and Indochina.

3. An agreement between ASEAN and In-dochina on a framework for peaceful coexis-tence and peaceful settlement of disputes.

Q. Which solution would be Vietnam's pre-ferred option?

A. Vietnam prefers a comprehensive solu-tion, but it would appear that a partial solution is more realistic. At the same time we are pre-pared for the worst scenario, which is no solu-tion. This means, on an annual basis, we could withdraw a large part of our forces over a 5-10 year period as the situation stabilizes and the people of Kampuchea are able to stand on their own.

Q. But how can you afford the price? After all, Vietnam is a poor country. Your per capita income is over \$100 a year, your resources are limited. If you place your emphasis on defense and maintaining an army which is one of the largest in the world, development will suffer badly. Is Kampuchea worth that price?

A. For thirty years Vietnam, Kampuchea, and Laos have been victims of continuous wars while the world enjoyed the longest peace in this century. We do most cherish peace to re-build our country. The last two centuries show that peace and security are indivisible for all three countries. Foreigners invading one of these three countries will not spare the other two. China had used Pol Pot to invade Vietnam and to kill millions of Kampuchean people. In Berlin the Soviet Union, the U.S., and Great Britain had the right to crush Hitler while in Phnom Penh Vietnam is denied the right to

crush Pol Pot at the same time saving the Kam-puchean people from the genocide of Pol Pot. We could not morally and in conscience stand by and watch the Pol Pot clique butcher mil-lions of innocent Kampuchean in cold blood. If you are sitting here and you see your neigh-bor being clubbed to death, can you stand by and watch? We also have to keep an eye on our neighbor to the north which has hegemonistic designs on us. So we have to maintain a de-fense system capable of withstanding this dou-ble onslaught. It is a burden imposed on us that we must shoulder even if we are poor, with limited resources. Is there any other way?

Yet we have attempted to give both develop-ment and defense the same priority. And our main objectives on the economic front are to improve our agricultural production, increase the availability of consumer goods, improve our energy resources and heavy industrial capability.

Q. Major human rights organizations, and even the U.S. State Department human rights report, recently documented that some 60,000 Vietnamese are in re-education camps in your country, pointing to much human rights abuse. Why do you feel the need for the camps, and when will you release all prisoners?

A. Following the liberation of Vietnam in 1975, there was no bloodbath nor a Nurem-berg-type trial. Nor was there capital punish-ment in dealing with the former collaborators with the enemy, as in Europe after the Second World War. We carried out a lenient, humane policy in keeping with our tradition. There was no violence: instead we placed these mass murderers of the My Lai type and participants in Phoenix operations* in re-education camps. As of now most of them have been freed, a

small number are left in these camps. But dis-torted reporting still exaggerates the number of re-education camp inmates. We are quite pre-pared to allow all of these left in the camps to leave tomorrow for the United States. But the U.S. government has rejected that suggestion. They prefer to leave these criminals free in Vietnam but not in the United States.

Q. Will a Sino-Soviet thaw alter Vietnam's relations with the two communist giants?

A. Normalization between any two coun-tries is the affair of the countries concerned. Yet such a thaw may prove to be beneficial to peace and security in Asia and would therefore be welcomed by us. But we do not believe that a change in Sino-Soviet relations can seriously affect Vietnam.

Q. Your country is essentially being run by the older generation right now. Have you made provision that the transition from the old to the new will be a smooth one?

A. We have an old Vietnamese proverb which says that when the bamboo gets old it sprouts young shoots. We have many young shoots, but there is no system of an heir appar-ent here. Things will evolve in due course. In our long struggle for independence and our journey towards development, generation has succeeded generation in a smooth transition. I feel confident and optimistic that this historical fact will hold true in the future too. □

*A CIA-directed program to assassinate members and supporters of the National Liberation Front in South Vietnam during the U.S. war there. Former CIA director William Colby testified that more than 20,000 Vietnamese were killed in the program's first two and a half years. — IP

Britain

Miners battle Thatcher's cops

3,000 arrests fail to stop pickets

**By Clive Turnbull
and Martin Hill**

SHEFFIELD — "What you now have in South Yorkshire is an actual police state, tan-tamount to something you are used to seeing in Chile or Bolivia," stated Arthur Scargill, pres-ident of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), following a series of violent attacks by police on coal miners picketing the Or-greave Coke Depot, near Sheffield, May 29 and 30.

The miners have been on strike for nearly three months against British government plans to close many mines permanently and throw thousands of miners out of work.

The fight has become a major class confron-tation between the labor movement and the

Conservative government of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, which directly controls the nationalized coal mines. The miners have won impressive solidarity from other unionists, in-cluding rail workers, dock workers, steelwork-ers, and others. The British Labour Party has taken some important steps to aid the strikers.

Much solidarity activity revolves around stopping the movement of scab coal and pre-venting its use in British industry. In the fore-front are mass "flying pickets" of NUM mem-bers such as those who aimed to stop the move-ment of coal at Orgreave.

In response, the British government has un-leashed a wave of police violence and a crackdown on the democratic rights of miners and other unionists that causes many to recall

previous historic British labor confrontations such as the 1926 general strike.

Almost 3,000 arrests to date

Since the strike began nearly 3,000 miners have been arrested — primarily in clashes in the Nottinghamshire area. In the Nottingham coalfields more modern mining methods and divisive incentive-pay plans yield higher wages for some miners. Several thousand have ignored the call for solidarity with the 85 per-cent of NUM members who are striking to save jobs. Much picketing is directed toward mak-ing the strike solid in Nottinghamshire.

On just one day, May 29, 82 pickets were arrested and 32 injured, as they attempted to prevent the National Coal Board (NCB) from

transporting coke from Orgreave to the Scunthorpe Works of the British Steel Corporation. The NCB was using nonunion, scab truck drivers.

The following day, another 35 miners were arrested, including NUM President Scargill. Police attacked the picket line with horses, dogs, and riot gear. After one week the total number of arrests stood at 173. Fifty-three miners suffered injuries, including broken arms, legs, and skull fractures.

A nurse at Rotherham General Hospital said that she had never seen as many scalp injuries, as well as injuries resulting from people crushed by horses and crowds, in all her years at the hospital. The Casualty Department had been stretched to the limit with Orgreave injuries.

Arthur Scargill described the scenes he had witnessed from having led the picketing personally for several days. "Anyone who has been here has seen police tactics of the most brutal nature. We have seen riot shields and riot gear in action. We have seen mounted police charging into our ranks. I was appealing to the police to show restraint," said Scargill. "There were baton charges. I saw truncheons wielded, and I saw our people hit. I saw people punched to the ground. Quite honestly, there were scenes of brutality which were almost unbelievable."

Nose to nose with police

Roland Whitehead, Silverwood NUM committee member, explained how the battles at Orgreave had arisen. "We took the police unawares with the first mass picket. We broke through their lines, but there was no violence on either side. The police even stopped the scab lorries [trucks] so that we could appeal to the drivers not to go in.

"But we turned up the next morning and found police with horses and dogs. One minute we were nose to nose with literally thousands of police pushing against us. Then they folded back and let the mounted police charge through. They wield batons like a baseball bat, galloping straight at you.

"At first their dogs were on long leashes, but that day they were let loose, biting one picket and then called to bite another by their handlers. There was a young woman bitten, who was handing out sandwiches, 300 yards away from the trouble. She had to have eight stitches in her knee."

In the course of defending themselves from the police violence, the miners made use of available material. At one point this included setting fire to a portable structure, called a Porta Kabin, outside the plant. The British big-business media took the opportunity to violence-bait the miners once again. Roland Whitehead explained what really happened:

"It was the need to defend ourselves against the charges by mounted police that led to the Porta Kabin being dragged into the road and set on fire. It wasn't mindless violence. We had to make barriers out of what was to hand. This is why the wall at the side of the road was



Police arrest mineworkers' leader Arthur Scargill.

pushed over, and telegraph poles uprooted. Not as a battering ram, as was claimed on television, but to block the road from the police charges."

Scargill's arrest

Arthur Scargill's arrest was clearly a carefully planned exercise taking place three hours before the scab lorries were due. Roland Whitehead explained the circumstances:

"I think Scargill was going to talk to the Orgreave workers themselves. There were only between 50 and 70 pickets present, and they were walking down the foot path. He was just arrested without provocation. If the press cameras hadn't been there, they might have charged him with something more serious than obstruction."

The arresting officer was no ordinary policeman, but the "ground commander" Acting Chief Superintendent John Nesbitt.

Comment was made in the press and television about the union cap Scargill wore daily on the picket lines. He replied, "The cap was given to me by the leaders of the American miners' union, the United Mine Workers of America, during a visit to Britain some years ago. They had a strike of Kentucky and West Virginia miners working for the mining group, Amax. And we all know who was one of the bosses at Amax — Ian MacGregor [the head of the British National Coal Board]."

Deliberately engineered

In Roland Whitehead's opinion, the battle at Orgreave has been deliberately engineered by the Conservative (Tory) government. He

explained that "the steelworkers have got documents that prove that the government intervened directly."

"The Tories are trying to lower the morale of the NUM. It's a set-piece confrontation by the police to avenge Saltley Gates."

The battle at the Saltley Coke Depot during the 1972 miners' strike was seen as a crushing defeat for the Tory government of the day, in its earlier attempt to smash the unions. Ever since, the ruling class has sought to draw the lessons and build up new police tactics and means by which mass picketing can be defeated.

The May 30 London *Times* reported, "The government has a detailed plan for handling the miners' strike. It was drawn up three years ago on the Prime Minister's instructions by a cabinet committee of senior civil servants." This plan considered using troops to drive coal trains and the use of scab lorry drivers.

At the same time as the government stepped up its attacks on the Orgreave picket line, the London *Observer* reported that "the government is urging the board [NCB] not to agree to terms that could be interpreted as a victory for NUM President Mr. Arthur Scargill."

Despite the unprecedented police violence, and the length of the strike, the miners have not been cowed or beaten. Said Scargill in response to the police strike-breaking, "my advice to all our members and to the wider trade union movement is to ensure they come here in their thousands in order that we can make aware to everybody that we are not prepared to see this kind of brutality inflicted against working men and women." □

Toledo strike an example for U.S. labor

Militant action, solidarity answer union-busting drive

By Steve Craine

A major class confrontation at a small auto parts company in Toledo, Ohio, is providing important lessons for the U.S. workers movement.

The strike of 400 workers at AP Parts became national news on May 21 when strikers and 3,000 supporters, mainly other members of the United Auto Workers (UAW), defied a court-ordered ban on mass picketing. This solidarity demonstration was brutally attacked by city cops and private security guards hired by the company to escort strike-breakers to the plant.

Equipped with tear gas, clubs, pellet guns, and riot helmets, the cops charged into the crowd after a few arrests failed to disperse the solidarity demonstration. In the six-hour battle that followed, 41 unionists were arrested, and several workers and some cops were hospitalized. One police car was burned, and 17 had all their windows broken out.

Company imposes takebacks

On March 5, when the previous contract expired, AP Parts, which supplies mufflers and exhaust pipes to major auto manufacturers, had unilaterally imposed its final contract offer on the union. It implemented a \$5.84 per hour cut in pay and benefits and many changes in seniority rights and work rules detrimental to the workers. These takebacks had been rejected by union representatives in negotiations with the company.

Coupled with the wage cut, AP Parts laid off 175 workers and began a campaign of discipline and harassment against the remaining workers for alleged violations of the company's new, arbitrary rules.

The initial response of the UAW leaders was to keep union members on the job despite the lack of a contract, while hoping to work out a compromise with the company. They also filed charges of unfair labor practices with the government's National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). As the company's harassment intensified and the NLRB turned down the union's charge, no alternative remained except to strike.

The workers went out on May 2. On May 3, AP Parts called the laid-off workers back to work, pointing out to them that refusal to work would jeopardize their unemployment benefits. However, the laid-off unionists stood firm, and not a single one agreed to cross the picket lines.

Like many other companies determined to bust their unions, AP Parts had been pleading poverty and threatening to shut down com-



Nancy Bayasko/Militant

Cops arrest Toledo auto workers at May 21 rally.

pletely if its demands were not met. In January the company placed a full-page advertisement in the local newspaper threatening to move operations to non-union areas. It already has an unorganized plant in North Carolina.

Although AP Parts itself is a relatively small company, it soon got assistance in its union-busting project from more powerful forces. A court immediately granted its request for an injunction limiting picketing to six people at each gate. On March 27 AP Parts received a \$60,000 grant for employee training from the state government. With 175 experienced workers on layoff, this clearly amounted to an offer from the state to foot the bill for training strike breakers.

The major auto companies had encouraged AP Parts management to go after the UAW in the first place. In April General Motors signed a new contract for \$20 million worth of mufflers. (Later it was raised to \$30 million.) But the contract was made on the condition that AP Parts not give in to the union.

Auto workers fight back

The May 21 solidarity action reflects the fact that a small but growing layer in the union movement is studying and learning from the lessons of recent setbacks and defeats and is increasingly ready to lead a fightback.

Most of the workers at the rally were not AP Parts strikers, but other UAW members. They included white workers, older workers, and some Blacks, Latinos, and women. Also attending were members of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW) Local 7-912, who are on strike against the Sun Oil refinery in Toledo, and a few other unionists. The president of the local branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) participated, too.

Toledo has been a strongly pronoun city for

decades. Coincidentally, one of the first big steps in the fight to make Toledo a union town was exactly 50 years ago, when the militant strike against the Toledo Electric Auto-Lite Company helped set the stage nationally for the rise of the Congress of Industrial Organizations.

Of Toledo's 350,000 people, almost one-tenth are members or retirees of the auto workers union. With national contracts in the major auto companies due to expire in September, auto workers throughout the city and the region understand the direct impact the AP Parts strike will have on their own wages and working conditions. The common interests shared by all auto workers have become clearer to Toledo unionists over the past few years as the recession in the auto industry has hit the city's work force especially hard. They have also learned that the employers' demands go beyond forcing major concessions, but are aimed at permanently crippling the unions.

Another important factor in the developing class consciousness of workers at AP Parts and other Toledo workplaces has been the example of Sun Oil workers who have been on strike since March 21 against similar takeback demands from the nation's 12th largest oil company. The emphasis from the beginning in this strike has been on the need for support from the entire labor movement.

Only a few days before the AP Parts strike began, 600 unionists attended a support rally for the oil workers. Ron Rinna, president of the striking OCAW local, said, "No longer can one local union take on a company the size of Sun. That is the purpose of this rally. No longer can Sun say that they are taking on us alone. They are taking on the entire community." Many AP Parts workers were on hand for the oil workers' rally, and some Sun strikers participated in the May 21 demonstration at

AP Parts.

The OCAW local leadership provided another important example to area workers by organizing the union ranks as full participants and decision-makers in their strike. Regular reports and discussions on the negotiations were held by the union members.

Part of broader fight

Like workers throughout the United States, Toledo unionists have followed the escalating antiunion campaign by the employers — from the busting of the air traffic controllers union by the federal government in 1981 to the successful use of bankruptcy proceedings to tear up union contracts at Continental Airlines, Wilson Foods, and other companies. They have read about hard-fought but unsuccessful union battles like that of Greyhound Bus workers in late 1983. And they have seen that even the inspiring determination of copper workers on strike in Arizona for nearly a year has been insufficient to win a victory over the giant Phelps Dodge Corporation.

Finally, the experience in the struggle with AP Parts itself has forced many workers and a certain number of lower-level union officials to look to new, more militant tactics. The leadership's initial response was to avoid a fight, to keep on working without a contract while waiting for the company to become more reasonable. Meanwhile they looked for assistance to the government's labor board. This was quickly exposed as inadequate. Workers soon realized that their bosses were out for nothing short of destruction of the union. And it became clear that union-busting will not stop at one company. A frequently heard view in Toledo is, "First AP Parts, then us."

As this understanding spread to other auto workers in the city, plans began to develop for an organized fightback. The May 21 action was organized by rank-and-file unionists and shop stewards and committeemen in UAW-organized shops, especially at the Jeep assembly plant, one of the largest factories in the city.

A campaign to inform union members of the slave-labor conditions being demanded by AP Parts was mounted. The idea of being ready for solidarity action on a moment's notice was discussed for a week before May 21. Most of the participants learned that the demonstration was on only as they left work that afternoon. The response was overwhelming.

Dave Kubicki, chairman of one of the UAW's local units in Toledo, explained later, "The shops and people in the plant have been asking for some time, 'When are we going to go out and do something? When are we going to help them?'"

Socialist workers

Members and supporters of the Socialist Workers Party are also active in the UAW-organized plants in Toledo and participated in the May 21 action and the discussions leading up to it. Elizabeth Lariscy and Mark Friedman are SWP candidates for U.S. Congress and Ohio House of Representatives respectively.

Both work at Jeep and are members of the UAW. After participating in the solidarity demonstration at AP Parts, Lariscy and Friedman issued a statement to the news media demanding that all charges against the arrested demonstrators be dropped. The statement was broadcast by six radio stations.

Socialist views are known to many workers in Toledo's auto plants, especially through the socialist newspapers the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*. Since January, socialists in Toledo have sold 419 copies of the two papers at plant gates, over half of them to workers at the Jeep plant. Another 118 papers have been sold by socialists to their coworkers inside the plant. Fifty-two *Militants* had been sold to AP Parts workers before their strike began.

Since the May 21 battle between unionists and cops, socialists have met with even wider interest among workers in Toledo as well as other cities. The socialist papers have been featuring the story and lessons of the AP Parts strike.

The struggle at AP Parts, like most labor struggles in the United States today, is a defensive one. Workers are fighting just to protect rights and living standards they thought were secure a few years ago.

The May 21 solidarity action did not win the strike or stop AP Parts and the other auto bosses in their union-busting drive. What it did accomplish was to set an example for other unionists across the country.

It points in the direction of the militant methods that built the unions in the 1930s. Such an example today brings to life the lessons of the 1930s. The 1934 Auto-Lite strike was won by massive solidarity not only of other unions but also of the unemployed. The Teamsters strikes in Minneapolis in the same year gathered support from all working people, including family farmers. They demonstrated that union democracy is the solid foundation for class-struggle policies. The struggles in the 1930s also showed that the class-collaborationist union bureaucracy could be, and had to be, out-flanked by a democratically-organized rank-and-file movement to break from business-as-usual unionism and win new ground for the working class.

The struggle at AP Parts is helping the U.S. working class win back this heritage of struggle. It points militant workers in the right direction, toward building the kind of movement that can defend the unions and beat back the bosses and their government. □

France

For unity against austerity

LCR urges fight to change Mitterrand's policies

By Jean Lantier

[The following article appeared in the May 4-10 issue of *Rouge*, weekly newspaper of the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), French section of the Fourth International. The translation and footnotes are by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

[Former Prime Minister Raymond] Barre is content. At radio station Europe 1's press club on April 29, Barre gave the government an Oscar for austerity policies. "It seems to me the government is moving in a good direction," Barre stated. And he noted that he could see much of his own policy in the government's actions, which give priority to "external balance," recognize "the importance of French economic competitiveness," and remain "within the European and international system."

Three years ago at the Place de la Bastille, the people of the left celebrated the end of a 23-year reign; the reign of the right.¹ It was a time of hope, of joy. We can recall the drawn

faces of the losers [rightist politicians like] Peyrefitte, Bonnet, Stoléru, Saunier-Séité, Giscard, and Barre, deflated like collapsed balloons. That was yesterday, and it is already so far away.

Since then, the Socialist Party and Communist Party have pulled out all stops in trying to make people forget why it was they were brought into power, why it was that despite themselves these parties established unity at their highest levels in order to govern.

Austerity as the sole policy

"The government has chosen a strategy whose logic resembles the strategy carried out by Mrs. Thatcher," said P. Bricq of the Socialist Group in banking enterprises at the SP Enterprises Convention on April 29.

"Isn't it (the left) simply doing exactly what the right dared not do?" asked an SP leader from Lorraine at the same convention.

While Barre is content with the government's policy, that policy is stirring things up

1. On May 10, 1981, Socialist Party candidate François Mitterrand was elected president of France. The following month, the Socialist Party and Com-

munist Party won a majority in the National Assembly. Both parties are represented in Mitterrand's cabinet.



Unionists protest job cuts in Lorraine.

within the “great tranquil force”² that is agitated by the 20,000 layoffs in the steel industry and a Savary Law worthy of the Guermeur Law.³

In fact, we can see the outlines of a third austerity plan shaping up on the horizon: massive layoffs in nationalized sectors (like steel) or heavily subsidized sectors (like shipbuilding) and restructuring that will turn entire regions into industrial deserts. We can see the logical accompaniment of this policy — growing and concentrated attacks on protection of labor contracts, on the stability of the workweek, on unemployment compensation and Social Security benefits.

In this fine country that Mitterrand presides over, there are now more unemployed workers than working farmers. And this army of unemployed, which is constantly growing, is used by the employers as a pressure on the wage workers. Women are forced back into part-time work, there are calls to send back immigrant workers, there is a breakdown in indexing wages to inflation. Left austerity is on the march.

May 10 still lives

May 10 still lives. It was easy to see on the streets of Paris at the April 13 march of Lorraine steelworkers. It swept through all the big cities on April 25 [when demonstrations against the Savary Law were held in 100 cities]. And both times the demonstrators went into the streets against a particularly scandal-

2. During his election campaign, Mitterrand’s slogan was “the tranquil force.”

3. The Savary Law, named after Mitterrand’s minister of education Alain Savary, is now before the National Assembly for consideration. It would continue state funding for private schools, most of which are run by the Catholic Church. This law runs counter to the programs of the SP and CP before they came into office. Both parties called for nationalizing the private schools and eliminating religious instruction in them.

ous government plan. Many of those who came out on April 25 did so as much to erect a barrier against the right as to reject the government’s capitulation to the “haves,” a capitulation expressed politically in the Savary Law.

The ruling parties — the SP and CP — with a majority in the National Assembly, are doing everything in their power to wear down and divert this massive rejection. They hope to force the workers into a maze. The SP uses the blackmail of unity to push the austerity policies. The CP wants to convince people that rejection of the austerity plans would mean organizing divisions within the ranks of the workers.

In the final analysis, both parties end up approving the layoffs. And the old boys can then turn their attention back to capitulating to the right wing and the bishops, as embodied in the Savary Law.

No, that is not what the workers wanted on May 10. That is not what they voted for. They wanted to eliminate unemployment and inflation. And they are still fighting for jobs and wages at [shipyards in] La Seyne, [at steel mills] in Lorraine, in the Citroën plants, in the post office mail-sorting centers.

But these workers all pose the question of how do you win, how do you make the government give in, how do you fight when the parties in the government are supposed to be representing the workers?

Our fight

The shipyard workers descended on Paris. So did the coal miners. Then came the Lorraine steelworkers. But they did not win. The pressure of the steelworkers was strong enough that the government had to rely on the cohesion of its majority and stake its existence on winning the parliamentary vote on the 20,000 layoffs.

The lesson to be drawn is clear. No matter how determined the sectors hit by the layoffs are, no matter how broad their mobilization may be, they will not win unless they are

united in a single general movement, in a single action that brings them all together.

That is a more effective response in terms of struggle, but it is also a political perspective. We must force this “all together” framework on those who think only of cutting the struggles for jobs into neat little slices, those who organize to isolate the struggles from each other, that is, the leaderships of the union federations and the top bodies of the left parties.

“All together” for jobs is possible. It would have been easy for the leaders of the General Confederation of Labor (CGT) and the French Democratic Labor Federation (CFDT) to call people out on strike to support the Lorraine steelworkers April 13. They could bring together the struggles of the shipyard workers, the auto workers, the steelworkers, and coal miners.

But they will not do that unless a working-class current of opinion forcefully expresses itself throughout the country, in the unions and the political parties, publicly, in a united way. A current that rejects austerity. A current that demands that the parties in power change their policies. A current that sets itself the task of forcing them to do this by organizing an “all together” action. For this to happen it is necessary to break down the walls that isolate one struggle from another, that separate [the shipyards at] La Seyne from [those at] Fos-sur-Mer, that separate the Lorraine steelworkers from the laid-off auto workers.

The demand that the SP and CP change their policy takes on a concrete form when it is based on these struggles, on this working-class current for an “all together” action. It becomes a material, compelling force through united and national mobilization. Without that mobilization, we would wait in vain for anything from these members of parliament, these ministers, this president, who laid off the steelworkers and will lay off others tomorrow.

The Gathering of Workers Against Austerity and Against Capitalist Europe, organized for May 26 and 27 by the LCR, falls precisely within this framework. Its aim is to bring together the workers who want to fight but no longer view the SP and CP as vehicles for such a battle. To bring together the unionists who must confront the harmful policies of the union federations. To bring together the political forces independent of the government in order to discuss and act together. This gathering comes just at the right time.

Nowhere else will representatives of the struggles of steelworkers in Lorraine and Marseille come together with postal workers or auto workers. Nowhere else will you find nearly the entire spectrum of revolutionary organizations. No other meeting will bring together active leaders of European workers struggles — West German unionists for the 35-hour week, Spanish steelworkers for jobs, members of Italian factory councils for the sliding scale, Danish dock workers fighting layoffs and anti-working-class repression. The gathering will take place in Bourget on May 26 and 27. □

The crisis of capitalist agriculture — I

Working farmers face increased exploitation

By Jim Pearson

[The following is the first of two parts of an article taken from the May 1984 *Socialist Action Review*, a magazine supplement to the fortnightly *Socialist Action*, which is published in Auckland, New Zealand, and reflects the views of the Socialist Action League (SAL), New Zealand section of the Fourth International.]

[The article is based on a talk originally given to a national conference of the SAL in December 1983. The second part, to be printed in our next issue, deals with how monopoly corporations are squeezing farmers, the government's farm program, and socialist proposals for agriculture. Footnotes are by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Of all the imperialist countries, New Zealand is outstanding in the dependence of its entire economy on agriculture. This is for reasons both geographical and historical.

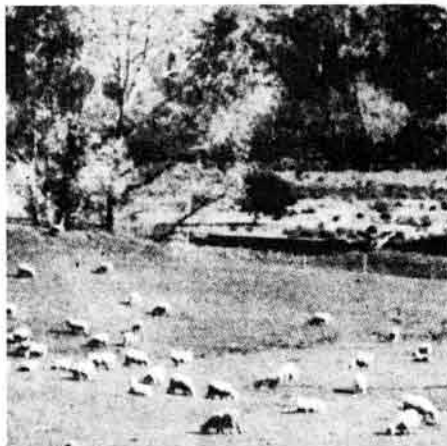
New Zealand's climate is exceptionally well-suited to pastoral farming, and it has few mineral resources.

It developed as an imperialist economy from colonial origins relatively late in an historical sense. This meant that, after the destruction of the Maori economy of communal agriculture in the land wars of the nineteenth century, the land was free of the feudal systems of land ownership that impeded the development of capitalist agriculture in Europe and Japan.

On this basis an internationally very efficient pastoral farming developed. Dairy herds in New Zealand, for instance, average 135 compared to only 20 in the EEC¹ and 30 in the USA. Yet the big majority of dairy farms remain family concerns with an average of only one-and-a-half labour units per farm. On top of that there exists a highly developed processing sector for both meat and dairy products.

New Zealand had a small population, and therefore a small domestic market. From this, the economy developed a high dependence on foreign trade. Revenue from exports has always chiefly come from agricultural exports, and today these still make up over 70 percent of export revenue — especially the three big ones: meat, wool, and dairy, which together make up 60 percent of exports.

These revenues have been used to develop manufacturing industry, which was originally



New Zealand is the world's largest exporter of sheepmeat.

exclusively for the domestic market. Manufacturing is largely dependent on imported components and raw materials and sustained by heavy protectionism. The classic example of this is the kitset car assembly industry.

Agriculture and agricultural processing are, therefore, the largest and most important industries. Some of New Zealand's largest companies are almost exclusively concerned with agricultural products (Watties, the meat companies) and all of the big companies are concerned in one way or another with it.

For example, New Zealand's largest company, Fletcher Challenge, is also the largest stock and station agent,² under the name Wrightson NMA. The second-largest stock and station agency, the recently-merged Dalgety Crown Corporation, is New Zealand's seventh-largest company by asset size. All the banks and insurance companies are involved in farm lending.

The rural rich make up an important section of the New Zealand capitalist establishment in the political sphere. For example, a number of prominent National Party MPs call themselves farmers. These include: Minister of Agriculture Duncan MacIntyre; Minister of Labour Jim Bolger; Minister of Defence David Thomson; Minister of Lands and Forests Jonathan Elworthy (from one of the country's leading ruling class families); plus one kiwifruit farmer, Bruce Townshend from the Bay of Plenty.

2. Stock and station agents are big capitalist monopolies that sell farmers fertilizer, seed, machinery, breeding stock, and many other supplies including food and household goods. They generally sell on credit in order to tie farmers to their particular company.

On the other hand, a large proportion of the *productive* population is engaged directly in agriculture or agriculture-based industries. As well as the 160,000 farmers and farm workers, there are more than 30,000 freezing workers, plus dairy factory workers, workers in transport and shipping, watersiders, and others, whose jobs are directly related to agricultural production.

Key producing class

Working farmers, that is, family farmers who employ no labour, constitute one of the key producing classes in New Zealand, along with the wage workers of city and country. They account for the bulk of agricultural production and are a major source of surplus value for the capitalist class as a whole.

As New Zealand is buffeted by the deepening and more regular international capitalist recessions, these facts take on a two-fold significance. In the first place, New Zealand's dependence on agriculture makes it one of the weakest economies in the inter-imperialist competition, one of the most vulnerable to the ups and downs of the growing trade wars. Secondly, in its drive to restore capitalist profitability New Zealand capital is driven to increase the rate of exploitation of working farmers as well as of wage workers. Together, this means that the New Zealand bourgeoisie will find it more difficult than most to maintain the political allegiance of the exploited farmers, which forms the basis of capitalist rule. This double bind of capitalist farming in New Zealand is what lies behind the debates that have surfaced in recent years within the ruling class over agricultural policy.

Underlying the current crisis in New Zealand farming is a crisis of overproduction. It is part of the overproduction crisis which is hanging over the entire international capitalist economy. In the last few years, farm production in New Zealand has reached record levels. Wool production hit a peak of 380,700 tonnes in the 1980/81 season, up 14 percent on the level of ten years earlier, which was itself a record year. Total milkfat production hit a record 319,000 tonnes in 1982/83, up 14 percent on five years ago. Over the five years to 1981/82 meat production increased about six percent.

Decline in real farm income

Overproduction exists, it needs adding, not because there is not widespread hunger and a desperate need for food in the world, but because production is above what can be sold at a good enough profit to satisfy the capitalists' greed.

But these production levels have not re-

1. European Economic Community, often called the Common Market. It includes Belgium, Denmark, France, West Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, and Netherlands.

sulted in any increase in farmers' real net incomes. The December 1983 *Agricultural Economist*, published by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, estimates that in the June years 1979/80 to 1983/84 the average sheep or beef farmer's nominal net income fell by 20 percent, despite increased government support through the Supplementary Minimum Price (SMP) scheme. The Consumer Price Index rose 50 percent during this same period. Net dairy farm income has risen in recent years because of improved international prices. After inflation, however, real net income has remained static. The Agricultural Review Committee report, *State of Agriculture 1983/84*, predicts dairy farm net income to decline 10 percent in 1983/84 over the previous year, and sheep and beef farm net income to decline 16 percent.

In part these declines reflect a fall in world prices due to the growing stockpiles. But the full effects of world overproduction in agricultural products have yet to be felt. In every major product that New Zealand exports there are growing restrictions on access to traditional markets and stockpiling of surpluses in competing exporter countries. Periodically the spectre of catastrophic price wars is raised.

This possibility is most acute in the case of butter, one of New Zealand's principal dairy products. In 1981/82 New Zealand produced 222,000 tonnes of butter — 90 percent of which was exported.

In 1982 the Dairy Board surprised many people by buying 100,000 tonnes of surplus United States butter — an unusual thing to do for a butter-exporting country. It did that in order to stop the US releasing its surplus onto the relatively small international free market, an action which could have triggered a full-scale price collapse. Since then, however, the US dairy mountain has reappeared and the US government has made some moves to reduce it by making grants of butter to "friendly" Third World countries like Jamaica and Egypt. This has lowered world market prices and affected some established markets for the New Zealand Dairy Board.

These donations, though, have hardly dented the stockpile, which remains at massive levels. In late October 1983, the US commodity Credit Corporation's support stocks were: butter — 178,000 tonnes; cheese — 407,000 tonnes; and skim milk powder — 606,000 tonnes. At the end of October, EEC stockpiles were even larger, at 639,000 tonnes of butter and 1,040,000 tonnes of skim milk powder. These surpluses exceed the entire annual international free market in dairy products and dwarf New Zealand's total annual production.

In addition to depressing world prices, these stockpiles also threaten New Zealand's butter exports to the EEC. When Britain entered the EEC in 1973 a special arrangement was made for continued access by New Zealand to the traditional British market, which up until then had taken 90 percent of New Zealand's dairy exports. Since 1973 the annual quota for butter has been halved from 166,000 tonnes to



84,000 tonnes for this year. Under a separate arrangement, cheese exports have fallen from 68,580 tonnes to 9,500 tonnes. In fact no formal agreement for continued access has been signed since the old agreement expired at the beginning of 1984. EEC dairy producers are demanding that New Zealand access be phased out faster than the New Zealand capitalist rulers would like. In the meantime, access is being organized on a monthly quota at one-twelfth of the temporary 84,000 tonne quota.

A "voluntary" limit of 245,000 tonnes also exists on sheepmeat exports to the EEC, and pressure is building to reduce that figure as the EEC becomes increasingly self-sufficient in sheepmeat. This could become a major problem for the capitalists in the meat industry because Britain remains the largest market for New Zealand lamb, taking 40 percent of export production. "Voluntary" restraints also exist on beef exports to the US — the largest beef market — as well as a virtual prohibition on butter exports there. These restrictions reflect a very real problem for New Zealand capitalists — the major markets for meat and dairy products are also the main producers.

Overproduction

Overproduction and protectionism affect all kinds of capitalist industry and trade. But there are a number of special twists peculiar to agriculture that combine to intensify the problems.

In the first place, the nature of agriculture makes it subject to unforeseeable fluctuations in production under the influence of climatic changes and diseases, etc. Agricultural produce is mainly perishable, and is difficult to store in large quantities or for long periods. Agriculture is slow to respond to the dictates of the market. An example of this is the expected low beef kill in New Zealand's meat works this season, which is caused, paradoxically, by an increase in beef prices, following a number of years of poor prices. Because farmers who want to take advantage of the good prices in future years must retain their breeding stock, the first result of a price rise is a fall in the kill. All

these factors contribute to wild price fluctuations in agricultural products.

Secondly, agriculture is, in every capitalist country, based on small producers, family farmers, who own their means of production and, therefore, their product, but whose livelihoods are totally dependent on working the land. Unlike capitalists, who can transfer investment away from one line of business to another if it becomes unprofitable, or even stop producing altogether and live off their surplus capital for a while until their stockpiles are cleared, the small farmer has no choice but to keep on producing, even when prices are low. Thus agriculture has a permanent tendency to overproduction. There is a permanent tendency for agricultural goods to sell below their value. This is an important factor in the huge EEC surpluses.

In addition, the farming-based economy of New Zealand faces further problems stemming from the fact that a very high proportion of this country's agricultural production is destined for the export market — 70 percent of beef production, 90 percent of lamb and dairy production, and almost 90 percent of wool. New Zealand is the world's second-largest dairy exporter, third-largest meat exporter, and second-largest wool exporter. However, in terms of total world production, the figures are quite different. New Zealand accounts for less than 1 percent of world meat production and 1.36 percent of dairy production. The proportion of wool, at 12 percent, is slightly higher, but wool also competes against synthetic fibres. Given the importance of these products in total export earnings, it means New Zealand capitalism is extremely vulnerable to world overproduction.

Because the world's major consumers of meat and dairy products are also the major producers, and given that only a small percentage of production is traded internationally — around 6 percent of meat and 4 percent of dairy production — small changes in output can have major effects on world trade. For example, in the years 1977–79 the EEC imported 225,000 tonnes of beef. In 1980 it exported 286,000 tonnes, to become the world's second largest exporter after Australia. This dramatic turnaround came about from an increase in EEC production of 4 percent and a decrease in consumption of 0.6 percent. A 4 percent increase in EEC milk production in 1982/83 doubled EEC stockpiles of butter and skim milk powder — an increase greater than New Zealand's annual production. Even though little of this increased dairy production was released for the international market, its existence contributed to a 15 percent decline in dairy prices in 1983.

On the other hand, a fall in New Zealand's production would make very little difference in raising world prices — since it could easily be replaced by competing producers. In this respect, New Zealand capitalism has little choice but to continue increasing production and hope for the best. This fact has important consequences for the way New Zealand capitalism

attempts to solve its problems.

This also accounts of the political form in which the problem of overproduction appears. Had New Zealand been exposed to the naked force of the world market, it would have gone on the rocks long ago. But account has been taken of New Zealand's "special position," as argued in the capitals of Europe by a succession of New Zealand politicians in relation to the question of access to the EEC market.

Warren Cooper: 'N.Z. worthy of preservation'

Minister of Foreign Affairs Warren Cooper explains it this way: "It helps that we have a healthy two-way trade with Europe. It helps that we are efficient producers, and that we cooperate with EEC marketing elsewhere. But in the end we are able to hang on in there because of what the community views as foreign policy interests.

"It was demonstrably true that the New Zealand economy would suffer a serious blow if we could no longer sell butter in the UK [United Kingdom]. It is recognized that New Zealand, as a stable Western democracy, sympathetic to European values is, to put it bluntly, worthy of preservation" (*Auckland Star*, December 27, 1982).

However, as far as the EEC imperialists are concerned, these foreign policy interests in preserving New Zealand imperialism have to be weighed against their domestic political problems. As stockpiles have built up inside the EEC, depressing prices there, there have been demonstrations by small farmers. Ultimately concessions such as the EEC has made can only delay the effects of overproduction, not avert them. Protectionism continues to grow.

Moreover, each attempt by the New Zealand capitalists to solve their marketing problems turns up new political problems. For example, the position the government has been forced to adopt on Iran because that country buys almost 30 percent of NZ's export lamb, is really embarrassing for them. By opposing the imperialist economic boycott of Iran and forcing the oil companies to buy a small amount of Iranian oil to refine here, the government runs the risk of antagonising the US government. Early in 1984 the New Zealand government had to pull out of planned naval manoeuvres with the US in the Arabian Sea off Iran's coast.

The crisis is driving the New Zealand bourgeoisie into conflict with the other imperialist powers at the very same time that its position in the inter-imperialist competition is weakening, and its alliances with other imperialist powers are more important than ever. Whichever politician gets dispatched to Washington to plead for a reduction in beef protectionism might hear some harsh words about Iran. The question of international alliances is one of the chief ways in which the farm question directly concerns the working class. An important aim of any programme for a worker-farmer alliance in this country must be to destroy the idea that farmers' interests lie in these imperialist alliances.

In discussing the problems facing capitalist agriculture it is important to remember that the rural population is deeply class-divided, and the effects of the crisis are being felt in very different ways by the different classes.

To begin with, a substantial section of the agricultural workforce are wage workers. At June 30, 1981, there were 21,238 fulltime and 6,776 part-time employees, plus 8,570 casual workers. The number of casual workers would rise significantly during the summer season. (Figures from *The New Zealand Yearbook, 1983*.) These wage workers form an extremely exploited layer of the working class. For example, the June 20, 1983, *National Business Review* ran an article on the plight of kiwifruit pickers and packers. The article began by reporting that kiwifruit farmer MP Bruce Townshend had presented a petition to parliament seeking "to remove the threat of compulsory union membership from seasonal horticultural workers" — a wish that, of course, came true with the Industrial Law Reform Act. But wage figures used in the article indicated that the "threat" these workers faced came from other quarters:

"Wage rates for kiwifruit workers are low. The current award came into effect in January 1982, so growers have had two seasons at the same rate.

"The basic hourly rate for a picker or packer is \$4.01 [NZ\$1 = US\$0.65] for a grade two worker or \$4.13 for grade one, or \$160 and \$165 respectively for a 40-hour week. . . .

"The kiwifruit harvest is also a short period of about six weeks. Difficulties for workers include uncertainty about starting dates, and bad weather, which often means days without pay.

"Youth rates apply with workers aged between 18 and 19 receiving 90 percent of the full rate, while those under 16 get 60 percent of the adult rate.

"There has been little pressure on wages and conditions because most casual workers in the Bay of Plenty have been locals, with the majority married women."

Capitalist farmers

At the other end of the scale are the capitalist farmers — the exploiters of the farm labourers. A key characteristic of the leading layers in New Zealand's capitalist farmers is that they have their interests spread beyond their farms.

Correction

Two errors appeared in the article on New Zealand in our May 28 issue. On page 301, column 2, the third paragraph should have read:

"The Otara meeting on the Immigration Bill initiated by a Pacific island Labour Party branch was directed against the failure of the Labour Party parliamentary leadership to oppose the racist bill."

Also, the date given for the funeral of Ernie Abbott should have been April 3.

The famous Williams family of the East Coast/Hawkes Bay region, for example, while retaining its large landholdings is a major capitalist in Gisborne industry and commerce. The family also has significant investments in many large companies, including Kerridge Odeon, Fletcher Challenge, and Crown Dalgety — that is, including companies responsible for exploiting the small working farmer.

This third category, typically the family farmer who employs no labour, is not a capitalist — not even a small capitalist — as is often supposed. This type of farmer exploits no one's labour — a fact deliberately clouded by bourgeois terminology, which labels a farm a business and its income the "profit." The working farmer's so-called "profit" is purely the product of his or her own labour. But neither are they proletarians, because they own their means of production.

There are about 90,000 farmers categorised as "working owners." To what extent they own their land varies — this category includes sharefarmers and leaseholders, as well as mortgagors. It also includes the small number of capitalist farmers, as well as intermediate layers, such as farmers who only employ workers for short periods. Hidden in this category are also a growing number of semi-proletarian farmers, whose farms are not sufficient to support them and who have to supplement their income by means of a job off the farm.

The period of relative prosperity in farming that we have just come to the end of has helped to obscure these divisions in the "farming community." But each turn for the worse in the market situation brings them forward. (This talk will concentrate on the divisions between the capitalist and the working farmer, though the agricultural labourer should not be left out of the picture.) High prices of the boom period have also obscured the fact that over the last decade the rate of exploitation of working farmers has been steadily increasing.

Market and product diversification

Since the question of Britain's entry into the EEC forcibly brought the vulnerability of the New Zealand economy to the bourgeoisie's attention at the end of the 1960s, the cry has been *diversification*. This involves several aspects — diversification of exports away from agriculture (which I don't propose to deal with although it does have some importance to agriculture, especially the competition for land from forestry), diversification of agriculture away from the traditional products of meat, wool, and dairy, and diversification of markets for the traditional products away from Britain. The government has approached this task with some zeal, and over the last decade government "interference," in the form of tax breaks, export incentives, etc., has been a big factor in the whole situation.

The last aspect — diversification of markets away from total dependence on Britain — was part of the terms of the deal negotiated when Britain entered the EEC. New Zealand got 10

years to phase out its access to the EEC. There has been some success in this — Britain's proportion of meat and dairy exports has dropped from about two-thirds to less than one-third over the past decade. But this has merely changed the form of the problem, and maybe delayed it, but it hasn't overcome it. The new Iran market remains extremely precarious given the imperialist blockade and the war with Iraq, and there has been a new round of difficulties of protectionism associated with the US beef and sheepmeat markets. There remains a heavy dependence on the EEC and on traditional products, without the possibility of major alternatives emerging.

But while diversification has done little to lighten the bourgeoisie's problems abroad, product diversification has had some significant effects back home. It has created a new breed of New Zealand farmer: the kiwifruit millionaire — cousin of the deer farmer, descendant of the oldest breed of capitalist farmer in New Zealand — the land speculator.

The kiwifruit boom is worth looking at, not because it is a major sector of New Zealand agriculture, but because it reveals some of the trends common to all New Zealand farming.

Production of kiwifruit has increased at the rate of about 30 percent per year for the last couple of years. According to the *Agricultural Economist*, published by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, it has expanded at a rate never before matched in New Zealand's agricultural sector, thanks to an absence of major competitors and low levels of protection in importing countries. Exports have risen to an estimated 47,500 tonnes for the year ending March 1984, worth over \$100 million, from almost nothing ten years ago. But this pales beside the plans for further expansion. Some commentators predict that exports will rise to 300,000 tonnes by the end of the decade. This expectation is based primarily on existing plantings. Though the reports maintain a coy silence on the question, it must be obvious that this expansion cannot increase indefinitely, that sooner or later the boom must give way to bust.

Signs of this occurring in the not-too-distant future are already beginning to appear. Non-New Zealand producers now account for 45 percent of world production. In the year to March 1984, it is estimated that although exports rose 60 percent, prices fell 30 percent. Next year exports are predicted to rise only 14 percent and face a further price decline. But never mind — by the time the bust comes, today's kiwifruit millionaires will have sold up.

The chief characteristic of horticulture as a type of farming is intensive use of land. Since the 1930s most of the expansion of New Zealand farm production has been through the intensification of land use — the total area of occupied land remained about 17.5 million hectares for 50 years up to 1971.

The price of land is, on average, in proportion to the income that can be derived from farming that land. Thus, if the productivity of

the land can be increased by turning it over to a more intensive type of farming, the land price increases, and it can then be sold at a profit. While prices of kiwifruit, and thus incomes, are at boom levels, so also the land prices are inflated, and can be sold for super-profits.

In 1980, horticultural land sold for \$12,000 a hectare, compared to about \$1,000 for a sheep fattening farm on a similar type of land. In the region of greatest kiwifruit expansion, the Bay of Plenty, the price was nearly three times as high, at \$33,000 per hectare. A year later, the same land had risen in price by 58 percent to \$52,000 per hectare. It is not difficult to see where a large part of the bonanza profits are coming from.

Land speculation cycle

The ability to speculate on changing land prices is boosted by an array of government tax breaks and export incentives. In an *Agricultural Economist* case study published in December 1982 entitled "Not all kiwifruit profit in sales," it states, "For the case study orchards, property appreciation represented 30–40 percent of the total financial benefits . . . Further, the benefits from property appreciation were not taxable, in contrast to income from kiwifruit sales. Even tax payable on sales revenue was reduced by claiming tax concessions such as export incentives and deductions for development incentives. Tax savings are 90–95 percent, and are equal to 50–60 percent of farm income." This is the way the government encourages diversification.

This situation can only last as long as the boom lasts. The losers in the speculation are the latecomers, who end up owning an overpriced kiwifruit orchard when the price crash comes, and are left with a product and a piece of land nobody wants to buy. This is invariably the small farmer, simply because of the fact that initial access to land and, what is particularly important in the case of kiwifruit development, the finance to develop it is in the hands of the capitalist farmer or businessman. Government policy ties in with this pattern — as the kiwifruit crash approaches, tax breaks, etc. are being withdrawn.

This pattern has been repeated over and over again in the history of New Zealand, through every boom and bust, since the early run-holders [large-scale sheep farmers] amassed some of the first indigenous capitalist fortunes in the country by sub-dividing a part of their estates and selling them off under the Liberal government in the 1890s.

It was repeated in a classic way in the meat boom of the First World War. The guaranteed British markets brought huge profits from meat throughout the war years. When the war ended thousands of ex-soldiers were settled on the land while the boom was artificially sustained, and then came the crash in prices in the early 1920s.

The same pattern is appearing today in all the branches of agriculture. It is one of the principal ways in which surplus value is ex-

tracted from working farmers. Rich farmers make the profits in boom times, poor farmers take the losses in depressions. Statistics for all farm types reveal a pattern similar to the kiwifruit industry: Over the past decade small farmers have been buying in at high prices.

The long-term trend is for the number of farmers to decline. As the productivity of labour increases, it becomes possible, and necessary, for each farmer to manage a larger unit. This in fact happened throughout most of the post-World War Two period.

A study by Dr. Alan Levett published in the May 14, 1982, *Straight Furrow*, calculated that the number of farms had declined steadily from about 92,000 in 1955 to 63,000 in 1972, while the area of occupied land remained around 17.5 million hectares. However, at that point it turned around. Both the number of farms with working owners, and the real price of farmland, began to increase. From 1971–76 total farmland increased to 21.2 million hectares and has remained at that level since. From 1976 to 1980 the number of working owners continued to rise by 8 percent. The horticulture boom accounts for part of this increase, but there were increases in pastoral farming as well. The years 1976–1980 also saw the price of land per hectare for a South Island hill country farm increase fourfold.

Part of the reason for this is that during the 1960s and early 1970s, with a few exceptions, prices for agricultural produce were good. This meant that smaller holdings, or farms on poorer land, became economic, at least in a temporary way. As well, city business people significantly increased farm purchases to use as tax shelters. After 1976 the growth in the number of working owners came largely from sub-division, since the area of occupied land remained the same. The total number of farms reached 70,000 in 1980.

Once again, government financial policy played a part. A number of schemes offering cheap credit to farmers were initiated in this period, including the livestock incentive scheme (1976) and Land Development Encouragement loans (1978). Since land prices are related to income, the effect of these subsidies was to assist the sellers of land to obtain high prices. In other words, the government's assistance becomes capitalised in higher land prices.

What are the immediate effects of high land prices on the farmers who have to pay them?

Firstly, it accelerates the trend of alienation of the producers from the land. The growth over this period in the number of working owners exceeded that of farm holdings. That means an increase in share farming. Also, there has been a relative increase in the number of farmers on uneconomic holdings. Dr. Levett showed that from 1976 to 1980 the number of fulltime working owners (that is, working 30 hours or more on the farm) increased 14 percent. During the same period the number of part-time working owners increased by 22 percent. This is consciously encouraged by Rural Bank policy to give out loans for

"stepping-stone" units, as they are called.

Federated Farmers president Rob Storey describes it this way: "On their own these units are not economic. But when farmed in conjunction with a job associated with agriculture, such as shearing or agricultural contracting, [they] can provide the very necessary stepping-stone for a person with little resource to build up his asset at the same time as he/she continues an involvement in agricultural work, until at some stage he may finally aspire to farm ownership."

In passing it's worth noting how this arrangement helps to relieve the employer concerned of the obligation to provide a living wage for the job.

On the other hand, the possibility of "building up his asset" is denied by the high land prices, in that now the holding of an uneconomic size requires just as large a mortgage and interest payments. Many farmers are going to be still standing on the stepping-stone when the flash flood of depression hits.

The second main effect of high land prices is to increase the weight of debt carried by mortgager farmers. This has contributed to the increase in farm debt from \$185 million to \$800 million between 1970 and 1980. The same number of acres now carries four times the debt of a decade ago, and the interest rates also doubled during this period so that the total interest bill increased eight times.

With a larger proportion of a farmer's income going towards servicing the debt on his land, there appeared towards the end of the seventies a growing tendency to finance farm investment, and even current expenditure, on credit rather than out of income. Debt servicing now constitutes the average sheep and beef farm's major expenditure item, at 15 percent of the total. Each farm has an average of four mortgages and \$75,000 of debt.

The effect has been a sharp fall-off in reinvestment in the farm. You may have noticed the way they have been running a lot of advertisements for sheep drenches, farm vehicles, and that kind of thing on TV. Farmers just aren't buying them. The Agricultural Review Committee report estimates real capital expenditure on farms declined nine percent in the 1982/83 year, and expenditure per stock unit is at its lowest level since 1970/71.

Particularly serious is a sharp drop in fertiliser use. Faced with declining incomes (in spite of SMPs) and higher interest rates on their land mortgages and unable to even borrow further, farmers have cut back fertiliser use by 15-20 percent a year for the last three years to the lowest level since 1964. Higher fertiliser prices, compounded by a reduction in government subsidies, have also contributed.

This situation is particularly serious when you consider that since the First World War the expansion and intensification of New Zealand farming has rested entirely on the continuous application of fertiliser. The recovery of New Zealand farming in the 1920s was based on the



Stock and station agency auction.

intensification of land-use of the flat land through the use of fertiliser. The spoils of war — the phosphate-rich Nauru Island³ — was important in this. Aerial topdressing following World War Two allowed greatly increased production on hill country land, as well as futher subdivision. But if application of fertiliser to this land is not maintained, many of these farms become uneconomic. Overall fertiliser application is now 30 percent below what is required for maintenance of the industry.

All these factors conspire against small farmers. It was seen in the case of the drought which struck the East Coast of the North Island and Canterbury last year. To begin with, a drought is not an even-handed act of God, which hurts all farmers equally. Above all a drought is a crisis of credit. A farmer's ability to withstand a drought depends chiefly on the capital reserves he or she has available either to buy in extra feed, or to pay to have their stock grazed on someone else's farm outside the drought area. For the capitalist farmers, this means channelling a little of their capital reserves in this direction. For the working farmer it means slipping deeper into debt. The level of capital invested in the farm adds a further weight to the imbalance — richer farmers are more likely to have installed irrigation systems to mitigate the effect.

3. Nauru was administered jointly by New Zealand, Australia, and Great Britain from 1920 until it gained independence in 1968.

The last season's drought drove a number of farmers to bankruptcy. As the effects of the fertiliser use decline appear, this number will increase greatly, even outside of any worsening of market prices.

Stock and station agency mergers

The farm credit agencies are preparing for just such an eventuality, and are making sure that they don't get carried down with it. Over the past couple of years there has been a rapid series of mergers of stock and station agencies, to the point where the industry is now dominated by just two giants. With each merger, the directors noted the stabilising effects of having increased their pool of capital. This trend is also shown by the increased participation of the trading banks — the central credit institutions — in farm lending over the past few years. Trading banks are now the main source of short-term finance.

This by no means exhausts the question of land and credit, but it is sufficient to indicate the importance of demanding an end to the trading in land, as a key element in exposing the exploitation of working farmers by the very people who presently claim to represent their interests — the capitalist farmer-land speculator. Total nationalisation of the banking system and the provision of cheap state credit will also be an important demand. But the New Zealand experience with cheap state credit for farmers also shows the way in which state credit institutions like the Rural Bank and its predecessors, which were brought in by the first Labour government [elected in 1935] with the aim of assisting working farmers, can nevertheless be used to make generous grants to capitalist farmers while working farmers are denied urgently-needed drought relief.

A whole series of scandals have developed in the last few years over this question. A few years back we had the Marginal Lands Board affair, where a \$200,000 loan was given to the niece of the Minister of Agriculture, Duncan MacIntyre, and her husband to develop their farm. Then in 1983 it was exposed that toilet paper millionaire Spencer of Caxton Paper Mills got \$252,000 off the Rural Bank to develop his properties in the Waikato and on his Waiheke Island holiday retreat. Most of this money won't have to be repaid, and the loans were approved at a time many working farmers were being denied urgently-needed drought relief. The labour movement missed opportunities to demand worker and small farmer participation in the enquiries into these scandals, and they were eventually swept under the carpet.

[To be continued.]

Don't you know someone who should be reading *Intercontinental Press*?

Why not ask a friend, family member, or co-worker to subscribe?

For rates, see inside cover.

Mass movement for direct elections

Biggest challenge yet to military rule

By Marcelo Zugadi

BUENOS AIRES — More than 5 million people have demonstrated in Brazil's principal cities during the past four months to demand that the country's next president — due to take over in 1985 — be chosen in direct elections. Just when the dictatorship is celebrating its 20th anniversary in power and an economic crisis is shaking the country, a historically unprecedented mobilization has challenged the military regime that has long served as the cornerstone of stability for imperialism in South America.

Since 1964, when a coup d'état orchestrated by the CIA brought the military to power, the selection of the president has been the task of a handful of generals. They have periodically chosen one among their ranks to be ratified by a handpicked Electoral College.

Those days are now gone — and not only because of the impact of the Argentine elections, which whetted the appetites of Brazil's civilian politicians. The disarray in the top military circles, where each general upholds a different candidate, also reflects the intolerable pressure of the economic crisis.

End of the 'miracle'

Brazil is entering the fourth consecutive

year of recession combined with inflation, after nearly two decades of continual growth. The illusions in this "miracle," as such growth was vainly termed, have given way to reality: 230 percent inflation and an 8 percent drop in industrial production in 1983 alone; 5 million out of work, 40 million living in absolute poverty. The crisis can be gauged in the streets by the astonishing increase in crime, begging, and prostitution. But the true scope of the problem is shown above all in the sackings of supermarkets, the desperate actions of people beset by hunger and lacking any alternative, that have resounded in an alarming way throughout that country of 130 million inhabitants.

As the economic "miracle" has come to an end, so too has the cohesion of the capitalist layers that have dominated the state since 1964. This has been expressed in the rulers' inability to reach rapid agreement on who should be named as the next president. The bourgeoisie now faces a choice between pursuing recessive policies or seeking renewed growth. This means choosing between submission to the demands of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in order to deal with a nearly \$100 billion foreign debt, or else drastically changing course, starting with a moratorium on international payments.

Against this backdrop, the debate over the presidential succession has divided the top military commands, the ruling Democratic Social Party (PDS), and the main bourgeois opposition force, the Brazilian Democratic Movement Party (PMDB). The latter gained the governorships of nine states in the 1982 elections as well as a majority in the lower house of the federal Congress.

The disputes over whether to designate the next president by means of the PDS-dominated Electoral College or through elections based on universal suffrage originated when President João Figueiredo, who is scheduled to leave office in 1985, lost control of the PDS and with it the capacity to name his own successor. In order to placate his adversaries in the ruling party, Figueiredo indicated at the end of 1983 that he was inclined to favor direct elections.

This was like trying to quench a fire by dousing it with kerosene. Many PDS governors and congressmen immediately voiced support for the idea. The PMDB introduced in Congress a draft constitutional amendment calling for direct elections. And the Workers Party (PT) launched a campaign of mobilizations. The discussion moved from the parliamentary corridors to the streets.



February 1984 rally in São Paulo for direct elections.

Mounting mobilizations, culminating in a 2-million-strong demonstration in São Paulo on April 16, demonstrated that the majority of the population views total democratization as the only means of solving the economic crisis. The major news media, which generally backed the demand for direct elections, could talk of nothing else. Eighteen state governors, elected with 19 million votes in 1982, supported direct elections (as against 5 governors with 2.9 million 1982 votes who came out in favor of maintaining the Electoral College). Even Figueiredo's own vice-president, Aureliano Chaves, supported the demand.

The overall result was the biggest challenge the system has had to face, all the more serious in that it reflected the irremediable breakdown of the regime's traditional internal cohesion.

In his speech in April hailing the anniversary of the military coup, General Figueiredo asserted his support for direct elections — but only in 1991! Three weeks later, facing the continuing upsurge of mobilizations, he backed off and said they could be held in 1988, but he gave no ground on the selection of his immediate successor by the Electoral College.

Amid widespread expectations and with the armed forces at the highest state of alert, Congress voted April 25 on the proposed constitutional amendment: 298 deputies in favor (all those from the opposition parties¹ plus 54 from the PDS) and 65 opposed. But the amendment still failed to pass because a two-thirds majority of the entire body was required. Ninety-one deputies, caught between popular pressure and the regime's threats, chose not to attend the session.

This dubious victory for the military rulers exposed the government's total isolation and the divisions inside the armed forces and their party. It posed the question of replacing this regime with one that could gain the support of the broad, multiclass front that had formed around the demand for "Diretas ja!" (Direct elections now).

Workers Party took the lead

The vote in parliament obscured two fundamental features of the mass movement — the predominance of the workers movement and popular sectors in the demonstrations and the qualitative step forward taken by the broad opposition movement in adopting a clearly political slogan as its axis. These developments went far beyond the program and methods of the bourgeois opposition.

The All-Party Committee, which coordinated the mobilizations, reflected the clash of interests between the bourgeois parties and the working-class and popular forces that came together to confront the dictatorship. The Work-

ers Party not only initiated the campaign for direct elections against the will of the PMDB. In the course of the campaign the PT also gave expression to the sentiments of the masses, clashing in practice with the bourgeois leaders and drawing the inescapable conclusion from the mobilizations — the need for a general strike on the day Congress was to vote on the amendment.

The first step of the campaign was taken back in November 1983 by the PT, acting virtually alone. It organized a demonstration in São Paulo that, significantly, combined two slogans — "direct elections now" and "solidarity with Nicaragua." With the support of the two trade-union federations (CUT and CONCLAT),² the action involved some 15,000 people. The opposition state governors, who at that very moment were meeting in the São Paulo government palace to draw up a pro-direct elections manifesto, failed to support the rally.

When the PMDB's negotiations with the regime over direct elections failed, the party's state governors decided to support further

2. CUT — United Workers Federation; CONCLAT — National Coordinating Committee of the Working Class.

The CUT was founded in August 1983 by delegates representing 707 trade unions and 208 workers associations; it brings together the more militant sectors of the labor movement upon which the PT is largely based. The CONCLAT was set up in November 1983 by Communist Party union officials and a layer of the union bureaucracy that until recently had close ties to the dictatorship.

Uruguay

Campaign to free Tupamaro leaders

Raúl Sendic transferred to Montevideo prison

Efforts have been renewed in Uruguay and internationally to secure the release of Raúl Sendic and eight other leaders of the National Liberation Movement (MLN), also known as the "Tupamaros."

Sendic, now nearly 60 years old, is in precarious health owing to repeated torture and the deprivation of proper medical care. He has been held prisoner since September 1972, when he was captured in the course of a fierce campaign by the Uruguayan military to wipe out the Tupamaros.

In late 1973, Sendic and the eight other imprisoned Tupamaro leaders were removed from the jails where they were being held pending trial and transferred to secret confinement at military installations. The dictatorship made known that they would be killed if the Tupamaros resumed armed struggle against the regime. The nine have been held hostage in that way ever since, shuttled between military

mobilizations. Actions took place in many parts of the country, among them a rally of 300,000 in São Paulo. This stage of the campaign culminated in the unexpectedly large February 24 outpouring in Minas Gerais — a state governed by Tancredo Neves, a PMDB leader who opposes direct elections.

Despite Minas Gerais' small size in comparison to São Paulo, 300,000 persons turned out there as well. There was one constant feature of all these actions — PT leader Luís Inácio da Silva ("Lula") was the focus of the masses' attention, while representatives of the bourgeois parties were continually repudiated.

The scope and character of the mass mobilizations caused the bourgeois opposition to switch tactics. In the next phase of the campaign — which reached its high point in demonstrations of 1.5 million in Rio de Janeiro and 2 million in São Paulo on April 10 and 16 — the bourgeois parties came out openly against further mobilizations as the means of achieving direct elections. A student demonstration in Minas Gerais was repressed by the Military Police. Rio de Janeiro State Governor Leonel Brizola, who heads the PDT and is a leading presidential aspirant, maneuvered to block the rally in his capital; it was carried off without official approval and without any support from Brizola's government apparatus. In São Paulo a politician totally opposed to the mobilizations was appointed secretary while PMDB Governor Franco Montoro's representative walked out of the All-Party Committee. Montoro himself publicly opposed the holding of the April 16 march, although he was later

bases and repeatedly subjected to the most inhuman tortures.

The new campaign to demand the release of the Tupamaro leaders was launched April 6 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where the municipal council voted to declare Sendic an honorary citizen of the city. On the same day, an editorial in the Uruguayan weekly *Jaque* urged that Sendic be freed — the first public statement inside Uruguay in recent years on a case whose very mention has been taboo for the military regime.

An initial victory was registered April 17 when it was made known that Sendic and five others among the Tupamaro leaders — Henry Engler, Jorge Maneras, Julio Marenales, Adolfo Wassen, and Jorge Zavalza — have been transferred to Libertad Prison near Montevideo, the Uruguayan capital. But the whereabouts of the other three Tupamaros — Eleuterio Fernández, José Mujica, and Mauricio Rosencoff — was not disclosed. □

1. The bourgeois opposition parties represented in Congress are the PMDB, the Brazilian Labor Party (PTB), and the Democratic Labor Party (PDT). Also represented in Congress is the Workers Party (PT), which is based on the most militant sectors of Brazil's trade-union movement.

obliged to back down by pressure from his own party.

The bourgeois forces' rejection of a general strike on the day of the amendment vote was of course still more outspoken than their opposition to demonstrations. The weight of the state-government machines in the hands of the PMDB and PDT, combined with the relative weakness of the movement's trade-union pole, enabled the bourgeois parties to forestall a general strike. The objective situation, nonetheless, was and remains in favor of the PT's proposal; a poll carried out by *Folha de São Paulo* showed that in the main industrial and urban center of the country, 57 percent support a general strike as the means of achieving direct elections.

DOCUMENTS

'Em Tempo' takes up strategy of direct-elections movement

[The following editorial is taken from the May 3-16 issue of *Em Tempo*, a Brazilian socialist fortnightly published in São Paulo that supports the Workers Party (PT). The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

1. As is widely recognized, this country is no longer the same. After the first stage of the campaign for "direct elections now!" the isolation of the regime has reached such a point that we can already visualize the end of the dictatorship as a real possibility.

The dictatorship still exists, of course, and is still able to bare its teeth, decree emergency measures, besiege the capital and the National Congress, and pressure the PDS deputies to line up behind its interests. And, as we have seen, such measures still have a certain efficacy. The dictatorship is still capable of attacking the offices of leftist newspapers and throwing any number of persons into jail.

Nonetheless, it is in no position to deal deep and lasting blows to the mass movement. Its internal unity is too precarious for it to be able to gather the strength for a military coup. And in the unlikely event that enough momentary unity could be achieved to make such a coup possible, it would be difficult to stabilize things afterwards.

The people can no longer be intimidated as before. This was brought out, for example, in the splendid cacophony of horn-blowing that broke out in Brasília during the emergency measures.* Challenged and debilitated, the

*In order to prevent demonstrations in the capital, Brasília, during the week leading up to the vote in Congress on the amendment presented by opposition deputy Dante de Oliveira calling for direct elections, the regime decreed a state of emergency there and deployed 8,000 troops in the streets. — IP

Reflecting this reality, just five days after the voting in Congress the CUT and CONCLAT held joint May Day demonstrations in various cities and issued a statement that affirmed: "We want immediate elections. We have gathered to prepare the ground for a general strike, which ought to take place before the voting in Congress on the Figueiredo Amendment [which calls for shortening the presidential term and holding direct elections in 1988]. Only the working class, by shutting down production, can conquer direct elections."

On the basis of that joint statement, the CUT and CONCLAT have been holding assemblies in all union locals to discuss and organize the general strike. □

dictatorship reacts even in ridiculous ways — witness the curious episode of Gen. Newton Cruz reviewing his troops before dawn on April 26 after the Dante de Oliveira amendment failed to pass. Cruz called for six "Hip, hip, hoorahs!" for victory — against the National Congress and the people.

An institutional impasse has arisen in that the Electoral College is no longer viable but any constitutional alternative to it requires a two-thirds vote in Congress. Figueiredo's amendment, termed by the general-president his final word and the maximum concession possible, does not offer a framework for negotiations with the bourgeois opposition.

2. With the defeat of the Dante de Oliveira amendment in Congress, reports have mounted forecasting negotiations over the impasse, with the aim of averting a troublesome breakdown of control with unforeseeable results. The main initiative toward conciliation has been taken by [Minas Gerais Governor] Tancredo Neves. Bringing together governors from both the PMDB and the PDS, Tancredo offered even more than a transitional plan — in fact, he put forward an entire program, including economic measures, for a transitional government.

Still, it is one thing to envision a certain strengthening of tendencies toward negotiations, but quite another to claim that room for conciliation among the various factions of the bourgeoisie already exists and that all that is needed is a channel to consummate a fait accompli.

There are three conditions for bourgeois negotiations today: an interlocutor on the side of the dictatorship who represents the unity of its forces; an interlocutor who expresses a consensus among the bourgeois opposition par-

ties, mainly the PMDB; and, fundamentally, a proposal that could make such an accord viable.

None of these conditions has been achieved so far. Substantial sectors of the dictatorship still resist negotiations that would clearly entail abandoning their plan to remain in power. And the broad movement for direct elections that has galvanized the country these past few months has not been defeated.

It is therefore probable that the institutional impasse will continue for some time. This could be decisive, depending on the extent of the pressure exerted by the continuation of the mass movement. It is significant that the most ardent "negotiator," Tancredo Neves, has already been obliged to recognize this fact. After stabbing the pro-direct elections movement in the back, he found himself in trouble inside his own party. A few days later he backtracked, saying that he was not in a personal or political position to lead negotiations. Furthermore, as a result of the repression ordered against a student demonstration the day of the voting on the Dante de Oliveira amendment, the PMDB executive in Minas Gerais is going through a major crisis.

3. From the workers' standpoint, there is no reason to fear the institutional impasse. What we want is precisely the end of the institutions of the current regime. For that same reason, the impasse is no argument in favor of negotiations, which would mean an agreement with Figueiredo and the betrayal of the people, who have mobilized for immediate direct elections. On this question, our view is exactly the opposite of Mr. Tancredo Neves. We want a breakdown.

In order for this to happen, it is necessary that the mass movement not retreat. It must stay in the streets and regain the level of mobilization achieved on the eve of the voting on the Dante de Oliveira amendment, while broadening out and radicalizing. Is this possible?

We believe it is. There is frustration owing to the fact that the Dante de Oliveira amendment failed to pass. But a feeling of indignation is mounting and will be difficult to blunt.

For the direct-elections movement to maintain its momentum and grow, it is necessary to maintain the broad unity of forces seen in the opening phase of the campaign. We know that the opposition governors will throw up obstacles to further mobilizations, as they have already been doing. But the masses' readiness to go on struggling finds its most outstanding expression in the PT, and this goes far beyond the party's immediate areas of influence.

Once again, the necessary tactic is to combine pressure on the most moderate sectors of the opposition with advancing mobilizations. In this sense, it is important to fight for the continuity of the Pro-Direct Elections Committees that were set up in various states and that have expression in the National All-Party Committee. At this time, these seem to be the most appropriate bodies for deciding on and

centralizing the next united steps to continue the struggle. A proposal is already being discussed for a national day of protests on May 13 or another date close at hand.

4. Understanding the need for such broad unity in no way implies subordinating the actions of the labor movement to possible vetoes by the All-Party Committee. The labor movement today faces the immense challenge of acting on the proposal for a general strike, the only instrument of force that can put qualitatively greater pressure on the dictatorship.

The general strike will take on reality if there is decisive support from the various sectors of the popular movement and endorsement by the various forces involved in the campaign. A national work stoppage today would inevitably take on a political content and would express in a radical way the democratic aspirations that are in the streets. In this sense

it would not be merely a trade-union action.

But this depends on the ability of the CUT to guarantee success through its own forces. Pressure on the CONCLAT plays a decisive role in a united-front dynamic. It is significant that there were united May Day actions in a number of places, reflecting the pressure for unity within the movement. The signing of a joint CUT-CONCLAT statement proposing discussion among the ranks on a general strike was also significant, even though we know that the bureaucrats and reformists could sabotage this at the next moment.

A general strike based on the radicalization of the democratic sentiments of the masses is objectively possible. What remains is to take the necessary steps to prepare and organize it.

5. The center of the campaign must not be in parliament, where Tancredo Neves and those who want to negotiate have room to ma-

neuver, but rather in the streets, the factories, the offices, and the schools.

This does not mean, however, that we must give up the fight in Congress. Quite the contrary. It is necessary to have another amendment in the hopper calling for immediate direct elections. This is one more way to denounce the regime, to keep the campaign under way, and to bar the way to those who want to claim that the fight for direct elections has already been defeated.

But clearly the best way to keep the direct-elections campaign on the track in parliament is not to further amend Figueiredo's amendment, which in any case is a proposal of the government. There are other amendments on the table and other possibilities to be utilized.

The fight against the dictatorship is arriving at a decisive turning point. Let us continue the struggle with redoubled enthusiasm. □

DOCUMENTS

On the elections in the United States

Declaration of the Mexican PRT

[The following is the text of a declaration issued by the Political Committee of the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT), Mexican section of the Fourth International, taken from the April 23-May 6 issue of the PRT's fortnightly newspaper *Bandera Socialista*. It is followed by a letter to the editor that appeared in the same issue. The translations from the Spanish are by *Intercontinental Press*.

[An earlier article from *Bandera Socialista* on the U.S. elections, by Enrique Hernández, was reprinted in the April 16 issue of *Intercontinental Press*. It was accompanied by a "Selections From the Left" citing the positions of various U.S. left organizations on the campaign of Jesse Jackson, as well as an article from a pamphlet on the 1983 elections in Chicago by Mac Warren, a leader of the U.S. Socialist Workers Party. The letter to the editor that we are reprinting below, which was run in *Bandera Socialista* under the heading, "Jackson strengthens the Democratic Party," refers to this article by Hernández.]

* * *

The presidential elections in the United States will be taking place in the midst of the present deepening of the crisis of U.S. imperialism's hegemony in the world.

The solution that U.S. capital seeks to find to this crisis involves not only an attack on the living standards and jobs of the U.S. workers, but also a deep-going economic and political reordering of the world in line with its interests.

The workers of the world are feeling the effects of the crisis and are seeking to free them-



JESSE JACKSON

selves from the imperialist yoke. From Central America to the Philippines, the workers are resisting imperialism and its designs for world domination and exploitation.

The election campaign and the class struggle

Therefore the underlying debate in the U.S. election campaign is over what solution — favorable to the bourgeoisie — should be imposed. In the campaign rhetoric, this is presented as the alternative, not of one class, but

of the entire people of the United States. Already during the invasion of Grenada, large sectors of the people in the United States were deceived about the meaning of that action, and imperialism gained their support for what was presented as an action that was "acceptable and beneficial" for world peace.

Ronald Reagan has shown his capacity to resist criticism and to stand up to strong public pressures. He continues to maintain his warlike attitude in Central America despite the calls, including from a segment of the U.S. Congress, that his administration explain U.S. involvement in the armed actions in Nicaragua — as was seen in the recent case of the mining of Nicaraguan ports.

The U.S. government seems to have decided to involve itself in a Central American war despite the reservations of the people of the United States regarding a war of that kind in the wake of the striking failure in Vietnam.

And in this regard the Republicans are doing the same as the Democrats, since we must remember that the present policy toward Central America has its origin in the Democratic Carter administration, which was frightened by its "error" in Nicaragua when it let Somoza fall.

Certainly, different tactical proposals exist between the Democratic and Republican parties, just as there are differences in their candidates and primary candidates. However, in terms of their position in the class struggle, all the candidates obviously support the continuation of the economic, military, political, and cultural hegemony of their country's imperialism in the world. All of them are obliged to defend the interests of their "nation," mean-

ing imperialism.

But the internal economic crisis in the United States gives rise to an ever greater confrontation between the classes. Capital's offensive against the workers in heavy industry has economically and socially wrenched U.S. society. This pushes a segment of the workers and the oppressed minorities to seek their own solution, a class solution, to the crisis and the austerity policy of the Yankee government. As a result, the campaign of Reverend Jesse Jackson has stirred interest among some radicalized sectors.

Regarding this campaign we must note that it was clear from the beginning that the Democratic Party would not nominate a Black. This goes against the very character of the party. And it is obvious that a significant portion of Jackson's followers are fed up with the austerity, the growing militarism, the dismantling of trade-union gains and gains of Blacks and women. Therefore, it is important that a discussion take place on the bourgeois and imperialist character of this party — starting from the explanation of why the Democratic Party is incapable of nominating Jackson — in order to bring the masses to independent political action.

For a class-struggle alternative, without sectarianism

The U.S. class-struggle and socialist movement must take serious steps toward building a united working-class pole that goes beyond the traditional propagandistic-sectarian posture on the elections.

In recent years class-struggle union movements have emerged that are fighting against the Reagan government's austerity policies. But these movements have not yet expressed themselves in the political arena. The job of socialists is, precisely, to close this gap between trade-union and political action by participating in such struggles. And in this a big role can be played by carrying out a united class-struggle campaign of all sectors of workers, women, and national minorities who are ready to defeat Reagan and the imperialist strategy in the world.

Therefore an election campaign by socialists in the United States today must present the workers with a useful instrument for pushing forward their struggles. How useful an election campaign is will be determined by the extent to which it offers an alternative of resistance to austerity and militarism and reflects independent political organization, as well as the extent to which it responds to the concrete needs of the masses. More than ever, the challenge for socialists and revolutionaries is to find a close link between the concrete and political demands of the class.

The difficulties in achieving these objectives are immense, particularly in a society like the one in the United States. But there are traditions and lessons of the world revolutionary movement that teach that the revolutionary movement is built with the workers themselves. Their methods: united mobilization and political independence.

Today in the United States there are two points that can unify important sectors of the workers and the democratic forces: the struggle against austerity and capitalist restructuring of industry; and the struggle against the imperialist intervention in Central America.

These two points, which between them are of concern to a large number of forces and parties that are currently dispersed, can be the elements that bring them all together in what could be a common platform to achieve an effective, responsible intervention in the elections. This would be the best way to spread

democratic and anti-imperialist positions to ever broader sectors of the people in the United States, who are today deceived and manipulated by their rulers.

U.S. socialists can move forward — without sterile sectarian incantations and by subordinating their special objectives to these axes of political action, which are in the interests of the workers, and especially to defense of the besieged Central American revolution.

This type of policy can give rise to a real alternative campaign to the two imperialist parties, the Democrats and Republicans. □

Letter to the editor of 'Bandera Socialista'

To Comrade José Martínez
Editor of *Bandera Socialista*

In recent issues of our publication (*BS* issues 281 and 282) there have been articles that try to offer an analysis of the present electoral contest in the United States. It is unfortunate that we have responded to an event of great interest with reports that lack coherence in their analysis. However, it is even more worrisome that some articles present — in the most confused terms — an orientation that breaks with an entire tradition of class independence by arguing that revolutionary Marxists in the United States should participate in — and we suppose this involves support for — the campaign of Jesse Jackson.

Without offering any evidence, Comrade Enrique Hernández maintains that Jackson "paints a dividing line" between "the exploited and oppressed" on one side and on the other side Reagan and "the candidates of the big corporations in the Democratic Party."

It is true that Jackson has generated great sympathy among the most oppressed sectors of the U.S. population. However, we know well that even parties of the right are capable of generating this type of sympathy (the PAN [National Action Party] in Mexico for example). The central question in determining our attitude toward the Jackson campaign rests not in an analysis of his electoral base but rather in what he represents in objective terms.

In this regard, Comrade Enrique Hernández argues that Jackson's positions are much more radical than those of the traditional liberal wing of the Democratic Party, represented by candidates such as George McGovern. But in what sense?

In the case of El Salvador, Jackson puts forward the need to "condition American economic and military support on an improvement in human rights." After having supported the U.S. military intervention in Lebanon, Jackson has responded to the growing public discontent by suggesting the withdrawal of the Yankee troops, but defending the presence of an imperialist "international peace force." In the case of the struggle of the Palestinian people, Jackson raises the need for a negotiated solution "exactly in the style of the

reconciliation of Egypt and Israel at Camp David." In Europe, Jackson defends the presence of Yankee troops as the only viable defense against "the threat of Communism."

And in the domestic arena, his proposals are based on the orientation of his own organization (Operation Push) which seeks an improvement in the situation of the oppressed sectors strictly within the context of the capitalist system.

The popular support that Jackson has generated is not based on a radical alternative program, but rather on his *image* as a long-time social fighter, which dates from his participation, with Martin Luther King, in the great struggles of Black people in the 1960s. And therein lies the essence of Jackson's campaign: in the face of the Reagan administration's offensive, which seeks to eliminate the social and political gains the exploited and oppressed won in recent decades through big mobilizations and militant struggles, Jackson offers the *demobilizing* and electoral perspective of working within the Democratic Party.

In fact, the Jackson campaign comes at a crucial moment, when the schema of domesticating the social movements of the 1960s by channeling them through the structures of the bourgeois political apparatus is being threatened by the gravity of the imperialist economic and political crisis.

In the face of this situation, the revolutionary left has the responsibility of putting forward a political alternative based on the unity between the exploited and oppressed who are in struggle and the anti-weapons movements. Any intervention in the electoral process must be based on the perspective of pushing forward these movements and must raise the need to carry out a policy independent of the parties of the bourgeoisie.

The fact that the U.S. left has still not been able to mount such a response does not mean we must accept the "alternatives" that Enrique Hernández raises: either isolated and sectarian radical campaigns, or an orientation toward demagogues of the Jackson type who seek to strengthen the Democratic Party.

Revolutionary greetings,
Rosendo Mendoza

Intercontinental Press