

# INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS

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Year-end Index  
for 1984

## New Caledonia Fights for Independence From French Rule



Indigenous Kanaks in a proindependence demonstration.

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Elected to  
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**Nicaragua Mobilizes Against U.S. Aggression**

# Havana meeting of CMEA

By Will Reissner

The three-day conference of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) held in Havana, October 29-31, marked the first meeting of that 10-member organization of noncapitalist states held outside Europe.

The Havana site reflected the organization's commitment to giving special priority to the economic development of its three non-European members — Cuba, Vietnam, and Mongolia.

Special treatment for Cuba, Mongolia, and Vietnam was ratified at the CMEA Summit meeting in Moscow in June.

Cuban Vice-president Carlos Rafael Rodríguez pointed to the significance of this commitment. "Not only was it decided to ratify the preferential treatment given to Cuba, Vietnam, and Mongolia by the other members," he said, according to the Oct. 28, 1984, issue of the weekly *Granma*, "but it was also made very clear that the CMEA membership as a whole should contribute to speed up the development of these three countries in order to put them on a par — in a period which cannot be short — with those of the other members."

The three non-European members receive preferential prices for their exports and financial and technical aid in developing their economic potential.

This policy mirrors the attempt to close the gap between more- and less-developed CMEA members in Europe since the organization's foundation in 1949.

In the ensuing years, the gap between the more-developed members (East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and the Soviet Union) and the less-developed (Bulgaria, Hungary, and Rumania) has narrowed considerably.

In national per capita income, the 3.2 to 1 disparity has shrunk to 1.4 to 1. In industrial production, the original 5 to 1 differential has been reduced to 2 to 1. In agricultural output, the 2 to 1 gap between the more- and less-developed European members has dropped to 1.7 to 1.

This shrinking disparity in the level of economic development of European CMEA states took place in a context of rapid economic growth for all the CMEA countries. In the past 15 years, for example, the industrial production of CMEA members doubled, while the production in capitalist states increased by one-third.

With one-tenth of the world's population, the CMEA countries produce one-third of its manufactured goods.

## Our year-end schedule

This is the last issue of *Intercontinental Press* that will appear in 1984. Our next issue will be dated January 21, 1985.

For Cuba, Vietnam, and Mongolia, one of the greatest benefits of CMEA membership is the protection it affords them from the ravages of the unequal trade relations between the imperialist countries and the semicolonial world.

In recent years, the prices of commodities exported by the underdeveloped countries have been declining steadily, while the cost of the manufactured goods they import from the advanced capitalist world has continued to rise.

Take the example of the world market price of sugar, Cuba's main export crop. In November 1974, sugar was selling for 65.5 cents per pound on the world market. By October 1984 the price had dropped to 4.3 cents per pound.

Without the benefit of long-term agreements with the Soviet Union and other CMEA countries fixing the purchase price of sugar far higher than the world market price, the Cuban economy would have been thrown into deep crisis by the steep decline.

Carlos Rafael Rodríguez noted that in its trade with advanced capitalist countries, Cuba must "pay for products from the capitalist countries ten or 15 times more than what we paid in 1950, while they are paying 4.3 cents per pound of our sugar, our main product."

The Cuban vice-president added, "when we sell our sugar to the capitalist market, our purchasing power is much lower than in 1931 and 1932 in the years of the Great Depression, when we were selling our sugar to the United States at half a cent per pound."

Agreements between Cuba and other CMEA members have already resulted in construction of two huge nickel processing plants, development of a large citrus industry, construction of a nuclear power plant, exploration for oil and gas, and many other large-scale projects.

Vietnam, too, has received much assistance from the CMEA countries. Vu Can noted in the July 1984 *Vietnam Courier*: "The Soviet Union alone has helped [Vietnam] build 200 industrial and public-interest projects . . . not including a hundred others now under way."

Vu Can reported that the CMEA countries have trained for Vietnam about 100,000 "scientists and technicians of higher and secondary levels."

The agreements Vietnam has signed with other CMEA members, Vu Can noted, will "help her catch up with the general level within the shortest time."

Through these agreements, Vietnam now produces modest quantities of machine-tools, diesel engines, electric turbines, tractors, small-tonnage vessels, and consumer goods.

In return, Vietnam sells to the other CMEA countries tropical products processed in its nascent industries.

Mongolia, too, has received help from other CMEA members in the form of credit and di-

rect aid. This has enabled Mongolia to begin mining coal, copper, and molybdenum, to increase grain and fodder production, and to develop a food-processing and consumer goods industry.

In a speech to the CMEA meeting in Havana, Cuban President Fidel Castro noted that his country's gross social product grew 2.3 percent in 1982 and more than 5 percent in 1983. In 1984, economic growth to the third quarter of the year was 9.8 percent.

"This stands in contrast," Castro noted, "both with the tragic situation in the Asian and African countries and with the similarly dramatic negative growth of the economies of Latin American countries considered as semideveloped. In recent years," said Castro, "these countries have experienced, as a consequence of their dependence on relations with developed capitalist countries — the United States above all — an economic regression which places them at the 1976 levels, with drops of over 10 percent in industrial output."

Castro added: "It is Cuba's membership in the socialist community, along with our people's successful efforts to continuously raise labor productivity and make our economy more efficient and profitable, that has enabled us to advance as we are doing."

Regarding the joint commission that has been established between the CMEA and Nicaragua, the Cuban president stated "we believe it is dramatically urgent to do our best to help Nicaragua confront victoriously the enormous human and economic sacrifices that the Reagan administration's attacks have imposed on it."

"Cuba," Castro pledged, "will spare no efforts to fulfill this undeferrable duty" to Nicaragua.

A Nicaraguan delegation headed by Minister of Planning Henry Ruíz attended the Havana conference.

Also present at the CMEA meeting were Enrique Iglesias, executive secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA); and Sebastián Allegret, permanent secretary of the Latin American Economic System (SELA). □

## CMEA membership

The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance was established on Jan. 25, 1949, by the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Rumania, and Czechoslovakia.

East Germany joined the CMEA in 1950, Mongolia in 1962, Cuba in 1972, and Vietnam in 1978. In addition, Yugoslavia has associate-member status.

Angola, Afghanistan, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, Laos, Mozambique, and Ethiopia have observer status in the CMEA.

Special agreements of cooperation exist between the CMEA and Iraq, Finland, Mexico, and Nicaragua.

# Coard trial: No justice in Grenada

By Ernest Harsch

While the U.S. occupation authorities in Grenada were engineering the recent general elections in an effort to sanction their invasion of that Caribbean island, another U.S.-directed stage show was also in progress: the trial of 19 people on charges of murdering former Prime Minister Maurice Bishop and other leaders of the Grenada revolution.

Those on trial include former Deputy Prime Minister Bernard Coard, Gen. Hudson Austin, Phyllis Coard, Selwyn Strachan, and other former figures in Bishop's People's Revolutionary Government (PRG) and in the armed forces.

After several weeks of preliminary hearings and numerous postponements and adjournments, the trial officially opened in St. George's on October 16. All the defendants refused to enter pleas, declaring that they did not recognize the legitimacy of the court and charging mistreatment by their captors. The trial has been adjourned several times since then.

All those in the dock *are* guilty of a major crime against the Grenadian people: betraying and overthrowing the workers and farmers government led by Bishop. It was Bernard Coard — who had organized a secret faction within the ruling New Jewel Movement and the officer corps of the army — who spearheaded that coup. When tens of thousands of Grenadians freed Bishop from house arrest on Oct. 19, 1983, Coard ordered special army units to physically crush the mass mobilization. Scores of demonstrators were gunned down in the streets, and Bishop and other revolutionary leaders were lined up against a wall and summarily executed.

Though Coard and his colleagues claimed to be "Marxists" and "true revolutionaries," this was a counterrevolutionary coup. And by destroying the revolution, they opened the doors to the U.S. invasion of Grenada that began less than a week later, on Oct. 25, 1983.

Coard and the others are justifiably hated by the masses of Grenadian working people. Hardly anyone in Grenada would be upset if they were sentenced to long prison terms.

But the purpose of the current trial is not to try them for betraying the revolution. Only the Grenadian people — freed of the ongoing U.S. occupation — could bring them to justice on that account.

Rather, its purpose is to bolster the U.S. occupation and to bury the political legacy of the Grenada revolution.

By falsely portraying Coard and his collaborators as "hard-core Marxists," the U.S. embassy and the U.S. Army "psychological operations" teams are seeking to whip up anti-communist sentiments and to discredit the ideals that Bishop fought for. They are trying to convince the Grenadian people — and

working people in other countries as well — that the brutal methods of Coard's group are the methods of Marxism and that socialist revolutions inevitably lead to bloodbaths.

The trial is being conducted by some of the staunchest opponents of the Grenada revolution, under the watchful eyes of the U.S. embassy. The chief prosecutor is Karl Hudson-Phillips, the former attorney general of neighboring Trinidad and Tobago, who heads the right-wing Organisation for National Reconstruction in that country and who frequently condemned Bishop when he was alive and in power.

By trying some of the most hated people in Grenada, the authorities are aiming to bolster the false image of the capitalist courts as impartial dispensers of "justice," standing above social classes.

Finally, the Coard trial is intended as a precedent, to pave the way for further and more effective acts of repression against genuine revolutionaries and class-struggle fighters.

Just as the December 3 elections did not express the sovereign will of the Grenadian people or "restore democracy" to that country — as Washington claims — this trial has nothing to do with justice. □

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# Mass protests continue against Marcos

*Commission of inquiry implicates top officials in Aquino killing*

By Eileen Morgan

[The following article is scheduled to appear in the December 7 issue of *Socialist Action*, a fortnightly newspaper published in Auckland, New Zealand, that reflects the views of the Socialist Action League, New Zealand section of the Fourth International.]

\* \* \*

AUCKLAND — Although more than a year has passed since the assassination of Philippine opposition politician Benigno Aquino, the mass antigovernment protests sparked by his death are continuing.

Huge demonstrations took place in Manila, the capital of the Philippines, on both August 21 — the first anniversary of the assassination — and November 27, Aquino's birth date.

Up to two million people were estimated to have taken part in the August 21 protest. Other marches and rallies, involving tens of thousands, have been ongoing throughout 1984.

Benigno Aquino was a central leader of the United Nationalist Democratic Organization (UNIDO), the procapitalist opposition to the dictatorship of President Ferdinand Marcos. He was murdered at Manila Airport, on his return to the Philippines after spending several years in exile in the United States.

A military "investigation" immediately after the assassination pinned the blame on Rolando Galman, who was shot by the soldiers escorting Aquino off the plane immediately following the shot which killed Aquino. The investigators claimed that Galman was a lone gunman hired by the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP). The CPP is an outlawed organization, and its chairperson, Jose Maria Sison, has been in prison since 1977. The armed wing of the CPP — the New People's Army — leads a guerrilla struggle against Marcos which can mobilize 20,000 combatants.

## Commission of inquiry

The hundreds of thousands of Filipinos who poured into the streets in the weeks following Aquino's assassination made it clear that this "explanation" was not accepted. Under this pressure, Marcos was forced to set up a public commission of inquiry. Its five members were, however, hand-picked to limit the scope of its findings. The Aquino family boycotted the commission's proceedings, saying it could never arrive at the truth as long as Marcos was in power.

After 10 months of public hearings two reports were released by commission members

on October 23 and 24. Both reports were forced to conclude that there was no evidence to support the claim that the CPP was behind the assassination. Instead, everything clearly pointed to a military plot. Galman was only an innocent scapegoat.

The first report to be released — by the commission's chairwoman and long-time Marcos associate Corazon Agrava — claimed that only seven people were involved in the plot. Responsibility rested with the six guards who escorted Aquino off the plane and Brig. Gen. Luther Custodio, the head of a 2,000-strong security force at Manila Airport, she stated.

## Army leaders implicated

Agrava's report went out of its way to declare that Army Chief of Staff Gen. Fabian Ver had had nothing to do with the assassination. Ver is a distant relative of Marcos and was his bodyguard and chauffeur until appointed head of the 200,000-strong armed forces.

The majority report by the other four commission members, in contrast, names 26 people, including one civilian (a millionaire businessman), as being involved in the assassination plot. Included in the 26 are Ver, Custodio, Maj. Gen. Prospero Olivas, the Metro-Manila commander of the Philippine police, and Col. Vicente Tigas, a media representative for the Presidential Security Command.

The majority report, however, like Agrava's, stopped short of implicating Marcos himself in the assassination plot. But, as Aquino's widow pointed out to journalists, it is impossible to believe that the murder was "planned and executed without Marcos' knowledge or express approval."

## Mass protests

On October 25, thousands of Filipinos marched through central Manila to protest the commission's failure to implicate Marcos and to demand that he resign. Five days later demonstrators clashed with riot police, who used tear gas, smoke bombs, truncheons, and water cannon. Several demonstrators were injured and 14 were arrested.

Marcos originally tried to protect Ver, telling him in a letter that "the circumstances under which the board has chosen to implicate you in its findings are fraught with doubt and great contradictions of opinion and testimony." Ver was granted a temporary leave of absence. But on November 5, with mass protests continuing, all 26 named in the commission's majority report were indicted for "double murder" (that is, the murders of both Aquino and Galman) before the government

ombudsman. It remains to be seen, however, whether any further action will be taken against any of them.

## Economic reality

The mass upheaval in the Philippines is a product not only of opposition to the brutal police methods of the Marcos dictatorship, but of the economic reality confronting Filipino workers and farmers. A report published in the October 30 *New Zealand Herald* (reprinted from *Newsweek*) explained, for example, that:

- Nearly 300,000 workers in Manila have lost their jobs since the beginning of 1984.
- Inflation now stands at 60 percent.
- The foreign debt is \$52 billion [NZ\$1 = US\$0.48]. The International Monetary Fund has recently approved a \$1.26 billion loan, pending the implementation of a stringent austerity policy.
- The Philippine economy is expected to shrink this year, possibly by as much as 6 percent. For example, rice had to be imported for the first time in years because the rising cost of fertilizer has cut production.

## Union struggles

In an interview published in the October-November issue of *Push*, the newspaper of the Hotel and Hospital Workers Union in New Zealand, Filipino trade union leader Bobby Ortaliz — who visited this country in August — outlined some of the wages and conditions faced by workers in the Philippines.

Ortaliz explained that industrial workers in the Philippines earn around \$5 a day. Agricultural workers on the plantations are supposed to be paid around \$3 a day, but most get as little as 80 cents to \$1.40. The official poverty line is \$7 to \$8 a day.

As well as being president of the sugar workers union, Ortaliz is acting secretary of the KMU (Kilusang Mayo Uno — May First Movement), a trade union alliance that has, he says, over 700,000 members. The KMU has played a leading role in mobilizing working people in protests against the Marcos regime.

According to Ortaliz there are about 3 million industrial workers in the Philippines. The majority of the workforce of almost 20 million are peasant farmers and agricultural workers. The unemployment rate is currently around 35-40 percent, he estimates.

Despite government repression against trade unions and striking workers, the first six months of this year saw 500 strike notices filed with the Ministry of Labor and Employment. Up to August, 150 strikes had taken place, and in September, 10 strikes broke out in Manila

alone.

Marcos has powerful backers in the face of this mass opposition to his rule, however. The United States has \$4 billion worth of investments in the Philippines (60 percent of its total South East Asian investments), and huge strategic military bases with 20,000 U.S. troops.

During the recent presidential election campaign in the United States, Ronald Reagan made it clear that Marcos has his wholehearted

support. The U.S. government had to defend Marcos and his government, he explained, "rather than throwing them to the wolves and then facing a communist takeover across the Pacific." By "wolves" he was, of course, referring to the working people of the Philippines.

Other imperialist powers such as New Zealand and Australia have also been strengthening their economic and military ties with the

Marcos regime. New Zealand Ministry of Defence briefing papers made public in October, for example, indicate that moves towards a closer military relationship between New Zealand and the Philippines began two years ago, and have since gathered pace. This is being developed under the mutual assistance program for aiding the development of the armed forces in South Pacific and South East Asian countries. □

## New Caledonia

# Revolt against French colonial rule

## *Kanaks set up their own provisional government*

By G.K. Newey

Only four days after proindependence forces set up a provisional government in the French colony of New Caledonia, French settlers on that Pacific island murdered 10 native Kanaks in a cold-blooded ambush December 5.

Among the dead were two brothers of Jean-Marie Tjibaou, leader of the Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front (FLNKS). The FLNKS, a coalition of 10 organizations, established the provisional government of Kanaky on December 1.

A third brother of Tjibaou was seriously wounded in the ambush outside the town of Hienghene. The settlers had blocked the road with felled trees. Two vehicles filled with people returning from a FLNKS rally were stopped, and the ambushers opened fire and threw dynamite into the cars. Kanak survivors reported hearing one settler exclaim, "I'm going to kill the scum," before opening fire on the one person still alive in one of the vehicles.

Tensions on nickel-rich New Caledonia, which is 12,000 miles from France, had been mounting since November 18, when the FLNKS led a successful Kanak boycott of elections to the island's local assembly.

The proindependence forces were protesting the French government's plan to delay action on independence until a referendum in 1989, and to allow any French citizen present on the island to vote on New Caledonia's future.

After the election boycott, the French government rushed in 750 more troops, to supplement the 700 police and 3,000 French soldiers permanently garrisoned on the island.

The day before the 10 Kanaks were gunned down, the French government had sent a special envoy, Edgard Pisani, to the island to try to defuse the confrontation between Kanaks and the French settlers.

### Seized in 1853

New Caledonia was seized by the French in 1853. A series of uprisings of the Melanesian Kanak natives of the island took place throughout the 19th century as French settlers took



over most of the land on the fertile west coast and drove out the Kanak inhabitants.

In 1917 a revolt led by Chief Noel was put down when Noel was captured by the French and beheaded.

Today most Kanaks live on reservations or in traditional villages on the narrow east coast. They survive through subsistence farming and fishing.

Until the end of World War II, Kanaks were obliged by law to remain on their reservations. Until 1946 they were denied the right to vote.

Even today there are only six Kanak secondary-school teachers, and there is not a single high school outside Nouméa, the island's capital, which is overwhelmingly French in population.

In early December, a group of 78 French researchers and teachers, most of whom are anthropologists by training, issued a statement condemning the impact of French rule on the Kanak people. "Driven from their lands, relegated to reservations, victims of terrible schooling and a manifest segregation, the Kanaks today, whether rural or urban, workers or functionaries, have had their creative poten-

tial totally denied," the statement noted.

While the Kanaks are concentrated on the east coast and the European population on the west coast, the island's mountainous interior is scarred by huge French-owned open-pit nickel mines, making New Caledonia the world's second largest producer, with one-third of the world's nickel reserves. Nickel accounts for 92 percent of the value of New Caledonia's exports.

For more than a century, successive French governments have fostered the settlement of colonists on New Caledonia to offset the Kanak population.

During the 19th century, Paris used the island as a dumping ground for prisoners. After the defeat of the Paris Commune in 1871, thousands of Communards were shipped to New Caledonia. Opponents of French rule in Algeria were also exiled there.

A large segment of the local French population, however, is transient and consists of government functionaries, soldiers, and technicians on short-term contracts.

As a result of this settlement policy, the percentage of Kanaks in the population has steadily declined. Today, the 64,000 Kanaks make up only 44 percent of the island's 145,000 residents.

About 35 percent of the population is French. Three-quarters of the 50,000 French residents are concentrated in the capital.

The remainder of the population is composed of some 16,000 natives of other French colonial possessions such as the Pacific islands of Fiji, Wallis, and Futuna, and the Indian Ocean island of Réunion; and by 10,000 Indo-Chinese, mostly Vietnamese, who were brought to New Caledonia while their countries were still under French rule.

### French refuse independence

The traditional attitude of French governments toward New Caledonia was expressed in a 1972 letter from then Prime Minister Pierre Messmer to his colonial minister.

Messmer wrote that "the French presence in

[New Caledonia] cannot be threatened, save in a world war, except by nationalist demands of the natives, eventually supported by other Communities in the Pacific."

Messmer argued that "the massive immigration of French citizens, from the mother country or from the overseas departments, especially from Réunion, should make it possible to avoid this danger by maintaining or improving the numerical relationship of the communities. In the long run, the native nationalist demand cannot be limited unless the demographic mass of the non-Oceanian population is a majority."

As Messmer feared, independence for New Caledonia has received the support of most Pacific states. Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu have been in the forefront of that support.

Kanak activists had placed great hopes in the election of François Mitterrand as president of France in 1981 because Mitterrand's Socialist Party was on record in favor of New Caledonia's independence. Mitterrand himself had spoken favorably of that prospect before his election.

But the Kanak hopes have been betrayed. Once in office, the Mitterrand government backtracked on its support for independence.

On May 29, 1984, the National Assembly in Paris passed a bill introduced by Georges Lemoine, the Socialist Party minister of overseas departments and territories, under which New Caledonia's status would be determined by a 1989 referendum in which every French citizen on the island would be allowed to vote.

The Assembly rejected the Kanak demand that voting be restricted to those with at least one parent born on New Caledonia.

The Socialist Party's support for the Lemoine bill led Roch Pidjot, the only Kanak member of the National Assembly, to resign from the SP parliamentary caucus.

The Kanak community totally rejected the Lemoine bill. Because it puts off the referendum until 1989, the bill enables the size of the French population to continue rising in the interim. In addition, the referendum would come three years after the French legislative elections of 1986. If the right-wing parties win a majority in those elections, the new French government could cancel any movement toward independence.

The Lemoine bill also allowed any French citizens on the island to vote on its future. Under French law, French civil servants, military personnel, and their families can vote the minute they set foot in the colony, and other French citizens can vote after only six months' residency. The French government could conceivably temporarily station enough French soldiers on the island to tip the balance in the election.

By calling for the vote to be limited to those with one parent born on New Caledonia, the Kanak activists note that this would give the vote to those they describe as "victims of France's colonial history in New Caledonia," the descendants of the convicts, Communards,



FLNKS supporters at rural roadblock.

and those shipped to the island from other colonies.

Since the successful Kanak boycott of the November 18 territorial assembly election and the December 1 establishment of the provisional government, French authorities have had to admit that the Lemoine bill's schedule is impossible to stick to.

#### 'Speed up timetable'

Prime Minister Laurent Fabius told the National Assembly on December 4 that 1989 was too late for a referendum and "the timetable will have to be sharply speeded up."

On the question of who can vote, Socialist Party leader Lionel Jospin proposed that the Kanaks and Europeans vote separately in a referendum, with the possibility that this could lead to the partition of New Caledonia and the establishment of a federated state, something the Kanaks totally reject.

Jospin added that he had no preference regarding the outcome of a referendum on self-determination. "Remaining in the French republic with autonomy would be fine with me; independence would not distress me a bit," he remarked.

The right-wing parties in the National Assembly spoke against Jospin's proposal for separate votes by the two groups. They feel sure that independence could be voted down if

everyone votes in the same election.

Pierre Messmer, the proponent of maintaining French control through increased settlement, argued that in any vote, "no discrimination having to do with race, place of birth, activity, duration of time in the territory is tolerable or even acceptable."

He added that he hopes that "Caledonians will freely choose" to remain an overseas territory of France.

Roch Pidjot, the Kanak member of the National Assembly, told that body: "the right of the Kanak people to independence cannot be destroyed by the result of any referendum whatsoever." Pidjot stressed "our determination to gain rapid and certain independence," adding that "nothing will make us go backward."

On December 4, the right-wing territorial assembly elected as a result of the Kanak boycott appealed to the Reagan administration to heed "the potential danger of a new Cuba" in the South Pacific and warned that the French Socialist Party government was preparing to "abandon" the island.

The statement charged that the FLNKS is getting aid from Libya. This charge has been echoed by Lemoine of the SP, who sternly lectured proindependence Kanaks in mid-October, saying: "I feel the choice has become very simple, even for those who want indepen-

dence: there are those who want independence with France and those who want independence with Libya."

In fact, the main Libyan contribution has been to accept 17 young people from the FLNKS for training as security guards to pro-

tect the FLNKS leaders against attacks by colonialist assassins.

The need for such training was highlighted by the December 5 massacre, and by the December 2 bombing of Jean-Marie Tjibaou's home. □

## DOCUMENTS

# Greetings to FLNKS convention

## French LCR backs New Caledonia independence front

[The final session of the founding convention of the Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front (FLNKS) took place in Nouméa on Sept. 24, 1984, the 131st anniversary of French rule in New Caledonia.

[Claude Gabriel attended the convention as a representative of the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), French section of the Fourth International. Below is the text of Gabriel's September 22 address to the convention. The translation from French is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

\* \* \*

"Those who support independence must explain what will be done on the day after. What kind of society will be organized." Those are the terms used by [French Secretary of State for Overseas Departments and Territories Georges] Lemoine recently regarding your country in an interview in the newspaper *Le Monde*.

Lemoine, you see, is worried. The poor man is wracked by doubts. What will they do with their independence, he asks himself all of a sudden. Are they going to break with French interests? Will they damage France's place in the Pacific? Are they going to chase out the colonial bosses and profiteers? That is what underlies his question.

But since he dares not raise these questions openly, since he dares not reveal the profoundly commercial and imperialist thrust of his expectations, he limits himself to saying: "Will this society be multi-ethnic?"

But the French government knows what your position is. It knows that the proindependence front itself has pledged that this country will remain open to those who accept Kanak sovereignty over it. The government knows all this, and Lemoine's question, despite its false ambiguity, obviously does not bear on this point.

Lemoine's ethnic pluralism means the maintenance of French imperialist interests in this country. It means the search for a neocolonial solution that would guarantee a continuation of the profits taken from this land for 130 years.

That is why Lemoine is so concerned with ethnic pluralism in New Caledonia. The immigrant workers in France and the second generation immigrants would love to hear the French government talk about ethnic

pluralism.

But, you see, Lemoine is part of a government that was elected through the votes of the working people, but did not carry out any of its main promises. It was elected to end austerity, but it deepened austerity. It was elected to end unemployment, but it deepened unemployment. It was elected to attack the arrogance of the bosses, but today it apologizes for liberalism and capitalist profits.

The French government, which did not honor the promises it made to the workers, would like the Kanak independence organizations to follow its example and not honor their word. Propose one policy to your people and then carry out another — that is the recipe this government proposes to you. And believe me, they are specialists in it.

That is why it was to be expected, comrades, that this government would be opposed to your plans. It was to be expected that the government parties would not vote for the proposals Roch Pidjot made in the Chamber of Deputies.<sup>1</sup>

This is a regime that from Chad to Lebanon has risen to the front ranks of the defenders of French imperialism. It is a regime that bows to the employers. That kind of regime could not adopt a progressive policy toward the colonized peoples.

Parties that have refused to satisfy the demands of the workers in France could not satisfy those of the Kanak people. They were ready to raise the idea of independence, for tomorrow, for later. But they do not grant you the right to fight for it.

In addition, it is very true that as far as colonialism is concerned, an independence that has been granted is always better than an indepen-

1. On May 29, 1984, the Socialist and Communist parties, at that time still in a coalition government, voted for a bill introduced by Lemoine that put off a referendum on New Caledonia's independence until 1989 and gave the right to vote to all temporary residents from France.

Roch Pidjot, the only Kanak member of the French parliament, presented amendments that would have moved the date of independence to Sept. 24, 1985, and that would have given the right to vote in a referendum only to permanent residents with at least one parent born in New Caledonia.

Pidjot resigned from the Socialist Party's parliamentary caucus in protest against its support to the Lemoine bill. □

dence won through struggle.

These parties have done nothing to inform the workers in France about the justice of your struggle. They have kept silent on your struggle. It has gotten to the point that many workers do not even know that New Caledonia exists.

As the struggle gets tougher here, it is necessary to open a second front, a front in France. It is necessary to have growing, active, and militant support for your independence struggle. And we are going to carry out this work. We promise you that.

Whatever form you give your struggle, we will be there at your side. We will try to see that your voice is heard over there in the colonial metropolis. We know from experience with the Algerian people's liberation struggle that support in France is an important factor in anticolonialist struggle.

I thank you for welcoming us here at your convention. I bring you the fraternal greetings of our members. May your convention mark an important stage in your struggle.

On this occasion, I want to say an additional word about the other peoples colonized by France: those in Polynesia, in Wallis and Futuna, in Guadeloupe, in Martinique, in Guyana, in Mayotte, and in Réunion.<sup>2</sup>

May the FLNKS provide an example for these peoples' struggles. May Kanak independence and socialism tomorrow serve to encourage these peoples.

May your congress also be the first congress of the disintegration and final crisis of French colonialism.

Long live Kanak independence and socialism!

Long live the Kanak people!

2. Polynesia, Wallis, and Futuna are island groups in the Pacific; Guadeloupe and Martinique are islands in the Caribbean; Guyana is on the South American continent; Mayotte and Réunion are in the Indian Ocean off the African coast.

## Independence leader arrested in Guadeloupe

On November 28, French colonial police in Guadeloupe arrested Luc Reinette, leader of the Caribbean Revolutionary Alliance, for his alleged responsibility in 60 bombings. Henri Amédien, another independence activist, was also arrested.

The Caribbean Revolutionary Alliance, which calls for independence of the French Caribbean colony, has been banned by the island's French administration.

The radio station of the Popular Union for the Liberation of Guadeloupe — a legal, pro-independence group — linked the arrest of Reinette to the recent upsurge against French colonial rule in New Caledonia. It stated that the arrest was aimed at "reassuring the partisans of colonialism." □

# Kim Dae Jung plans return

*Regime vows to jail dissident leader*

By Will Reissner

South Korean opposition leader Kim Dae Jung's announcement that he will return to Seoul in early 1985 has infuriated that country's military dictatorship and worries the regime's backers in the White House.

By the South Korean government's own count, Kim Dae Jung won 46 percent of the vote in the 1971 presidential election against military strongman Park Chung Hee. Since then, Kim has spent most of his time in jail, under house arrest, or in exile.

Kim has been in the United States since December 1982, when he was released from a 20-year sentence in a South Korean jail to leave the country for "medical treatment." He is under an official South Korean government order banning him from giving speeches, taking part in politics in any way, holding party posts, running for office, or voting.

The South Korean government has vowed that if Kim returns, he will immediately be rearrested and required to "serve the remainder" of his 20-year sentence. The Seoul regime charges that Kim violated his release agreement by engaging in political activity while in the United States.

Kim's problems with the South Korean regime date back more than a decade. In 1973 while in exile in Japan, he was kidnapped by agents of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency, who returned him to South Korea. Only strong international protests prevented the KCIA from murdering him at that time.

When the present military dictator Chun Doo Hwan seized power in 1980, Kim was again arrested. Although already in jail during Chun's massacre of thousands of protesters in the city of Kwangju in May 1980, Kim was charged with responsibility for the protests and sentenced to death by a military court. In January 1981, that sentence was commuted to life imprisonment, and was reduced to 20 years in March 1982.

Kim has vowed to return to South Korea "to participate in the people's struggle for the restoration of democracy and human rights." He added, "Even if I am put in prison, my staying there may encourage our people to make efforts for the restoration of democracy."

In his September 12 announcement of his plan to return to Korea, Kim said "I want to undertake a dialogue with the Chun regime to find a solution to the crisis presently facing the Republic of Korea."

While in the United States, Kim attempted to convince the State Department that U.S. support for Chun's dictatorship is counterproductive.

Kim has argued: "Some of our people are becoming radical, even accepting communism

or becoming anti-American because of their anger and disappointment with the present situation. If the situation continues, within several years it will be beyond my ability to handle it, and there will be no hope for the restoration of democracy and peaceful reunification."

But he admitted, "I can't say that I have persuaded the American government to change its Korean policy."

Nor has he been successful in appealing for support from other imperialist powers. Attempts to receive official invitations to visit Japan, France, and West Germany before his return to South Korea met with a cold shoulder.

In his book *Mass Participatory Economy: My Democratic Alternative in Korea*, Kim Dae Jung argued for a "noncommunist, truly free-market economy," with fewer privileges that dominate the country's economic and political life.

Kim's support for the formation of free trade unions had made him a special target of the wrath of the conglomerates and the military regime. South Korea's so-called economic "miracle" has been largely based on the superexploitation of the work force and the accumulation of a gigantic \$40 billion debt to imperialist banks.

As James Schiffman noted in the November 23 *Wall Street Journal*, "keeping a tight grip on labor is vital to the South Korean government," whose whole strategy for economic development is based on keeping wages low.

"Labor activists," Schiffman reported, "say

the government has kept workers in line through extensive surveillance and interference by plainclothes security forces," a euphemism for the secret police.

Strikes, though not illegal, are in practice almost impossible to call. No industrywide unions are allowed to exist, and the small company unions that are tolerated are too weak to defend workers against the powerful conglomerates.

Washington and Seoul clearly worry that Kim's return to South Korea could add fuel to the growing movement of students and workers against Chun Doo Hwan's military regime.

Although Kim himself states he plans to return precisely to counter "trends toward desperation and radicalization," the U.S. and South Korean governments fear his presence will have the opposite effect.

The State Department refused to intercede with Seoul on Kim's behalf. An official described Kim's planned return as "a matter for the Korean government to handle."

But Washington also worries that the South Korean military may have an Aquino-style welcome readied for Kim. Benigno Aquino, a liberal opponent of the Marcos regime in the Philippines, was murdered last year upon his return to Manila. His death has led to new waves of protest against the Marcos dictatorship.

Speculating on the possible murder of Kim in Seoul, one U.S. trade specialist said: "Can you imagine what that would do to General Motors' plans to invest in Korean car-making or to the banks' confidence in Korea's ability to service its \$40 billion debt?"

Despite the threat of immediate reimprisonment, Kim Dae Jung remains determined to return to South Korea. He states that his initial activity will focus on organizing on campuses and in factories. He stated that "in a week, I can organize the strongest political organization in [South] Korea." □

## Campus protests mount

*Students forge links with workers*

Fierce repression by the South Korean military regime has been unable to stem a rising tide of student protests demanding a restoration of democratic rights.

In recent months, the student movement has also reached out to South Korea's poorly paid and largely unorganized workers, adding demands for union rights and higher wages to the calls for campus autonomy and freedom of speech.

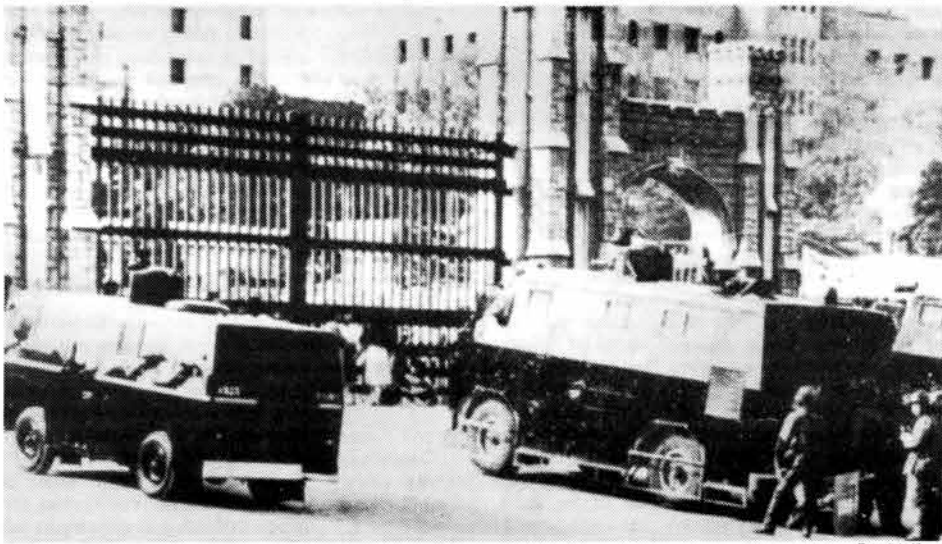
Military dictator Gen. Chun Doo Hwan has responded with an iron fist. On October 24, for example, 6,400 riot police invaded and occupied the campus of Seoul National University in an attempt to break up a boycott of classes on the 20,000-student campus.

"The brutality used by riot police to quell student rallies here has to be seen to be believed," wrote Shim Jae Hoon in the November 15 *Far Eastern Economic Review*. "A typical clash will involve the police tear-gassing the entire campus, clubbing, punching, kicking, and dragging students — including girls — by their hair. Student retaliation with stones, Molotov cocktails and wooden staves often leads to frightening combat resulting in scores of serious injuries."

Students strenuously resist arrest, Shim noted, because it leads to beatings, expulsion, loss of job prospects, and the like.

Despite the police intimidation, the protesters have remained uncowed. At Seoul Na-





People's Korea

Riot police tear-gas pumpers in front of Korea University.

tional University, for example, just as the last of the 6,400 riot police withdrew from the campus October 26, students began a new anti-government rally.

A national student organization to coordinate protests was established by 2,000 representatives from 20 universities, who gathered at Seoul's Yonsei University, November 5. The crowd swelled to 4,000 as thousands of riot police fired tear-gas barrages at the students.

Two days earlier, an attempt by representatives from 42 colleges to meet on the campus was broken up by riot police.

The new organization — the Student Alliance for Democracy and Against Dictatorship — is the first national student body in 10 years.

The growing number of student demonstrations can be seen in figures released by the South Korean Ministry of Education. In the first semester of 1984 alone, there were 443 demonstrations on 56 of the country's 99 college and university campuses. By contrast, in the first semester of 1981, there were 26 demonstrations or rallies on 20 campuses; in the same period in 1982 there were 11 actions on 10 campuses; and in the first semester of 1983 there were 52 protests on 20 campuses.

Many of the student demonstrations have been organized to demand the reinstatement of expelled students, an end to police spying on campus, the right to form independent student organizations, and the right to publish uncensored student newspapers.

But the protests have increasingly included issues relating to the right of workers to a living wage and to organize unions.

On September 9 and October 12, hundreds of students from 13 universities in Seoul attended meetings and took part in street demonstrations with workers at the Chongge Clothing factory, who are trying to reestablish a union.

In late October, some 500 Seoul National University students marched to the gates of the

Kuro Industrial Zone, demanding better wages for workers and chanting antigovernment slogans.

The Chun Doo Hwan dictatorship fears that the students are using the university campuses as bases from which to organize broader sec-

## Sri Lankan workers' trial postponed

The initial hearing in the case of the Balangoda 18 in Sri Lanka, which was scheduled for October 4, has been postponed until December 13.

The 18, most of whom are plantation workers at the Rye Estate in Balangoda, were arrested on June 15 under provisions of Sri Lanka's Prevention of Terrorism Act, which was designed to repress the freedom struggle of the country's Tamil minority.

The workers and their attorney, Upali Cooray, had been meeting at the Sinhala-Tamil Friendship House in Balangoda to discuss workers' grievances at the plantation. They were accused of holding an unauthorized meeting and were held incommunicado for 24 hours. Bail was not set for almost four weeks. (See *Intercontinental Press*, September 17.)

After the 18 were released, some of the defendants and their supporters have been subjected to harassment both by the police and by supervisors of the Rye Estate. Despite this harassment, the newsletter of the Balangoda 18 Defense Committee reports, the work of the Friendship House continues. It provides recreational activities for Tamil and Sinhala youth from the area and will soon launch a program of vocational education. R.D. Somapala, one of the 18 defendants and secretary of the Friendship House, expresses the hope that other opponents of discrimination will follow the example of the Friendship House and set up similar organizations in their areas.

The defense committee reported that the at-

tors of society against the regime.

In early October, 350 students occupied the headquarters of the opposition Democratic Korea Party, demanding it take a stand against police spying. The DKP, which has been reluctant to confront Gen. Chun, was forced to publicly endorse the campaign.

On November 14, more than 250 students stormed the offices of the ruling Democratic Justice Party, demanding full democracy in South Korea. The 13-hour occupation followed a march the previous day by hundreds of workers and students, which was broken up by riot police.

There were also mass demonstrations on campuses throughout South Korea in April, commemorating the 24th anniversary of the April 19, 1960, student revolt that toppled the Syngman Rhee regime, and the fourth anniversary of the massacre of thousands of workers and students in Kwangju by Gen. Chun's troops.

Despite summer vacations, students from dozens of universities organized protests in August and September against Gen. Chun's visit to Japan, the former colonial ruler of Korea, and Chun's increasingly close economic and military ties with Japanese imperialism.

In September there were numerous protests against the visit to South Korea of the head of the Japanese military. □

torney general requested postponement of the October 4 hearing because he had not decided what charges to bring against the 18. In the meantime, all the defendants are required to report to the Balangoda police every two weeks.

The defense committee has been organizing support in Sri Lanka and abroad. It reports that international support has already exceeded its expectations, and is continuing efforts to obtain more international support.

Four U.S. Congressmen and 10 members of the Danish parliament have sent protest messages to Sri Lankan president Junius Jayewardene. Other protests have been sent by union activists, church leaders, and civil rights activists from Australia, West Germany, Denmark, and the United States.

In a letter to President Jayewardene, Vilho Sigurdsson, mayor of Copenhagen, protested the "undemocratic persecution of plantation workers, who must have every right to meet and discuss problems concerning their work and their trade union affiliations."

Additional letters and telegrams demanding an end to this persecution are still needed. They should be sent to President Junius Jayewardene, President's House, Colombo, Sri Lanka. Financial contributions and copies of protest messages should be sent to the Balangoda 18 Defense Committee at 53 Rajamalwate Road, Colombo 15, Sri Lanka. □

# Labor government gets another term

*Many in left are disoriented by Nuclear Disarmament Party*

By David Deutschmann  
and Ron Poulsen

SYDNEY — Twenty months ago the Australian Labor Party (ALP) was elected to national government. This followed seven years of Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser's conservative government. The Liberal Party, which Fraser led, and its junior coalition partner, the Nationals, are the two main capitalist parties in Australia.

This Labor government was returned to office in Federal elections December 1 with a decreased parliamentary majority.<sup>1</sup> It is only the second time in Australian history that a Labor government at the national level has served two consecutive terms. It also coincides with the first time the ALP has controlled governments in four of the six states.

When the ALP, under the parliamentary leadership of Robert Hawke, was first elected in March 1983, it was largely in response to working people looking for an alternative to the years of the bosses' austerity drive under Fraser. With the rate of unemployment topping 10 percent — as well as increasing attacks from the Liberal government on both living standards and union rights — the ALP was brought to office with its largest parliamentary majority ever.

Tied to this were widespread illusions that a Hawke-led Labor Party would provide solutions to the deepening recession that hit in 1981-82. Hawke had only shortly before entered parliament after being national president of the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) for 10 years.

In 1983 significant sections of the capitalist ruling class opted for Labor, specifically because it promised to bring industrial peace through its social contract with the union movement. This social contract, under the name of the Prices and Incomes Accord, was a written agreement between the ACTU and the Labor Party. Some left union officials, especially from the Communist Party of Australia, have been in the forefront in pushing for union and ALP adherence to the accord. It placed severe restrictions on union movement campaigns in return for a future Labor government "guaranteeing" to "strengthen the social wage"

1. The ALP suffered a 1.5 percent decrease in its vote from the March 1983 election. This has cut its previous majority of 25 seats in the 148-member House of Representatives to about 15.

Approximately two-thirds of this decreased vote is estimated to be due to invalid votes cast as a result of confusion over a change in voting procedure.

Voting is compulsory in Australia for all those over 18 years of age.



ROBERT HAWKE

in areas of social welfare, tax relief, etc.

In effect, under the accord the labor government has continued the wage freeze of the previous Liberal government. It has virtually outlawed any industrial action outside of the restrictive "guidelines" of the union-ALP agreement. This is illustrated by the fact that the number of workhours lost due to industrial action is now the lowest in 16 years.

## Many capitalists back Labor

It was therefore not surprising to see that support for Labor from the dominant sectors of the ruling class was even more openly enthusiastic in this recent election. Not only major employer organizations but also most of the big-business press called for the reelection of the Hawke-led Labor government. The Melbourne *Herald*, for example, broke its 129-year-old tradition and for the first time supported the election of the ALP.

These endorsements from influential sections of Australia's rulers are in recognition of the Hawke government's proven role in helping to implement the employers' attacks against the working class. Under the banner of "national reconciliation" and "bringing Australia together," the Labor government has furthered the bosses' anti-working-class offensive without the same "confrontation" of the Fraser years. Hawke's prestige as a trade union leader, combined with the dampening effects of continued high unemployment, have helped the Labor government and Hawke's supporters in the ACTU to effectively police the social contract to date.

That Labor's term in office has coincided with a slight upturn in the economy has meant that during the 20 months of its control of the treasury, it has not lost significant support from the working class.

While there has not yet been any widespread challenge to the Prices and Incomes Accord, the Hawke government will find it increasingly difficult to rely on the social contract to stem the mounting discontent over declining living standards and job losses.

During the period of Hawke's leadership there has been a series of reversals of Labor Party policy, including on foreign policy, uranium mining, and Aboriginal land rights. It is these that have produced the greatest reaction within Labor's ranks and widespread debate in the labor movement.

The failure of the Hawke Labor government to implement ALP policy — for example, aid to Vietnam, condemnation of the continued Indonesian occupation of East Timor, cessation of uranium mining, full land rights for Aborigines — was resolved by Hawke and his supporters at the July 1984 ALP national conference, which saw the removal of the few progressive policies from the ALP platform.

For several years Hawke had led attempts to reverse the ALP and ACTU policies opposing the mining and export of uranium. Australia has some of the largest uranium deposits in the world. The development of the uranium-mining industry by the Fraser government had led to the emergence of a mass anti-uranium movement in the late 1970s, which included significant union action and involvement.

The pro-mining policy, which Hawke succeeded in imposing at the July national conference, has met with widespread condemnation from ALP members and supporters.

This reaction from Labor's ranks has also been fueled by the Hawke government's slavish endorsement of U.S. foreign policy under President Reagan's administration.

## Nuclear Disarmament Party

This has come at the same time as the emergence of the new peace and disarmament movement which has largely subsumed the previous anti-uranium movement.<sup>2</sup> This de-

2. A range of left groups also contested the December 1 elections. These included the Communist Party of Australia, the Socialist Party of Australia, and the Socialist Workers Party.

In South Australia these three parties, along with the local representatives of the Communist Party of Italy, ran a joint Senate ticket as the United Campaign for Peace and Socialism. A Sydney-based Green Party also stood in one electorate.

In the Northern Territory and New South Wales, independent Aboriginal candidates also stood, in opposition to the Hawke Labor government's betrayal of Black land rights.

These candidates received from 500 to 2,500 votes.

velopment has been reflected in the creation of a new party in recent months — the Nuclear Disarmament Party (NDP). Formed in the course of the 1984 elections, the NDP drew in a range of peace activists and environmental groups and largely took inspiration from the West German Green Party.

Its stated objective is "to exert pressure on the Federal government to:

1. Close all foreign military bases in Australia.
2. Prohibit the stationing of nuclear weapons in Australia, or passage of nuclear weapons through Australian waters or airspace.
3. Terminate all mining and export of Australian uranium, and to repudiate all commitments by previous Australian governments to mining, processing and export of uranium."

The NDP fielded candidates for the national parliamentary elections. In particular, it attempted to win seats in the Senate, the upper house — or "house of review" — of the federal parliament.

In the weeks leading up to the elections, the NDP was front-page news as it recorded up to 12 percent in public opinion polls, and predictions were made that it would hold the balance of power in the Senate.

In the election itself the NDP received just under 7 percent of the national vote for the Senate (or 525,000 votes). At this point it is still unclear whether it won enough votes for one or two seats.

The NDP was backed by some sections of the left, including *Tribune*, the paper of the Communist Party of Australia.

The NDP was also vigorously backed by *Direct Action*, the paper of the Socialist Workers Party, Australian section of the Fourth International. An announcement in the paper stated that the entire staff of *Direct Action* had joined the NDP. A statement by the editor asserted that "the NDP's participation in the federal elections is a very positive step which we will do all we can to support. The NDP is succeeding where the Labor left has failed."

#### The NDP's views

In its literature the NDP answers several questions about its views:

"Is the Nuclear Disarmament Party anti-American and pro-Soviet?"

"NO! The NDP supports the millions of people in the US, the Soviet Union and other countries who want bilateral disarmament. The NDP opposes only the policies of governments which promote the nuclear arms race and undermine world peace.

"In the event of a foreign invasion of Australia, what would be your defence policies?"

"The Nuclear Disarmament Party supports self-reliance as Australia's defence policy. The NDP believes that an efficient defence policy can be developed spending no more than current Australian expenditure on defence.

"Who threatens Australia?"

"The Minister of Defence has stated that Indonesia lacks the military capability to attack

Australia successfully in the foreseeable future. At present, Australia faces a much greater military threat from the Soviet Union than if the US bases were removed. Evidence suggests that it would then have little interest in Australia. There are no present or foreseeable threats to Australia's security from other countries.

"Why refuse to have nuclear-armed ships and planes in Australia?"

"These are targeted by the Soviet Union whilst in Australia and pose a major threat to our cities.

"How could we achieve nuclear disarmament?"

"Along with other nations, we could exert pressure on the Superpowers to agree to a freeze or a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. A freeze would immediately lessen international tensions and pave the way for multilateral disarmament negotiations and international supervision thereof."

The NDP opposes the U.S. bases in Australia on the grounds that they will make Australia a target of Soviet attack, pointing to the Soviet Union, rather than imperialism, as the source of the war threat.

Absent is any reference to the U.S. bases as a permanent menace to the peoples of the Asian region fighting for national and social liberation against imperialist aggression.

Even more significantly, the NDP has ignored Australian imperialism's own military role in defending its economic and political interests in Southeast Asia and the Pacific, including the operation of its own military bases such as Butterworth in Malaysia.

In fact, the NDP propaganda points to the Soviet Union and even Indonesia as the likely threats to Australia.

The nationalist framework of the NDP's opposition to the presence of "foreign" military installations in Australia and its concern for the subsequent nuclear threat to Australia, has no inherent anti-imperialist content. To the contrary, such a focus, as illustrated in the above NDP leaflet, is easily channeled into support for or an apology for the "conventional" defense of Australian imperialism and its interests at home and abroad.

This was borne out when the peace movement and the NDP were largely silent on the Hawke government's endorsement of the "conventional" military intervention of U.S. imperialism in Central America.

As the NDP competed for newspaper space with the coverage of the threatened U.S. invasion of Nicaragua, its candidates had little to say on these war moves.

Attempts by virtually every political party to take on the colors of the antinuclear sentiment in the wake of the NDP's apparent popularity showed it would not be impossible for either a Labor or Liberal government to coopt the issue. The Hawke government made a step in this direction when for the first time it registered a vote at the United Nations General Assembly in November for a "nuclear freeze" and sponsored another motion for a comprehensive

test ban treaty.

But even if such opportunist posturing does not at first succeed in defusing the antinuclear movement, the electoral approach of the NDP may well accomplish the same result.

#### Deepening electoralist illusions

The NDP, formed in order to contest the 1984 election, can only help to deepen the illusion that the issues of war and peace will be resolved in parliament. In this way, the NDP can provide a useful electoral safety-valve for antinuclear sentiment — a development that has not gone unnoticed by the more astute ruling-class journals.

The NDP also presents itself as an alternative to "traditional political parties," in its appeal to "disenfranchised" youth.

The most prominent NDP candidate, rock singer Peter Garrett, at the news conference to launch the NDP's New South Wales campaign, referred to the disillusionment of young people with "politics, left factions, right factions, trade unions, and fat people making money."

Similarly, *Direct Action*, in urging a vote for the NDP, explained that "thousands of young people who have never thought it worth voting before will support the NDP this time. . . . Once people start thinking they can influence politics — change history — it could be very difficult to stop them. That scares the pants off the traditional politicians."

While appealing to youth genuinely disillusioned with the Hawke-led Labor Party, the NDP-Garrett solution is merely another way to draw them back into parliamentary politics under the guise of registering a protest vote against Labor's pronuclear policies.

The NDP, Garrett said, is about the only issue that matters: saving humanity from a nuclear holocaust. The singular emphasis on the threat of nuclear war elevates it to a moral issue, above all class questions, and helps to mystify and conceal the class character of all war, including the source of the nuclear threat.

As a result the NDP projects itself as a politically heterogeneous and multiclass party. While it won a degree of its support from disaffected members and supporters of the ALP, its support came from all parties and classes.

#### NDP's anti-Labor perspective

The orientation of the NDP to ALP supporters, however, cannot camouflage its anti-Labor perspective (as is obvious from its call for directing second preference votes to the small, liberal capitalist party, the Australian Democrats).

Much of the support for the NDP has been justified by claiming the particular urgency of opposing the right-wing character of the Hawke government. This implies that either the working class base of the Labor government has changed or that the Hawke government is qualitatively more treacherous than past Labor governments. Neither implication is true.

For many decades the ALP has been linked

to and based on the mass organizations of the working class — the trade unions. This distinguishes it from the capitalist parties.

In spite of the class-collaborationist policies of its leadership — which are by no means new — the vast majority of the working class in Australia looks to the ALP and sees it as their party. As the employers' offensive intensifies, workers will press harder for their unions and their party to wage an effective defense of their interests. They will attempt to make them instruments of struggle rather than collaboration.

Out of the struggle inside the ALP will come the formation of a mass revolutionary workers party that can lead the fight to overturn capitalist rule and establish a workers and farmers government. This kind of party will not come from petty-bourgeois pacifist groups like the NDP.

Class conscious workers must participate in the ALP and, at every stage of the struggle that develops inside it, help advance the course of independent working-class political action.

In the context of the 1984 elections this re-

quired explaining how the Labor government's policies have served Australia's rulers, not working people, and advancing the class-struggle policies that are necessary to lead the working class and working farmers forward. Connected with this is the recognition that further experience of the ALP in office will help reveal to growing numbers of workers the class-collaborationist treachery of "their" leaders. For this reason it was necessary for class-conscious workers to support the reelection of the Labor government on December 1. □

## DOCUMENTS

# Australian SWP's election stand

## *Calls for preference to 'disarmament party' over Labor*

[The following appeared in the November 21 issue of *Direct Action*, a weekly newspaper published in Sydney, Australia, that reflects the views of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), Australian section of the Fourth International.]

[It was followed by a list of SWP candidates for the House of Representatives along with three other individual candidates and two parties — the Nuclear Disarmament Party and the United Campaign for Peace and Socialism in South Australia — endorsed by the SWP.]

\* \* \*

The [Robert] Hawke Labor government has done nothing to defend working people's rights and living standards. About the only thing to be said for it is that the Liberals would have been even more vicious!

But in truth Labor has not acted very differently from Liberal governments of recent years. It has presided over the most serious wage cuts for decades, unemployment is almost as high as ever. Education and health spending has been cut, and Australia has a foreign policy every bit as warlike as the Liberal policies that led this country into the disaster of the Vietnam War.

Under this Labor government Australia is exporting uranium which will be used in nuclear warheads, it hosts United States war bases and nuclear ships and bombers and it provides economic and military aid to some of the most brutal dictatorships in South-East Asia.

While very few workers would want to see the Labor government fall and the Liberals return, it will turn the stomachs of many to have to vote for such anti-labor policies.

### **Nuclear Disarmament Party**

Fortunately there is an alternative. By voting Nuclear Disarmament Party and directing preferences\* to Labor, voters can send a mes-

\* Under Australia's system of preferential voting, voters rank all candidates for each office in order of

sage to the Labor Party, while not risking a Liberal victory.

A vote for the NDP in the Senate can tell Labor that Australians do not support its aggressive international policies. We do not want to be linked to the United States war machine. The US bases do not guarantee our security. They are war bases designed to provide information for a United States first nuclear strike. They tie us irrevocably to the war machine.

The continuing alliance with the United States is almost certain to lead us into more Vietnam-type wars. It is vital to tell the Labor government that such policies are not acceptable. Labor's aggressive international policies flow logically from its domestic policies. Austerity at home almost invariably goes hand-in-hand with war abroad. The Hawke project is to force working people to pay for the capitalist economic crisis and the suffering it causes.

The ALP-ACTU [Australian Labor Party-Australian Council of Trade Unions] prices-incomes accord has been responsible for a relentless attack on workers' wages, democratic rights, and job conditions. It is no accident that anti-union laws such as section 45D of the Trade Practices Act are still on the books two years after Labor came to power. Worse, these laws have been used against the trade union movement while Hawke has been in power.

The fact is that this Labor government wants to keep the trade union movement bound hand and foot, so that it cannot defend workers' rights and living standards. This is because it has staked everything on trying to increase bosses' profits in the false belief that benefits from this will eventually trickle down to working people.

Labor has succeeded in boosting profits — many companies are making record profits.

preference. If no candidate receives an absolute majority of first choice votes, the candidate with the fewest first choice votes is eliminated, and second choice votes on those ballots are counted. This process continues until one candidate has obtained a majority of all votes cast. — IP

Naturally, if wages are held below the rate of inflation — as they have been — profits will rise. But this has not resulted in creation of more jobs — nor could it.

Internationally, the capitalist system is in a depression — one that shows no sign of ending. While there has been much fanfare about the recent economic recovery, it was a very sorry recovery.

Unemployment leveled off, but did not decline — it remained around 8 per cent, making the 2 per cent unemployment that helped bring down [Liberal Party Prime Minister] Billy McMahon in 1972 look trivial by comparison. Now a new recession is beginning in the United States, and this country will not escape its effects. Hawke's second term will see unemployment begin to climb again.

It is important to tell the Labor Party that its wage freeze is not wanted, its anti-union laws are not wanted, its cutbacks in social welfare expenditure are not wanted.

### **Socialist Workers Party**

The Socialist Workers Party is contesting nine House of Representative seats, advancing policies to defend workers' rights and living standards against the impact of the capitalist depression.

The SWP also supports antiwar policies such as those advanced by the Nuclear Disarmament Party. It is also important that Australia should tell the United States that it does not support Ronald Reagan's war against the peoples of Central America. Nicaragua and El Salvador should be left alone to sort out their own affairs. Their peoples have the right to decide what sort of government they want, without interference from the United States.

The SWP says that workers did not cause the depression and they should not have to pay for it. Companies which have been making huge profits for decades caused the economic crisis — yet their first response is to make workers pay by sacking them.

There are policies which can defend work-

ers' jobs, rights and living standards in times such as these — policies such as redundancy payments which make it extremely expensive for companies to lay off, affirmative action policies which penalise companies for discriminatory practices.

We do not have to live with unemployment. Higher taxes on big companies and less war spending would enable more job-creating public works expenditure. But Labor won't even consider such policies — they would upset too many company directors and other money-grubbers who have the ear of Bob Hawke and his gang.

The SWP has outlined a number of such policies during the course of these elections. The underlying principle is that the rights and living standards of working people must come first. Working people cannot be held responsible for the problems of the capitalist economy.

The Hawke government says exactly the opposite. It says we must all pay for the greed and short-sightedness of a tiny number of people who sit in boardrooms and never suffer any but the most remote consequences of their actions. Meanwhile the rest of us have to put up with low wages, unsafe working conditions or the dole.

The SWP says depressions such as the present one are not necessary. Socialist economic planning could eliminate them. Many people do not believe socialism is a realistic alternative at the present time. But there never will be an alternative unless one is built.

A vote for the SWP, with preferences to Labor, is a vote for socialist policies to defend working people's rights. It is a vote for the type of workers' party necessary to seriously defend democratic rights and living standards. It is a start towards building a real socialist alternative.

#### Why vote Labor?

Given the Hawke government's abysmal record, many traditional Labor voters are wondering whether to vote Labor at all. By far the majority of Nuclear Disarmament Party are disillusioned Labor voters, yet many are considering giving their preferences to the Democrats.

The problem with that is that the alternatives in this election are a Liberal government or a Labor government. That's the choice. It must be Labor. Voting Liberal would be like giving the bosses a whip and telling them to feel free to use it whenever they like.

If the Liberals get back in it would be much more difficult to defend union and democratic rights, wages would come under even more savage attack.

The Democrats are not an alternative, they are simply breakaway Liberals. On most important issues they side with the Liberals. Their environmental policies are simply camouflage.

The way to vote Labor and to tell the ALP that it is expected to defend workers' rights, not attack them, is to vote for progressive candidates and direct preferences to the ALP. □

## Left slate formed in Australia

### SWP joins united left ticket

By Paul Petit

[The following article is taken from the October 31 issue of *Direct Action*, a socialist weekly published in Sydney, Australia, that reflects the views of the Socialist Workers Party, Australian section of the Fourth International.]

\* \* \*

ADELAIDE — A meeting of 60 people here on October 18 launched the United Campaign for Peace and Socialism. The meeting voted unanimously to endorse a joint electoral platform thrashed out over several weeks of negotiations. The project was initiated by the [South Australia] state branch of the Communist Party of Australia.

This important and unprecedented campaign will probably unite the CPA, the Socialist Party of Australia, the Socialist Workers Party, and the Partito Comunista Italiano (Italian Communist Party) in an attempt to present an effective reply to the right-wing policies of the federal Labor government.

A number of activists with no party affiliation also support the campaign.

Earlier this year the SWP and the SPA produced a joint national statement outlining their agreement on matters such as the need for opposition to the imperialist war drive, and the anti-worker policies of the Hawke government. However, until now, there has been no attempt in this country to run a joint election campaign.

A focus of the campaign will be the war

threat. The platform calls for "world nuclear disarmament," emphasizing that this means opposing "the reckless military aggression of Reagan and the United States war machine."

It opposes the ANZUS pact [a military treaty between Australia, New Zealand, and the United States] and calls for support of struggles of oppressed peoples. It opposes US military intervention in Central America.

The platform also calls for an end to mining and exporting uranium — an important point in this state in the wake of the Roxby Downs blockade.

Since it seems unlikely that the Nuclear Disarmament Party will stand in South Australia, the united campaign, which will most likely field candidates in the senate, will offer an alternative to those who oppose the pro-uranium and pro-war policies of the Hawke government.

Other sections of the platform challenge the Labor government's sell-outs in the areas of Aboriginal rights, women's rights, the environment, and democratic rights. Organisers hope to involve activists from these areas in supporting the campaign.

While agreement on this platform is significant, it is clear that there are still differences between the parties involved. These relate not only to specific issues, but also to how the process of change will come about.

Nevertheless, the united campaign will help defend the interests of working people, and may aid in clarifying underlying differences. □

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## United States

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## North Star Network in fusion

### Unites with group that supported Mondale

By Jerry Freiwirth

BERKELEY, California — About 125 people attended a meeting here September 30 that heard Laurie Gitlin, Bay Area Socialist Organizing Committee (BASOC); Pedro Camejo, North Star Network; and John Trinkl, staff writer for the radical weekly *Guardian*, speak on what the left should do following the U.S. elections. The meeting was sponsored by the Bay Area United Forum, which was initiated last year by BASOC, North Star Network, and Workers Power/Solidarity Federation and is composed of individuals from various political currents.

Gitlin, the first speaker, described a bumper sticker she had seen recently. It carried the inscription, "Life is Hell — and then you die." This, she stated, adequately sums up the mood

of the present political situation.

She made several main points in her presentation. First, she emphasized the importance of getting out the vote for Walter Mondale, the Democratic Party's presidential candidate.

She then said that the left needs to shelve indefinitely any dreams about initiating multi-issue movements. Instead, she argued, the left should restrict itself to single-issue movements such as disarmament, rent control, and opposition to U.S. intervention in Central America.

Next, she asserted, building a revolutionary party is presently not on the agenda. What is needed now is for the left to begin working "to prevent eight more years of Reaganism" at the polls in 1988.

Following Gitlin's presentation on the elections, Camejo announced that the North Star

Network and BASOC had decided to fuse.

Camejo explained that for years he had been a sectarian. He broke from this, he said, as a result of what he learned from the Nicaraguan revolution.

Camejo spoke at length about Rev. Jesse Jackson's election campaign for president in the Democratic Party primaries. He described Jackson's "Rainbow Coalition" as one of the most important developments in U.S. politics in decades. In his view, the "Jackson movement" was an important step toward the idea of "a government of working people and their allies."

When asked point blank by a Mondale supporter during the question period whether he called for a vote for the Democratic presidential candidate, Camejo did not give a direct answer. Instead he launched into a general denunciation of the two capitalist parties. He then added that the question of elections and the attitude radicals should take toward the Democratic Party was a "very complicated matter" for which he did not have all the answers. Much more discussion is needed, he said.

Camejo stated that it is necessary to "look very carefully at" several electoral efforts coming up in 1985. He particularly pointed to the campaign of Democratic city councilman Wilson Riles, Jr., for mayor of Oakland, California. Riles, a Black, is running against the Democratic incumbent, who is also Black. Riles' campaign has become a focus for many radicals in the Oakland-Berkeley area. Riles was the Northern California coordinator for the Jackson campaign.

Camejo also stated that most of "our generation rejected the American Communist Party out of hand." Now, given the role of the Cuban Communist Party, the Sandinista National Liberation Front, etc., we have to "recognize that this question is considerably more complex."

Trinkl's talk revolved around a description of the debacle of the attempt to regroup several Maoist tendencies in the 1970s. The *Guardian* played a major role in this effort. Trinkl also presented his opinion of the peace movement today. □

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## DOCUMENTS

### Building an 'anti-sectarian trend'

[The following is a letter from the North Star Network in Berkeley, California, dated October 9, 1984. It was addressed to readers of the *North Star Newsletter* and was signed by Joyce Stoller.]

\* \* \*

In the several months since the last issue of the *North Star Newsletter*, our work has been proceeding and we want to keep you informed about the latest developments.

We have suspended publication of the *North Star Newsletter* in anticipation of starting a new magazine which we intend to start publishing in February. This twice monthly magazine will focus on revolutionary struggles taking place around the world, and on the strategic lessons to be learned from them. Initially we will reprint articles from other sources; eventually we will produce some of our own material in order to learn from and link up the struggles that are taking place all over the

United States.

You will be hearing from us soon with more details and information about subscription rates.

In September, the San Francisco North Star Network and the Bay Area Socialist Organizing Committee completed discussions on merging the two organizations. BASOC had its roots in the Maoist movement of the early 70's, and was a part of the anti-sectarian, anti-reformist trend of the past few years that included the *Guardian* newspaper. BASOC has evolved a political perspective that is similar to *North Star's*, and we have worked together over the past year on a number of joint projects including the Bay Area United Forum series.

On December 8-9 the North Star Network will have its first national conference in the Bay Area. There are currently three documents available for \$5.00. The conference is by invitation only, so let us know as soon as possible if you would like to attend. □

## Danish workers build support for NUM

The Danish movement in solidarity with striking British coal miners is publishing a newspaper to publicize the strike. The first issue of *Kulminestrejken* ("The Coal Miners' Strike"), an eight-page tabloid, appeared in November. Its initial press run was 30,000 copies.

The primary activity of the Danish solidarity committee, National Collection for the British Coal Miners, is raising funds for the hard-pressed miners and their families. In addition it has initiated a campaign to get the Danish trade union movement to stop all transport of coal from Denmark to Britain.

*Kulminestrejken* explains the background of the British strike, which has been going on since early March 1984, and includes an interview with Arthur Scargill, president of the striking National Union of Mineworkers (NUM). It also carries a photo feature on the support work in Britain of Women Against Pit Closures, the organization of miners' wives and other women from the mining communities of Britain.

The paper's first issue carries an article on a picket line in the port of Århus that attempted to prevent the loading of Danish coal on a ship bound for Britain. A back-page article covers fund-raising efforts in Denmark.

Since the middle of the year, more than 1.75 million Danish kroner [about \$170,000] has been sent to the striking miners from supporters in Denmark. The National Union Federation (LO) has donated kr. 250,000, and more than kr. 1 million has come from individual contributions. In several factories every work-

er now makes a regular weekly contribution to the strike-support fund. The union representing transport workers in Esbjerg, with 1,400 members, has given kr. 65 per member.

The Danish solidarity movement has also organized speaking tours for British miners and miners' wives to get out the truth about their strike in factories, union halls, and public meetings around the country. □

## Extradition hearing set for Croatian fascist in U.S.

At a request by the Yugoslav government to return Andrija Artukovic to Yugoslavia to stand trial for war crimes he committed during World War II, U.S. authorities are holding him in custody until an extradition hearing is held, scheduled for Feb. 12, 1985.

Artukovic, the former Justice and Interior Minister of the pro-Nazi Independent State of Croatia in the 1940s, is wanted by the Yugoslav government for the persecution and killing of more than 200,000 people.

The Independent State of Croatia was established by the pro-fascist Ustasha movement when German troops entered Yugoslavia in 1941. The Ustasha regime was overthrown in 1945 by a massive revolution of Yugoslav workers and peasants.

Artukovic, like other Ustashi officials, fled the revolution. In 1948 he entered the United States where he has lived ever since despite many attempts by the Yugoslav government to have him returned to stand trial. □

# U.S.-backed party sweeps election

*Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement waged vigorous campaign*

By Larry Johnston

ST. GEORGE'S — The New National Party (NNP) was swept to power on December 3 amid charges of electoral fraud. Immediately upon being sworn in as prime minister, NNP leader Herbert Blaize called on the United States to maintain its military presence "until such time as we have a fully equipped and trained Grenada force."

The NNP claimed 58 percent of the vote, winning 14 of the 15 seats up for election. The remaining seat was won by Marcel Peters of former dictator Eric Gairy's Grenada United Labour Party, which received 36 percent of all votes cast. Peters and the GULP, however, denounced the elections as rigged, and Peters vowed to resign the seat in protest.

The Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement (MBPM) has also protested the results. Party leader Kendrick Radix declared that in many polling places they know the MBPM received two to three times more votes than were reported.

The election itself was conducted while the country is occupied by several hundred U.S. and Caribbean troops and police. In fact, an extra 250 Caribbean police were brought in for the election and stationed in front of each polling place.

Several thousand Grenadians were not registered to vote in this election. The MBPM pointed out in a December 6 news release that only 48,000 Grenadians were registered in 1984, down from 63,000 registered in 1976.

The policy of issuing photo identification cards with registration for voting was instituted for the first time with this election. Thousands of Grenadians were suspicious of the motives behind this move and therefore did not register. In addition, more than 3,000 people arrested in October 1983 by invading U.S. forces had been released on the condition that they not engage "in politics and antigovernment activities."

When the MBPM decided to contest the election, many Grenadians who had not registered tried to sign up but found that the registration period had passed.

In response to an appeal from the MBPM, supervisor of elections Roy Chasteau agreed to consider reopening registration. However, the U.S.-appointed interim administration intervened, firing Chasteau. When 25 of his staff protested, they too were fired.

The NNP was clearly the choice of the U.S. administration. In fact, along with several eastern Caribbean governments that had supported the October 1983 invasion, Washington was instrumental in forming the NNP through a merger of the Grenada National Party, the

New Democratic Party, and the Grenada Democratic Movement. Moreover, the U.S.-installed interim administration delayed organizing the elections until the NNP was in place.

The NNP ran by far the best-financed campaign in Grenadian history. Estimates place the NNP's campaign expenditures at EC\$3 million [US\$1.14 million], much of which is thought to have come directly from the CIA and other U.S. sources.

With that money, the NNP was able to hire 500 campaign workers. It had dozens of sound vans at its disposal and tons of glossy literature to carry its message across the country. It also gave away tens of thousands of jerseys, caps, badges, and the like. In the final days of the campaign, the NNP hired airplanes to fly around the island advertising NNP candidates.

Several weeks before the election, a comic book entitled *Grenada Rescued from Rape and Slavery* appeared. The book aimed to discredit the March 13, 1979, revolution and the campaign of the Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement.

The NNP tried to take advantage of the confusion that existed among the masses since October 1983 to undermine the MBPM. The NNP, along with the *Grenadian Voice* and other news media, claimed that leaders of the MBPM such as Kendrick Radix and George and Einstein Louison were implicated in the detention and murder of Maurice Bishop.

The MBPM took up this charge in an editorial in the November 24 *Indies Times*. "Brother Radix led the first demonstration in St. George's on October 15 . . . Einstein Louison was placed under house arrest the very same day as Bishop . . . George Louison was the only person on the Central Committee to vote against the joint leadership . . . He was jailed for his tough opposition to Coard."

Despite the small resources at its disposal, the MBPM waged a vigorous campaign. A successful rally of 2,000 was held in Market Square in St. George's, and rallies of 500 were organized in Carriacou and Gouyave.

In addition, scores of neighborhood and street meetings were organized by MBPM candidates throughout the three-island state. A public office of the party was opened and dozens of people came in daily for information, campaign badges, and jerseys.

In their campaigning, MBPM candidates explained that the aim of the U.S. invasion of Oct. 25, 1983, was to turn back the gains of the revolution, that it was not a rescue mission as has been claimed.

They pointed out that unemployment was approaching the pre-1979 level of 49 percent,

that free health care and dental care were no more.

At a campaign meeting in Gouyave, Einstein Louison pointed out that "they talk about rescue mission and they talk about invasion. For them who get back their estates and are working them, they are rescued. But for the workers who are out of work, they get invaded. They invade the workers and they rescue the owners."

Another theme of the MBPM campaign was to point out the gains of the revolution — free education, free health care, trade union rights, agroindustries, reduction of unemployment from 49 percent to 14 percent, and the housing repair program.

These gains have been turned back by the interim administration.

At a meeting in Spring Street, St. George's, Kendrick Radix stated, "We used to give out housing repair. Over 17,500 people got housing repair in Grenada. As soon as 'democracy' came back, those handful of men in town say 'the government must not import boards to give to the poor people. You must have democratic money in your pocket and buy from us.' They closed down the program."

The MBPM also used its campaign to demand that the international airport, which the interim government had opened and named the Point Salines International Airport, be renamed the Maurice Bishop International Airport. MBPM campaigners pointed out that although many had talked of building the airport, the Bishop government had launched its construction.

They also called on the Grenadian government to honor Cuba and other countries that had helped build the airport, noting that at the opening ceremony Governor General Paul Scoon had thanked only the United States and Canada.

Although the Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement received a modest vote, 2,022 votes (4.9 percent) in the preliminary count, it established itself as a serious party through the election campaign.

The MBPM made a strong showing in St. John constituency, where Einstein Louison polled 509 votes (nearly 14 percent).

Access to the media was used to its fullest, with both free-time and paid ads on Radio Grenada.

Many people were rallied to the party, especially among the youth who were often too young to vote or were unregistered. But they showed commitment to continue the struggle and took up the MBPM's campaign slogan — "Forward on our feet, never on our knees." □

# Fight for a communist international

*New book designed for study by worker revolutionists*

*I . . . extend my heartfelt greetings to you and your comrades in the trenches, at sea, or on guard for the fatherland! To you I especially say: Hold out! You will determine what becomes of our country and what becomes of the German working class. May the new year bring us a speedy victory and a lasting peace!* — Philipp Scheidemann, chairman, German Social Democratic Party parliamentary fraction, Christmas, 1914.

*If we want peace, a peace that serves our needs, then we must now above all have confidence in German arms, in the combative German people. Similarly we must also have confidence in the German kaiser's desire and will for peace.* — Wolfgang Heine, German SPD right-wing leader, February 1915.

*The senseless slogan "hold out to the end" is bankrupt and only leads deeper into the genocidal maelstrom. The task of the hour for Socialists is the international proletarian class struggle against international imperialist slaughter. Every people's main enemy is in their own country!* — Karl Leibknecht, German SPD left-wing leader, May 1915

*However, the war which brings in its train so much misery and suffering for the toiling masses, enlightens and steels the finest representatives of the working class. If perish we must, let us perish in the struggle for our own cause, for the cause of the workers, for the socialist revolution, and not for the interests of the capitalists, the landowners and the tsars — this is what every class-conscious worker feels.* — V.I. Lenin, Russian Bolshevik leader, August 1915

## By Russell Johnson

The sharply contrasting responses within the European labor movement to the imperialist slaughter of World War I are highlighted by these excerpts from materials published in Monad Press's new book, *Lenin's Struggle for a Revolutionary International, Documents: 1907-1916, The Preparatory Years*. They illustrate what the book sets out to do — to document the central political debates within the international labor movement of that period and the efforts of the Russian Bolsheviks, led by Lenin, to coalesce an international communist left wing out of the socialist parties. By the outbreak of the war, the leaderships of these parties had clearly sold themselves into

the service of their own ruling classes in the manner of Philipp Scheidemann and Wolfgang Heine.

In setting out to achieve this task, the book covers considerable ground in its more than 600 pages. It begins with the debates within the Second International before 1914 in response to the growing imperialist drive toward war, focusing on the proceedings of the 1907 Stuttgart Congress of the International and the subsequent political struggle inside the Ger-

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*Lenin's Struggle for a Revolutionary International, Documents: 1907-1916, The Preparatory Years*. Edited and with an introduction by John Riddell. Monad Press, New York, 1984. 604 pp. \$10.95.

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man Social Democratic Party (SPD), the largest and most authoritative workers party in Europe.

It documents the collapse of the International with the outbreak of World War I and the efforts of the Bolshevik leadership, throughout the war years, to assemble the cadres for a new international from among the minority of socialists who advocated international working-class solidarity and struggle against the imperialist war.

To this end, the editors of *Lenin's Struggle* have assembled an impressive written record of this political struggle — the minutes, resolutions, and manifestos of congresses; correspondence between major participants in the debates; and leaflets and articles from the press of the different political currents and parties. This includes major excerpts from many well-known and some not so well-known texts by Lenin, placed here in their historical context. Complementing these are comprehensive selections from the speeches, letters, and articles of other major participants in the debates within the socialist movement of that time, such as Karl Leibknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Kautsky, Karl Radek, Leon Trotsky, and Gregory Zinoviev. With the exception of Lenin's writings, much of the material has been long out of print or is published for the first time in English in this book.

### Divided chronologically

But the book is not just a collection of documents. The material has been divided, more or less chronologically, into chapters that each focus on a major development such as the Stuttgart Congress, the opening of World War I, and the 1915 Zimmerwald Conference. The individual texts have been edited to avoid un-

necessary repetitions and extraneous debates, and are linked by editorial commentary. Together with comprehensive footnotes, glossary, and chronology, this commentary enables the reader to understand the historical context and evolution of the debates without any extensive prior knowledge of the labor history of the period.

The result is an eminently readable book that brings the labor movement of the period to life and provides many useful lessons in Marxist strategy and tactics for today's generation of revolutionary-minded workers. It helps lay to rest the "great men" myth whereby the big steps forward of the international working-class movement are attributed to the "genius" of a Marx or a Lenin. What we see through the book is not Lenin the genius, but Lenin as team leader, first of the Bolshevik Central Committee and then increasingly of a broader international team that coalesces around the Bolsheviks, as the correctness of their perspectives is confirmed by the advance of the class struggle during the war. We get a feel for the extent of the roots of the Bolshevik Party in the industrial working class, and the mettle of the worker-Bolsheviks building the party inside tsarist Russia.

We also get an appreciation for the influence of the class struggle and of the worker-militants on the debates inside the socialist parties. Karl Leibknecht, for example, the leader of the internationalist SPD deputies in the German parliament, did not at first publicly disavow the SPD majority's support for the German declaration of war. *Lenin's Struggle* explains that he was taken to task for this by worker militants when he reported to a meeting of party leaders in Stuttgart in September 1914:

"Comrades openly said they could not understand why Leibknecht and the others had not voted against the war credits and thus at least saved the honor of German Social Democracy," [a participant Jacob] Walcher wrote. "They considered that by giving way at this historic hour, the minority had made a very serious error and had almost irremediably damaged the cause of peace and revolutionary socialism."

Walcher recounted that in his summary, Leibknecht explained that "what comrades had said here had deeply shaken and gratified him. The criticisms of the minority and of him personally were quite correct. . . . He added, 'You are quite right in criticizing me. Even if alone, I should have called out my "No!" in the Reichstag and so informed the whole world that the talk of the unanimity of the Reichstag and the German people is a lie. I have committed a serious error. . . . I can only promise you to conduct in the future an uncompromising struggle against the kaiser's war and against the kaiser's Socialists.'"

Leibknecht was true to his word, providing



an inspiring example of how revolutionary socialists can use the platform of parliament, even in the most difficult times, to promote class consciousness and international solidarity. On December 2, 1914, he cast a lone vote in the German parliament against the second set of war credits. *Lenin's Struggle* gives an example of where Leibknecht spoke in the Prussian state parliament and called on the soldiers to turn their weapons on the German ruling class.

Karl Kautsky, who had put his considerable political authority behind the chauvinist SPD leaders in 1914 by insisting that internationalism and class struggle were only appropriate in peacetime, complained in 1916 of the growing influence of the internationalist left wing: "Their radicalism corresponds to the present needs of the broad, uneducated masses. Leibknecht is today the most popular man in the trenches. Everyone who has been there unanimously assures us of that. The discontented masses . . . see in him the man who is acting to end the war. . . ."

The picture that emerges in this book, then, is that of the world labor movement reaching a historical crossroads. After about three decades of capitalist expansion and relative class peace in Europe since the overthrow of the Paris Commune in 1871, a period in which monopoly capitalism and imperialist world domination was consolidated, class struggle again began to intensify in the decade preceding World War I. Increasing interimperialist rivalries forced the imperialist ruling classes to intensify their class war at home and abroad. The first fruits of this were colonial rebellions and wars. The democratic revolutions in China, Turkey, and Persia were particularly inspired by the first Russian revolution in 1905. The massive worker-peasant uprising in Russia also helped precipitate a wave of popular struggles in the European imperialist powers themselves.

#### Labor aristocracy

But as the workers moved into action, and as the imperialist war drive deepened, they found an unexpected barrier across their path — the leaderships of the big socialist parties and the trade unions. Decades of prosperity and conscious capitalist bribery of the upper layers of the workers organizations had left them rotted out at the top and politically and organizationally unprepared for waging class combat.

But in charting a class-struggle course forward in opposition to the opportunists, the minority of revolutionists in the German SPD, the central party of the Second International, were hampered by their lack of direct experience of a period of massive class upheaval. In addition, all the most authoritative political figures of the Second International who claimed adherence to Marxism — August Bebel, Karl Kautsky, Georgi Plekhanov — who were seen as the direct continuators of the work of Marx and Engels, were corrupting the political legacy of Marxism through adapting to the opportunist course. This meant that the



V.I. LENIN

continuity of the program of Marxism as a revolutionary strategy for the seizure of power had to be reconquered by the revolutionists.

This is reflected in the youthfulness of the revolutionary wing of the Second International. At the time of the Stuttgart Congress, where this book begins, Zinoviev and Radek were in their early 20s, Lenin and Luxemburg, in their late 30s. Zinoviev recalled that, when Lenin tried to organize a meeting of the left wing at the 1910 congress of the Second International, "About ten people met, and half of them had cold feet. They regarded Comrade Lenin with a fair dose of skepticism. He was not well known, and prominent representatives of the International had spoken against him. . . ."

Nevertheless, Lenin and the Bolshevik leadership played the key role in assembling this international revolutionary Marxist current. Unlike the other left-wing cadres in the International, their experience in Russia of the workers and peasants revolution of 1905 and the popular upsurge of 1912–14 gave the Bolsheviks experience in applying the Marxist program in combat situations. Throughout the prewar and war period, they sought to draw the lessons of these class-struggle experiences for the international movement.

#### Political clarification

In hammering out the essentials of a communist program with the quite diverse revolutionary forces that began to move toward the Bolsheviks' perspectives as the war ground on and the class struggle began to revive, Lenin clarified a wide range of political questions. He responded to the arguments of revolutionary-minded youth, such as those leading the Socialist Youth International, who advanced the pacifist demand of disarmament as the road to peace. He argued against those like Luxemburg and other Polish internationalists who denied the revolutionary significance of struggles against national oppression in the imperialist epoch. He argued against those who, like the influential Russian revolutionist Trotsky, dis-

missed an independent revolutionary role for the peasantry.

Lenin explained that revolutionary strategy aims at organizing an army of the toilers, led by the working class, to struggle for power by organizing civil war against the bourgeoisie, "a democratically organized and democratically conducted war of the propertyless mass against the propertied minority." The object was to organize the oppressed nationalities and the exploited peasants into that revolutionary army.

Many revolutionary Marxists today will find much to identify with and learn from in these debates and discussions, especially those of us who were won to the revolutionary movement in the imperialist countries since the 1960s. Like the antiwar fighters of the Second International, our political thinking has not been shaped by direct experience of a period of class combat.

Once again, we are entering a period of intensifying imperialist class war at home and abroad, after a prolonged period of capitalist expansion in which a proimperialist bureaucracy has been consolidated on top of the labor movement. In the name of Marxism and the class struggle, the Stalinist and Social Democratic wings of this bureaucracy preach petty-bourgeois pacifism, electoral politics, and narrow trade unionism. We are forced to reconquer Marxist revolutionary strategy in the face of these corruptions of it.

The layout of the book suggests that the editors had it in mind to facilitate the collective and systematic study of this period by today's revolutionists. We will find it well worth the effort.

#### Prewar debates

The early chapters document the pre-World War I debates in the Second International, beginning with the 1907 Stuttgart Congress. Looking back on the context of that congress in 1916, Zinoviev explained that "The outline of the approaching Europe-wide war already stood out with total clarity: a war in which the two imperialist alliances would stake tens of millions of lives for the sake of their slaveholdings. Imperialist reaction grew more insolent every day. It became obvious that the impending war posed the question of life or death for the Second International. . . ."

"By that time, however, opportunism had in essence already won the upper hand in the International."

This opportunism manifested itself in the debates on the colonial question, immigration, and militarism. Analyzing the congress, Lenin wrote that on the colonial question, "[t]he opportunists rallied behind [the Dutch Social Democrat] Van Kol. Speaking for the majority of the German delegation Bernstein and David urged acceptance of a 'socialist colonial policy' and fulminated against the radicals for their barren, negative attitude. . . . Incidentally, they were opposed by Kautsky. . . ."

The Communist International was to comment later that the prewar socialist parties, "in

reality, only recognised the white race."

Lenin pointed out that racist views were expressed against migrant workers: "Here, too, in the Commission there was an attempt to defend narrow, craft interests, to ban the immigration of workers from backward countries (coolies — from China, etc.). This is the same spirit of aristocratism that one finds among workers in some of the 'civilised' countries, who derive certain advantages from their privileged position, and are, therefore, inclined to forget the need for international class solidarity."

These anti-immigrant views were often justified with the claim that the bosses used the migrant workers as strikebreakers.

The gulf on the colonial question widened in the Second International with the rise of a series of anticolonial rebellions in Asia. The Bolsheviks recognized in these struggles an ally that was pointing the way forward for the working class of Europe. In his 1913 article, "Backward Europe and Advanced Asia," Lenin wrote that "[e]verywhere in Asia a mighty democratic movement is growing, spreading and gaining strength. . . . Hundreds of millions of people are awakening to life, light and freedom. What delight this world movement is arousing in the hearts of all class-conscious workers, who know that the path to collectivism lies through democracy!"

The central debate at Stuttgart was on antimilitarism, how the labor movement should respond to the imminent threat of a major war between the imperialist powers.

Authoritative leaders of the International, like August Bebel of Germany and Jean Jaurès of France, continued to approach the struggle against militarism from the standpoint of "defense of the fatherland." Zinoviev wrote in his 1916 article on Stuttgart, "Neither explained the clear difference between genuine defense of the fatherland as in earlier national wars and the fraudulent character of this slogan in present-day imperialist wars."

In addition, Bebel and other centrists in the leadership of the German SPD, which had increasingly focused its activity on winning reforms through parliament, rejected any forms of struggle that threatened the legality of their party. Bebel said in the debate on this at Stuttgart:

"Parliament is also an institution of the ruling classes, established to maintain their class rule. But we participate in parliament not only to fight ruling class domination, but also to improve social conditions. We don't limit ourselves to being negative, but carry out positive work as well."

The SPD, Bebel continued, would have "bad experiences" if they applied the "methods of mass strike, desertion by the reservists and the militia, and open insurrection" during war time.

#### Influence of opportunists

But this stance only played into the hands of the opportunists who, Zinoviev explained, "constituted the majority in the commanding

heights of the party everywhere in Europe, [and who] quite consciously united reformism with 'patriotism.' . . . Fully aware of what they were doing, the opportunists led the Second International to social chauvinism."

The growing preponderance of opportunism in the SPD saw the antimilitarist struggle reduced to proposals in parliament to shorten military service and improve the conditions of the draftees ("dispense with mindless drill"), for arms limitation talks between the imperialist powers, and for general disarmament. Some party leaders began to argue against the SPD challenging German imperialist foreign policy, proposing instead to concentrate on "domestic issues" inside the parliament. In 1913 the SPD voted for a military spending bill for the kaiser's army, presented as a tax reform, in violation of longstanding party policy.

These policies were challenged by the left wing of the SPD, led politically by Rosa Luxemburg. Against disarmament and arms limitation she argued:

(W)hoever honestly desires world peace and liberation from the tremendous burden of armaments must also desire socialism. . . . Arms limitation and curbing militarism are not part of international capitalism's further development. . . . Only those who believe that class antagonisms can be softened and be blunted, and that capitalist economic anarchy can be contained, can think it possible that these international conflicts can subside, ease, or dissolve. . . . "A little peace and order" is, therefore, impossible, a petty-bourgeois utopia, as much so in the capitalist world market as in world politics, in the limitation of economic crises as in the limitation of armaments.

Explaining this to the masses, ruthlessly dispelling all illusions about the bourgeoisie's sham moves for peace, and declaring the proletarian revolution to be the first and only step toward world peace — these are the tasks of the Social Democrats with regard to all disarmament farces, whether produced in Petersburg, London, or Berlin.

Throughout this whole period the revolutionary approach of the left wing was able to exercise a major influence over the antiwar resolutions adopted by the congresses of the International, which made no mention of defense of the fatherland. The 1907 congress stated, for example:

"If a war threatens to break out, it is the duty of the working classes and their parliamentary representatives in the countries involved . . . to exert every effort to prevent its outbreak. . . .

"In case war should break out anyway, it is their duty to intervene for its speedy termination and to strive with all their power to utilize the economic and political crisis created by the war to rouse the masses and thereby hasten the downfall of capitalist class rule."

This stand was reaffirmed at the 1912 Basle congress of the Second International, convened as a demonstration of socialist unity against the outbreak of war in the Balkans.

But when the imperialist war broke out in 1914, the decisions of Basle and earlier congresses were thrown overboard as the majority of the Social Democratic leaders rushed to sup-

port their own ruling class's war effort. "August 4, 1914, the date of the German SPD's vote for war credits," comment the *Lenin's Struggle* editors, "stands as the symbol of the old International's collapse."

A course had to be charted toward a new international, based on the legacy of the revolutionary Marxist tendency in the Second International. And this is what Lenin and the Bolshevik leadership team set out to do during the war years. Its story is told in the remaining chapters of the book.

#### Toward a new international

Among the minority of socialist leaders who refused to go along with the chauvinist betrayal of 1914, only the Bolsheviks called for a definitive break with the Second International. They set out to debate through revolutionary perspectives with other antiwar and revolutionary currents, as part of a process of assembling an international cadre around a clear communist program.

The first major opportunity for such a debate was offered by a conference of socialist antiwar forces held in Zimmerwald, Switzerland, during September 1915. The left wing of this conference, led by the Bolsheviks, became known as the Zimmerwald Left, which was to prove to be the embryo of the new communist international.

After much discussion, a manifesto submitted by the Left was rejected in favor of a compromise manifesto codrafted by Leon Trotsky, the most prominent Russian internationalist outside the ranks of the Bolsheviks, who had been chairman of the Petrograd soviet during the 1905 revolution. The Left voted for it as "a step towards an ideological and practical break with opportunism and social-chauvinism," wrote Lenin.

Karl Radek, a Polish revolutionary and one of the Bolsheviks' principal collaborators in the Zimmerwald Left, explained that a principal flaw in the Manifesto of the Zimmerwald Conference was its failure to point out that the betrayal by the Second International was rooted in the consolidation of the opportunist trend, based on the labor aristocracy and the intelligentsia, during the prewar years.

Some of the most important debates of this period took place with two groups of revolutionists outside the Zimmerwald Left — the Spartacist group in Germany, led by Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht; and Russian revolutionaries associated with Leon Trotsky in the *Nashe Slovo* paper, published in Paris, and in the Mezhrayonsi (Interdistrict Organization) inside Russia.

#### 'Turn war into civil war'

Lenin and the Bolshevik leadership spelled out their revolutionary perspective immediately after war broke out. For example, in a September 1914 Central Committee resolution they stated:

It must be the primary task of Social-Democrats in every country to combat that country's chauvinism. . . .

In the present situation, it is impossible to determine, from the standpoint of the international proletariat, the defeat of which of the two groups of belligerent nations would be the lesser evil for socialism. But to us Russian Social-Democrats there cannot be the slightest doubt that, from the standpoint of the working class and of the toiling masses of all the nations of Russia, the defeat of the tsarist monarchy, the most reactionary and barbarous of governments, which is oppressing the largest number of nations and the greatest mass of the population of Europe and Asia, would be the lesser evil. . . .

The conversion of the present imperialist war into a civil war is the only correct proletarian slogan, one that follows from the experience of the Commune, and outlined in the Basle resolution (1912). . . .

Despite the fact that, as Lenin pointed out, the Bolsheviks' revolutionary perspectives were based on the program of the left wing in the prewar Second International, many revolutionaries like Luxemburg and Trotsky at least at first shrank from drawing the same bold revolutionary conclusions from the outbreak of the war. Consequently they also hesitated to advocate a clean break with the centrist capitulators like Kautsky. Allowing the war to "oppress your thinking" is how Lenin described it.

While they opposed the war and called for the continuation of the class struggle as a mat-

ter of principle, they emphasized the war as a disaster for the working class that postponed revolutionary prospects. "The slogan of stopping war is that of class self-preservation for the socialist proletariat. It is the slogan of international rapprochement, and therefore the precondition for revolutionary activity," Trotsky wrote after Zimmerwald, while criticizing Lenin for "displaying a completely *negative* attitude to the slogan of the struggle for peace." Connected to this was Trotsky's opposition to the Bolshevik position that defeat of Russia is the lesser evil for the Russian toilers.

Editor John Riddell, in his introduction, notes:

By the end of 1916, where the collection of documents in this volume concludes, any progressive role of the Zimmerwald movement had been exhausted. As Lenin insisted, it had become an obstacle to rebuilding a proletarian internationalist leadership.

As the war raged on, the imperialist governments increased their attacks on working people, and the workers of warring and neutral countries mounted increasingly combative mass resistance. By the beginning of 1917, many Socialist parties, including the German party, had split under these pressures, and others were clearly headed in that direction. The revolutionary Socialists, taking advantage of the growing class polarization, strengthened their links with the working masses and won new forces. The Zimmerwald Left made progress in convincing more

revolutionists on the centrality of the political issues separating it from the Zimmerwald majority.

Trotsky was among those who were eventually won over. In 1917, under the impact of the outbreak of the Russian revolution, he and his supporters fused with the Bolsheviks. He became a central leader of the Communist International.

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The Monad Press editors promise that *Lenin's Struggle for a Revolutionary International* is the first in a series of volumes on the Communist International in Lenin's time that they are preparing, which aims "to make more accessible the example and lessons of the international communist movement that grew out of and was led by the Bolshevik Party." Further volumes will document the discussions, under the impact of the 1917 Russian revolution, that led to the founding of the Communist International and resolutions and proceedings from the first four congresses of the new international and from other international gatherings called under its auspices. Very little of this material has been previously available in English.

If this first volume is any guide, they will prove to be indispensable additions to the bookshelf of today's worker-revolutionary. □

## DOCUMENTS

# Mobilizing against U.S. threats

## *Sandinista leader explains political tasks to FSLN meeting*

[The following is the text of a speech by Commander of the Revolution Luis Carrión, member of the National Directorate of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) and vice-minister of the interior of Nicaragua. It was delivered in mid-November to an assembly of the Regional Committee of the FSLN in Region III, which includes the capital of Managua and the surrounding Managua department. Members of the leadership bodies of FSLN Base Committees as well as political secretaries of the Base Assemblies of the Sandinista Youth also participated in the meeting.

[The translation, by *Intercontinental Press*, is from the text published in the November 21 and 22 issues of the FSLN daily *Barricada*.]

\* \* \*

We want to use this meeting, which the Regional Committee ordinarily holds with the Leadership Nuclei of the Base Committees and which has been attended by the political secretaries of the Base Assemblies of the JS [Sandinista Youth], to talk a little about the current situation and the tasks that it requires.

The FSLN has always tried to act as a vanguard. In practice, since its foundation, from the early 1960s up until today, the Sandinistas

have only been comfortable in the front ranks of struggle. We were born with the aim of acting as a vanguard and we will continue until the end with that aim of acting as a vanguard.

We have called you together at this critical time to remain faithful to that tradition. The graver the imperialist and mercenary aggressions against our homeland, the greater and more complex the difficulties that the Nicaraguan people face from different arenas, the greater and higher is the responsibility of each FSLN militant.

Faced with the real possibility of a direct war by U.S. imperialism against our small nation, the duty and the responsibility to be the vanguard requires, in addition to courage and will, a high level of consciousness, complete understanding of the tasks that we must fulfill, and effective organization and discipline.

Various members of the National Directorate have exposed the danger of an attack by the U.S. Army against Nicaragua. They have exposed the aggressive maneuvers that the United States is carrying out in the Pacific Ocean, in the Atlantic Ocean, and on Honduran territory. We have exposed the extremely aggressive declarations by various functionaries of imperialism, by the U.S. gov-

ernment threatening us with bombing or eventual massive attacks against Nicaragua. We have exposed the flights and the provocations of that vulture, which in the last few days has not returned.\*

We have exposed the propagandistic and slanderous campaigns that the U.S. government has launched to create in the U.S. population an image of danger from Nicaragua, to create in the U.S. population a readiness to support a military adventure.

In the face of these examples that have been exposed by our leaders, it is necessary to seriously consider the risk of a direct attack by the U.S. Army. And in these circumstances the first question we put to ourselves, a question I imagine you have put to yourselves as well, is: Is it possible for Nicaragua — small, with few people, economically underdeveloped, with many material and cultural difficulties — is it possible for this little Nicaragua to defeat the attack, the war of Yankee imperialism?

In fact, *compañeros*, it is possible for the

\*The reference is to spy flights by U.S. Air Force SR-71 supersonic aircraft, known as the "Blackbird." Nicaraguans refer to it as the "vulture."

people of Nicaragua to defeat the imperialist war. We have not the slightest doubt about that. And this conviction arises not only from our will to win, from our desire for it to be so. This conviction arises from a scientific, revolutionary analysis of the objective conditions of the imperialist war.

It is a fact that the U.S. Army has many tanks, many planes, missiles and sophisticated weapons, and if we compare the U.S. Army with the EPS [Sandinista People's Army] our disadvantages would be more than obvious.

The problem is that what is involved here is not a war between any two ordinary armies. What is involved is a war between an imperial army, fighting for a completely unjust cause, far from its country, confronting an entire people. And on the other side, on our side, it will not be just an army, but rather an entire people struggling for the most just cause of all, the cause of its independence, the cause of its sovereignty and freedom, defending the land where our people were born and lived, their own territory, our own sky. It is an entire people — made up of men, women, children, old people, youth — confronting an army, and I pity the army that has to face this Nicaraguan people.

And not only will the Yankee army confront the Nicaraguan people on its own land. In addition, the resistance and the tenacious, heroic, and determined struggle of our people will make possible the mobilization of many forces in the world and within the United States itself. We are going to struggle basically with our own forces, but we are not going to fight alone. The peoples of Latin America, of Europe, Africa, Asia, and the North American people will go into action with us against the imperialist aggression.

How many men and how much time would Yankee imperialism require to control or attempt to control three million Nicaraguans? Twenty thousand, 30,000, 40,000, 100,000 men would be insufficient.

How many men can Yankee imperialism commit in this situation of world crisis, of international tensions to try to force the Nicaraguan people into submission? And if they could send 100,000 or 200,000, how long can Yankee imperialism maintain those 200,000 men in Nicaragua, when every day they have to send back 30, 40, 50, or 100 coffins with U.S. soldiers? How long would the people of the United States permit the government of Mr. Reagan to do this? It is very certain that [they would stop it] sooner, much sooner, than the strategists of Yankee imperialism can be counting on.

When we say that we are going to defeat the imperialist aggression, we are not saying that the entire U.S. Army will be defeated. But we are sure that the imperialist war will be defeated because if the Yankees land they will leave sooner than they think.

Up to 500,000 soldiers went into action in Vietnam — in South Vietnam and with some air incursions over North Vietnam. During seven or eight years of an interventionist war,



LUIS CARRIÓN

the United States suffered 56,000 dead in Vietnam. That's a lot of dead, but much less than Nicaragua, in relation to its population, has sustained since the triumph of the revolution.

Those 56,000 dead did not signify the breakup of the U.S. Army, not even of the part of the army that was in Vietnam, and they did not lose their ability to carry out military operations, which was more or less intact.

They did not lose their organization, but they did lose the war. They lost the war because they could not achieve their political objectives, because they could not defeat the people of Vietnam, because they could not crush their heroic resistance. And for years and years the resistance of the Vietnamese people gave rise to the resistance of the U.S. people, and Mr. Nixon had to look for excuses to leave Vietnam.

The imperialists are not invincible. The imperialists can be defeated, they have been defeated, and they will be defeated in Nicaragua (Applause).

Therefore, the fundamental factor in defeating aggression is the armed and unarmed resistance, the effective, tenacious, heroic, untiring, determined resistance of the entire Nicaraguan people. That is the guarantee of victory. That is the force that is going to mobilize the whole world, and that is the force that the FSLN will have to head up in the event of an imperialist war. Each one of us must be in that front line of battle.

Now, what about this business of the war?

The imperialist aggression against Nicaragua began some years ago. We are not speaking of something new. Yankee imperialism's objective is to destroy the Sandinista People's Revolution one way or another, and from the first moment of our triumph they began to work in an ever more aggressive way to destroy the revolution.

As part of that "work" to destroy us, they began the military aggression of the counter-revolutionary mercenary forces, the military provocations by the Honduran army, and the direct military provocations by the Yankee army and the CIA forces. They initiated war against the people, the most active element of which is the actions of the mercenaries against the revolution.

That war is simply the form that the imperialist war takes at this moment, because there is only a single war here. The mercenaries are the advance guard of the imperialist aggression; they are the form imperialism has been able to use thus far.

If the Yankees have not intervened here, it is not for lack of material resources, but rather because of a political problem, because they have not been able to create the conditions within the United States and internationally to justify an aggression. When they look here they see this people ready to fight, and that greatly increases the political costs for them and makes them think twice before launching the aggression against us.

So, thus far the most aggressive form of the imperialist war has been the mercenary forces, whose maximum objective is the destruction of the revolution, since, logically, for the Yankees it would be cheapest and most ideal to destroy the revolution without having to intervene directly.

The minimum objective of the counter-revolutionary forces is to prepare or create the necessary conditions that would facilitate and justify direct imperialist intervention. That is to say, to weaken the people's capacity for resistance, to try to control territories where they could install provisional governments that would call for intervention, or some other action with the same objective.

Thus, by confronting and defeating the counter-revolution, we are confronting and defeating the imperialist war in its current form.

But up until now the counter-revolution has not lived up to Mr. Reagan's expectations and has not been able to accomplish the minimum plan, much less the maximum plan. The Yankees therefore need to create new pretexts, other justifications to launch the total attack.

#### MIG scare

So they began to speak of the MIGs, to say that Nicaragua is arming itself excessively and constitutes a danger to the security of the United States. They say that we are a threat to the security of Central America. Lastly they raise a whole outcry around that affair to try to create conditions that would justify attacking Nicaragua.

In these circumstances and in the face of the

dangerous signs of aggression, we cannot remain with our arms folded, and we are not remaining with our arms folded. We are continuing to wage and even to step up the fight against the mercenary forces. At the same time, we have to raise our ability to confront a direct attack by the U.S. army.

We are not suggesting that there is a choice, that we can decide what is more important — the struggle against the mercenaries or strengthening the defensive capacity against a direct attack by the Yankees.

These two elements simply represent two different aspects of the same war. Strengthening our defensive capacity in, let's say, the Pacific regions, to face an imminent direct attack by imperialism, also means raising our ability to deal blows to the counterrevolutionary enemy in the border regions.

When we have 40 or 50 thousand well-organized militiamen, with their officers and their weapons, that is to say, when we have an extraordinary capacity to defend the city of Managua, we will also have the capacity to send part of those forces to carry out necessary missions in confronting the counterrevolution. And vice-versa, to the degree that we progress in the struggle against the mercenaries, that we weaken their forces, neutralize and wipe them out, we are normalizing the situation in the north and center of the country and we are creating the ability to strengthen the defense of the Pacific to confront a direct attack by imperialism. Those are two closely related tasks, two aspects of the same war, two victories that we must achieve.

The other thing that we wanted to say is that while Yankee imperialism exists, Nicaragua is going to live under a constant threat, which will have its ups and downs. Sometimes there will be more ships on our coasts and other times there will be fewer ships; there will be occasions when the president of the United States says more aggressive things and others when he says less aggressive things. But the threat, the danger of imperialist aggression will always be present, until the United States ceases to be imperialist.

Therefore, military preparedness and increased military strength cannot be viewed as conjunctural tasks; they are permanent tasks. Members of the FSLN must dedicate part of their attention to these tasks every day. And, at certain times it needs the majority of their attention.

#### **A dangerous moment**

Today we are living through a dangerous moment. A direct Yankee imperialist attack is a real possibility. Today we must put our forces in maximum readiness. This effort that we are making must come together into, must give rise to, an impenetrable and solid defensive capacity in Managua.

We have been speaking in the last few days about the capital. Why do we speak about Managua? What is the importance of Managua in case of an imperialist attack?

It has to do with the imperialists' objective.

Yankee imperialism wants to destroy people's power in Nicaragua and reestablish the power of the oligarchy, the bourgeoisie, and the exploiters — the power of the Somozaists, the proimperialists — and then they want to get out of the country as quickly as possible.

For this they have planned — and it would have to be like this — an attack that tries to gain rapid solutions. Obviously they will try not to get bogged down here, not to begin to exhaust themselves, but rather to achieve visible successes.

In order to keep the population of the United States united around an aggression against Nicaragua, they need political victories, political coups in the short term. And, obviously, that political coup is the seizure of the capital. That is the number one objective of an imperialist attack on Nicaragua.

If, three or four days after an intervention began, the U.S. Army could present an occupied capital with little damage and few losses, they would really have dealt a tremendous political and moral blow on an international and national level, because Managua is the symbol of the political power of the revolution. It is the symbol of people's power, the seat of the revolutionary power. Managua, in that sense, summarizes the homeland.

Having occupied Managua, even if the entire rest of the country were controlled by the revolution, the Yankees could present to the world the image of a victory, of an important political victory, and could continue with their plans to completely destroy the revolutionary power.

It is clear that the occupation of Managua would not signify either submission and Yankee domination or the end of the people's resistance. Indisputably, the occupation of Managua under the conditions we were mentioning would be a very hard blow; it would be an important victory for the imperialists. Therefore, for the Yankee imperialists it is very important to achieve that objective, and for the people of Nicaragua it is even more important to prevent it.

We must, then, be prepared to make the aggressors pay a very high price for every inch of terrain, every block, every house, every tree, every stone of our city. We must organize the defense of this capital in such a way that, if the Yankees succeed in penetrating to Managua, they can occupy only ruins and the blood of Managuans soaked into the soil of the homeland (Applause).

Because if that is how it is, even though the Yankees might enter this territory where the

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## **Britain**

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# **Protest threat to Nicaragua**

## *Disarmament group blasts U.S. war preparations*

**By Rich Palser and Jenny Prideaux**

SHEFFIELD — The annual conference of Britain's largest nuclear disarmament organization, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), met here on the weekend of December 1-2.

The conference showed a growing awareness of, and opposition to, U.S. President Reagan's preparations for direct military intervention in Nicaragua and Central America. While not included for debate on the original agenda by CND's National Council, a resolution on Nicaragua came second in a ballot for prioritizing emergency resolutions, and was carried overwhelmingly by the conference.

This resolution read:

"With the Presidential Election now over, the Reagan Administration is preparing to invade Nicaragua. Nicaragua is no more a military threat to the USA than was tiny Grenada, invaded over 13 months ago and still occupied. The invasion preparations are part of the United States' continuing war drive. A US invasion of Nicaragua could quickly result in another Vietnam-type situation, with leading forces inside the US Government pressing for nuclear escalation. Nicaragua could spark a nuclear conflagration.

"Conference therefore calls upon the British

government to issue a public statement utterly opposing any armed attack against Nicaragua.

"Conference calls upon the US government to stop threatening intervention against Nicaragua.

"Conference welcomes the American peace movement's initiatives, namely: the Christian witness for peace vigil, taking place on the borders of Nicaragua and Honduras, which is intended to prevent any invasion, and the women's march for peace from Mexico to Nicaragua. Conference instructs the National Executive and National Council to support the Nicaragua Campaign and Liberation in any proposed action."

Presenting the motion, the delegate from the Tottenham CND group said that U.S. intervention in Lebanon, U.S. aid to the regime in El Salvador, and U.S. threats against Cuba were all part of this drive toward war. U.S. government charges that the Nicaraguan elections were a fraud, that MIG fighters were on their way to Nicaragua, and that Nicaragua was a threat to the United States, were aimed at preparing the way for deeper intervention, he said.

A Youth CND delegate appealed to the conference that, "A peace movement that does not oppose real wars is not worth its name." □

capital now is, they will have gained no victory; even if they enter, they would have been defeated.

Therefore, the possibilities of resistance of the entire people, in every corner of Nicaragua are going to be seen multiplied a thousand times. The Yankees are going to have to leave Nicaragua, and this depends on us. It falls to the FSLN not only to organize a defense of this type and quality, but also to guarantee it every day of combat through our example, through action, through our very lives if necessary, in the same way that Julio Buitrago taught us with his own example that you had to kill or be killed to be able to live, and in the same way that Leonel Rugama showed us with his own life the road that must lead to victory.

#### Immediate tasks

Within this context, we have immediate tasks: in the shortest time possible we must have 40,000 militiamen organized in fully formed military units, with officers, with heads of squads, platoons, and companies, with battalion staffs, with general staffs of brigades. Every citizen of Managua who can be, must be registered and organized into a combat unit. Moreover, not just organized for a short while, but permanently organized, permanently assigned to his or her combat unit.

In the second place, we must make an extraordinary effort, in the shortest time possible, to raise the preparedness and combat capability of every one of the combat units in which those 40,000 militia members are organized — and 40,000 militia members is a minimum goal.

Equally, we must dedicate ourselves to preparing the defense of each area in which we are stationed as militia members. That means it is not just organizing the militia unit, it is not just personal preparation of the soldier, but also the defense of the area: trenches, engineering works, accumulating certain minimum material resources, certain minimum resources to strengthen the defense. To activate civil defense to guarantee maximum protection of our children, our old people, our invalids, all those for whose security, for whose future, we are preparing for victory.

We must raise the fighting spirit of the people and the dedication to "Free Homeland or Death!" We have to spiritually and politically prepare the people to be ready to sacrifice themselves if necessary.

Our cadre must be prepared for that and must know a little about the enemy, must study something of how the enemy acts and must have in mind that a war against the Yankees is much harder, much crueler, much bloodier than anything we have known. We must be spiritually and politically prepared to confront that war and defeat it.

To explain a little the concept of Active Resistance, we would like to say that it is something similar to the insurrection against the dictatorship. The people had a number of weapons, a few hundred weapons. Nevertheless, the war against the dictatorship was not



Youth of Managua prepare tank for defense of city.

waged by the 400 to 500 fighters of the FSLN who had military weapons. The war against the dictatorship, the insurrection against the dictatorship meant the involvement of everyone in fighting against the Somozaist [National Guards], with whatever weapons they had, with the resources that they had. There were guards who were burned to death, others who were clubbed to death or were killed in other ways.

The people's fighters, the fighters who had weapons, relied on people who made barricades, who helped them to build trenches or reload ammunition or who served as messengers or gave them coffee, or who took up the weapon when a fighter fell. Others informed when the Guard was coming. Others detected the enemies of the people to execute them. Some used FAL rifles, others .22 caliber revolvers, others contact bombs. There were some who even wanted to use gas cylinders as weapons against the guards.

That is why when the Somozaist guards went out in their brand-new Becats to drive through the streets of Managua, they rode in the back part of the jeeps with their feet and their rifles pointed out. That is, their rifles were pointed at any and all Nicaraguans who passed by, because the Guards understood that all the people, from the child with his basket of sweet breads, to the old woman who walked with difficulty, were their enemies.

That is how they felt and, in truth, that is how it was. And this people used every means to defeat the Somozaist Guards, and among them they used the FSLN's combat organizations.

Now the number of rifles in the hands of the people is no longer 300, 400, or 500; we have thousands of rifles and, in addition, tanks, can-

nons, and mortars. But the most important thing is that they are in the hands of the people to defeat the imperialist aggression with that same determination, that same will to struggle until victory (Applause).

Active Resistance means that we are going to begin fighting utilizing our tanks, our cannons, the weapons we have been acquiring. But if the ammunition for these weapons is used up or if the weapons are destroyed through the war itself, then we are going to keep fighting with our rifles, with our militia infantry brigades. And if the units are divided and communication is lost, each one of the groups will keep fighting, and if one of those groups gets divided into 10 more pieces, each piece will keep fighting, and when one isolated fighter is left and loses contact with the rest of the compañeros, he will keep fighting. That is Active Resistance, when everyone ceaselessly fights to expel the invader.

We must prepare ourselves for this. The more organization we have, the more effective our resistance will be; the more damage we inflict on the imperialists, the more costly we will make their boldness.

This is why we must quickly increase Managua's defensive capability and stabilize a formidable defense of the capital.

And it is necessary to take another aspect into account. Some ask themselves if it is worth the trouble to make that whole effort, to begin running around, to prepare ourselves, etc., and perhaps the Yankees won't invade. There are some who think like that.

To put it more simply, it is better to make an extraordinary effort, to put our forces in readiness, to give of ourselves that extra bit that the Sandinistas and this Nicaraguan people have shown themselves capable of giving, because

if the attack does not come, we will have taken a large step forward, since if it does not come now, it can come tomorrow, if not tomorrow, it can come the day after tomorrow, because the Yankees want to destroy us.

What would be the alternative? With that kind of thinking we would stay so calm that if the attack does come, they will catch us with our guard down. That is something we could not forgive; that would be criminal on the part of the FSLN. To not have done everything possible to guarantee the defense of the homeland. It is from that starting point that we must make the intensive effort and then maintain that defensive capacity at a stable level, because this effort we are making today enters into the CIA's computer, and all the spies that the CIA has here report back that the people of Managua and all of Nicaragua are in fact at their battle stations, and a light goes on in Reagan's console that says, "Danger, Danger, the Nicas are not such push-overs." And they are going to think about it a little more.

#### Not weaklings

That is, our sweat today can save us blood tomorrow. We must not allow the Yankees to land here believing that we are weaklings; they

have to know that no one here is a weakling. That is important and has a value.

The call we make today to strengthen the defense of our city in every way does not mean that we are going to stop producing, that drivers are going to stop driving, that mechanics are going to stop repairing, and that everyone will do something else.

It is precisely in these circumstances that we must be most efficient in production, that the results of our work must be the greatest, that we must conserve more resources. Because what kind of defensive preparation would it be to neglect production, to waste more, to disorganize ourselves? That is no preparation for defense; that would be preparation for non-defense, preparation for slackness and for anarchy.

For that reason, the National Directorate of the FSLN has decided that, even in these circumstances, some thousands of coffee pickers will leave the city of Managua, will go and pick coffee because when we said that we would prefer the fall of the coffee to the fall of the homeland, that did not mean that the coffee will go to hell.

It meant that we cannot harvest the coffee at the cost of unduly weakening the defense of the capital, but it did not mean that we are not

going to make an effort to gather all the coffee if that is possible.

So we are mobilizing a much smaller number of people: militia members, state employees, with the perspective that they will achieve a higher average level of production than the BEPs (Student Production Battalions). That means that in these circumstances of war, higher productivity is required to be able to confront the tasks of production and defense at the same time. And with a tortoise-like style, an indisciplined style, we cannot fulfill either one.

With that in mind, the compañeros who must be mobilized for the picking, should as a minimum each pick on the average between six and seven cans [per day] (Applause). Only with an increase in productivity and production, an increase in discipline and in the efficiency of the working day, can we push forward the two tasks that we must fulfill.

That's why we must "charge up our batteries." We have to fulfill our tasks with regard to the coffee, with regard to production, and we have to fulfill and guarantee in the next few days and weeks the tasks directly related to the defense of the capital, the defense of the homeland.

Free Homeland or Death!

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## Middle East

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# 17th Palestine National Council held

## *Defies boycott, reaffirms struggle for Palestinian state*

By Steve Craine

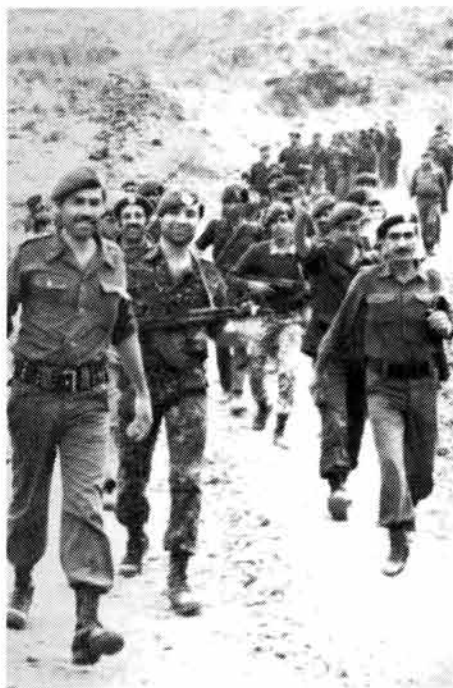
The 17th session of the Palestine National Council (PNC) held in late November in Amman, Jordan, endorsed Yassir Arafat's leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and rebuffed attempts by split-minded factions of the organization to subordinate the PLO to the interests of the Syrian regime of Hafez al-Assad. The Amman meeting also reaffirmed the PLO's longstanding fight for self-determination for Palestine.

This session of the PNC, which is the highest decision-making body of the PLO, was demonstratively boycotted by several of the PLO's component organizations. The boycott reflects divisions that have always existed within the PLO but that were exacerbated by the U.S.-backed Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 and the subsequent Syrian-organized mutiny in the ranks of the Palestinian guerrillas in Lebanon in 1983. These were two serious blows to the Palestinian struggle. They resulted in the scattering of the PLO leadership and fighters among several Arab states and the isolation of all factions from the largest concentrations of Palestinian people, in the Israeli-occupied territories and the refugee camps in neighboring Jordan and Lebanon.

This PNC meeting brought the PLO into greater contact with Palestinians living in Israel and the West Bank, especially through the daily, live broadcasts of its sessions on Jordanian television. "The streets were empty in the refugee camps, the restaurants had no people. Everyone was home watching the P.N.C. Arabs who work in Israeli factories say some people there were arguing and discussing what do our people want. People could see that these are not all terrorists coming from another planet," West Bank journalist Raymonda Tawil told the *New York Times*.

"For the first time people could watch the P.L.O. in action for themselves," a Palestinian in Israel told the *Times*. "Not only could they watch the P.N.C. in Amman . . . but at the same time they could tune in and see the anti-Arafat P.L.O. people speaking in Damascus on Syrian TV. Arafat's popularity benefited enormously from this comparison."

The heightened political awareness in Israeli-occupied Palestine around the meeting of the PNC led to several pro-PLO demonstrations. A peaceful student demonstration at Bir Zeit University near Ramallah the day before the PNC opened was fired on by Israeli troops. At least nine students were injured, and one



PLO troops training in North Yemen.

died of his wounds while his car was detained for a half hour at a special army roadblock set up during the attack. The next day another demonstrating Palestinian was killed by Israeli soldiers.

Much of the debate between the pro-Arafat component of the PLO — primarily Fatah, which Arafat heads, and numerous individual Palestinian figures — and those who boycotted the PNC revolves around the issue of relations with the Arab regimes. It is part of the PLO's fight for two decades to lead the struggle of the oppressed Palestinian people independent of any Arab government. The PNC's meeting hall in Amman was decorated with banners proclaiming, "No tutelage," to show its refusal to follow any master.

The PNC meeting had been delayed several months by lengthy negotiations aimed at bringing maximum participation to the council meeting. No faction of the PLO was excluded from the meeting, even those that had taken up arms against their fellow guerrillas in Lebanon.

But the effort for a united PNC failed due to the intransigence of factions allied with the Syrian and Libyan governments and the pressures the Syrian regime placed on PLO members and other Arab governments. Ultimately, the excuse used by the boycotting groups was that holding the meeting in Jordan would lead to turning the PLO into a puppet of Jordan's King Hussein. Hussein was responsible for the expulsion of the PLO from Jordanian territory and the massacre of thousands of its fighters in September 1970.

In spite of the boycott, the Palestine National Council showed that the PLO can overcome its organizational paralysis and helped clarify where the responsibility for divisiveness lies.

#### Actions of the PNC

Arafat addressed the first council session on November 22. His speech focused on the need for Arab unity in confronting Israel. He reviewed the history of cooperation between the Palestinian movement and other Arab governments, especially that of Jordan, and called for bringing Egypt back into the "fighting ring." He also explained his view of several controversial incidents within the PLO, including the 1983 mutiny and his unexpected trip to Cairo, the Egyptian capital, at the end of that year.

Following Arafat's speech, King Hussein addressed the delegates. "The existing facts in the Palestinian, Arab, and international arenas," he said, "require us to adhere to [United Nations] Security Council Resolution 242 as the basis for a just, peaceful settlement." Resolution 242, adopted after the 1967 war, has always been opposed by the PLO because it demands recognition of Israel and because it excludes the Palestinians from consideration except as refugees.

Hussein invited the PLO to join in a united Jordanian-Palestinian negotiating front in relation to Israel and called on the delegates to



King Hussein and Yassir Arafat at PNC meeting in Amman.

adopt a "fresh outlook and a new approach" because "the picture is bleak." He implied that the PLO should abandon the armed struggle and the principle of Palestinian self-determination on which it is based.

But despite the dire predictions of Arafat's impending sell-out to Hussein, the PNC denounced the king's "fresh approach." In the major political report to the conference, Farouk Kaddoumi, head of the PLO's political department, endorsed the idea of developing a joint Jordanian-Palestinian negotiating position against Israel, but specifically rejected Resolution 242, to the applause of the PNC delegates.

The final communiqué, issued on November 29, rejected any Middle East peace settlement that does not recognize the Palestinians' "right of return, right of self-determination, and right to the creation of an independent Palestinian state." The communiqué pointed out that, in addition to Resolution 242, neither the 1978 Camp David accords between Israel and Egypt nor the Reagan plan of 1982 met these criteria. Edward Walsh, writing in the November 25 *Washington Post*, commented: "A final adoption of this position would seem to close the door on U.S. and Western European peace initiatives centered on Resolution 242."

PNC delegates also insisted on keeping Arafat as chairman of the PLO Executive Committee. On November 27 he had offered to resign, but the following day a virtually unanimous demonstration in his support overruled this suggestion. The meeting replaced former PNC speaker Khaled Fahoum, who was participating in the boycott, with Abdul Hamid al-Saeh, a Palestinian who was expelled from the occupied territories by the Is-

raeli authorities in the 1960s and has since served in the Jordanian cabinet.

Arafat's December 1983 trip to Cairo, which was presented by many of his opponents in the PLO as evidence of his intention to sell out the Palestinian cause, was retroactively endorsed by the PNC meeting. A PNC resolution called the Cairo trip "a step on the road to strengthening relations between the Egyptian and Palestinian people."

The final resolution of the last PNC, held in Algeria in February 1983, called on the PLO Executive Committee "to define the relations with the Egyptian regime on the basis of the latter's abandoning of the Camp David policy." Arafat contended that Egyptian assistance to his forces when they evacuated Lebanon in December 1983 constituted a break with the Camp David framework and that renewed PLO-Egyptian relations could encourage this process. Some tendencies in the PLO attacked Arafat's Cairo trip primarily from the point of view that he had acted unilaterally, without consulting the Executive Committee.

Although the PNC meeting did not represent the sell-out that the boycotters predicted, the imperialist news media initially attempted to portray the meeting as a victory for what they call "moderation." *New York Times* correspondent John Kifner, reporting on the opening of the PNC on November 22, called the meeting "an attempt by the P.L.O. chairman to align himself with a new moderate position on the Middle East in alliance with King Hussein of Jordan." Summarizing the actual outcome of the conference a week later, Kifner claimed that the PNC's failure to adopt Hussein's position left it still facing the "Palestinian movement's principal problem: the lack of a practi-



cal program.”

The PLO factions that refused to participate in the Amman meeting formed two distinct groupings.

#### Positions of boycotting groups

The first of these, called the National Alliance, is made up of the dissidents in Arafat's own organization, Fatah, who organized an armed mutiny with Syrian assistance against PLO commanders in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley in early 1983 and those other factions that supported the revolt. These include the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC), Saiqa, and the Popular Struggle Front. The criminal mutiny against the already hard-pressed PLO forces in Lebanon had been motivated by opposition to Arafat's leadership, and since then, the National Alliance factions have demanded Arafat's removal as PLO chairman as a prerequisite to meeting with the other tendencies.

Shortly before the PNC meeting convened, PFLP-GC Secretary General Ahmed Jabril, who has close ties with the Libyan regime of Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi, denounced the calling of the PNC for Amman as proof of "deviation and treason." A leader of the pro-Syrian Saiqa predicted the "Arafat-Hussein-Mubarak bloc" was preparing to come to complete accord with and recognize Israel.

The stance of these PLO factions has been useful to Syrian President Assad. He has hoped to increase his influence with Washington and Tel Aviv by demonstrating that he could manipulate the Palestinian movement. He has already converted a section of the PLO into a tool of Syrian foreign policy, and now must undermine the authority of those he cannot control.

National Alliance leaders call for the setting up of an "alternative PLO." But as the PNC met, there was some evidence of fractures in the ranks of the boycotting groups. Muhammad Abu Jabir, representing the "Provisional Command Committee" of the PFLP-GC spoke at the November 25 session of the PNC and called for the ouster of PFLP-GC leader Jabril. He stated that a large number of PFLP-GC members shared his views. It was also reported that two members of Saiqa attended the meeting in defiance of its leadership.

#### Democratic Alliance

Four other components of the PLO — the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), the Palestinian Communist Party (PCP), and the Palestine Liberation Front (PLF) — formed the Democratic Alliance in early 1984.

These groups have been critical of Arafat's leadership of the PLO, especially of his visit to Cairo and his relations with King Hussein, but they refused to support the 1983 mutiny and for several months this year negotiated with the Fatah leadership in an attempt to reconcile all the PLO factions.

These negotiations resulted in an agreement

in June between Fatah and the four Democratic Alliance parties that proposed guarantees for the rights of all factions and the convening of the 17th PNC by mid-September. (See *Intercontinental Press* October 1 for text of this agreement.) The agreement rejected "any solution to the Palestine question on the basis of ... [any] plan that detracts from our people's inalienable rights, including their right to the return, self-determination, and the establishment of an independent state under the leadership of the PLO, their sole, legitimate representative."

The Democratic Alliance had called for the PNC to convene in Algiers. However, Syrian President Assad was able to pressure the Algerian government into refusing to host the PNC. Faced with this situation, the leadership around Arafat decided to hold the meeting in Amman, a move they knew the forces in the Democratic Alliance would oppose.

#### Syrian and Israeli interference

Last-minute negotiations between Fatah and the Democratic Alliance representatives, most of whom are based in Damascus, were disrupted when Assad prevented some members of the Democratic Alliance from traveling outside Syria to meet with Arafat. The radio station Voice of the PLO from Baghdad reported on November 15, one week before the PNC opened, that Syrian authorities had required all PNC members living in Damascus to report to an office of Syrian intelligence. Those who did so had their passports withdrawn to prevent them from attending the conference in Jordan.

The Zionist authorities in Israel played a parallel role in restricting travel to Amman. Israeli Defense Minister Yitzak Rabin announced he would not allow any PNC member from the West Bank or Gaza to participate in the PNC. He also stated that he would prevent anyone who did participate from returning to the occupied territories.

"The Israelis are working hand in hand with Syria to destroy the PLO structure," Hanna Siniara, editor of the East Jerusalem Palestinian daily *Al-Fajr*, told the *Washington Post*. "The Syrians want to make the PNC a rubber stamp," Siniara added. "By meeting, it shows that no Arab regime can dominate the decision-making of the Palestinians. ... To achieve our independence, we have to rely on ourselves."

The successful convening of the PNC has led to new divisions within the Democratic Alliance, as it did in the National Alliance. Four members of the DFLP reportedly attended the conference, though they avoided the roll call. Officials of both the DFLP and the PCP stated that they recognized the legitimacy of the Amman PNC. The PFLP refused to take the same stand. These differences led to the formal freezing of political cooperation and joint military command between the PFLP and DFLP. The joint command had been in effect since June 1983.

The PNC indicated that it would leave open

seats on leadership bodies for members of the Democratic Alliance but moved to expel leaders of the factions that had participated in the 1983 revolt in Lebanon.

#### PLO fight for independence

The Palestine Liberation Organization's conflicts with various Arab regimes highlight the difference between the PLO and any of these bourgeois governments, no matter how radical their anti-Zionist rhetoric may sometimes be.

The PLO is a revolutionary nationalist movement — a mass organization of the oppressed and dispossessed Palestinian people. Its legitimacy derives from its leadership of an anti-imperialist struggle against the Zionist occupation of Palestine. And it has done much to earn this leadership both militarily and politically. The present Arab governments, on the other hand, represent the minority of capitalists and big landlords (and even royal families) who benefit from the exploitation of the majority.

The popularity of the Palestinian cause throughout the Arab world forces all Arab governments to give at least verbal support to the anti-Zionist struggle. But support to the PLO brings these bourgeois governments into sharper conflict with imperialism than they would like. It has led to several devastating wars with Israel. The Arab rulers also fear the example the Palestinian struggle inspires among the masses in their own countries.

This has led Arab governments to stab the PLO in the back on several occasions. King Hussein's army crushed Palestinian guerrillas and civilian organizations in Jordan in 1970, forcing the PLO out of the country and cutting it off from the biggest group of Palestinian refugees. The guerrillas had to defend themselves from attacks by the Lebanese Army in the early 1970s to reestablish a base in Beirut and southern Lebanon. And in 1975-76 the Syrian Army, with the blessings of U.S. and Israeli imperialism, intervened in Lebanon's civil war to prevent a victory of an alliance of Palestinian and Muslim leftist forces. Finally, none of the Arab governments lifted a finger to defend the PLO and Lebanese masses during the brutal Israeli invasion in 1982.

The PLO has always had to defend its independence from all the Arab regimes. The PLO was originally set up and run by the Egyptian government of Gamal Abdul Nasser in 1964. Following Israel's defeat of Egypt, Jordan, and Syria in 1967, however, the Palestinian masses began looking more and more to their own guerrilla forces for political leadership. In 1969 the guerrillas, especially Fatah, took control of the PLO and elected Yassir Arafat to head the organization.

Nonetheless, the PLO has also needed to maintain relations with the existing governments to get as much economic, military, and diplomatic support as it can. It depends on maneuvering among all Arab governments in order to have bases of operations and contact with the Palestinian masses, who are scattered

throughout the region.

This necessary maneuvering and diplomacy has led to repeated predictions of the PLO's impending capitulation. Today's criticism (and praise) of Arafat's relations with Hussein are far from unprecedented. "If Mr. Arafat decides to cooperate with the King [Hussein], as he seems personally to desire, an alliance of the [Jordanian] Army and Fatah could suppress P.F.L.P. and guarantee the King's future, at least for a while. Lacking the P.F.L.P.'s ideological hangups, Mr. Arafat is understood to favor the monarchy as a compliant framework within which the commandos can carry out their campaign against Israel," wrote *New York Times* correspondent Dana Adams Schmidt in June 1970. This prediction, just three months before the "Black September" battle between the PLO and the Jordanian Army, proved to be wishful thinking.

The one-two punch of the U.S.-backed Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 and the Sy-

rian-backed PLO mutiny in 1983 deprived the entire PLO of its most important base outside Palestine itself. In Lebanon, the PLO not only had a military base, but had developed a substantial political organization among the Palestinians and an alliance with the exploited Lebanese Muslim masses.

Since then the PLO has been scattered among a half dozen Arab capitals from Algiers to Baghdad and Damascus to Aden, most of them far from Palestine or the majority of refugees. This has contributed to the present sharp confrontation of PLO factions.

Given the gigantic objective problems now facing the PLO leadership — the loss of its bases in Lebanon, the continuing Israeli occupation of that country, and the unprecedented factionalism inside the movement — the Amman PNC was a reaffirmation of the struggle and a step toward reestablishing the organization's vital contact with the Palestinian masses. □

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## Uruguay

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# Transition to civilian rule

## *Military received guarantees against punishment*

By Will Reissner

As the 11-year rule of one of Latin America's most repressive military regimes draws to a close, Uruguay's voters trooped to the polls November 25 in that country's first presidential election since 1971.

But the military's heavy hand made itself felt during the campaign, as the regime vetoed the presidential candidates of two of the three main parties. Neither Wilson Ferreira Aldunate of the National Party nor Gen. Liber Seregni of the Broad Front was allowed to run.

Wilson Ferreira Aldunate, who had been the National Party candidate in the 1971 presidential election, was thrown in jail on June 16 upon his return from 11 years in exile. He was not freed until December 1, one week after the voting.

Gen. Liber Seregni, 1971 nominee of the Broad Front — a coalition of the Socialist Party, Communist Party, Christian Democratic Party, and a number of smaller left-wing groups — was released from nine years imprisonment in March, but remains subject to limitations on his political activity. Seregni resigned from the armed forces in 1969 to protest their use against domestic oppositionists.

Other restrictions on political activity also remained in effect throughout the election period. The Communist Party and other left-wing organizations have been denied legal status, and more than 5,000 socialist activists are still banned from political activity.

The winner in the November 25 voting was the military's favorite, Julio Sanguinetti of the conservative Colorado Party. Sanguinetti took

38.8 percent of the vote, while the stand-in candidates of the National Party and Broad Front received 33 percent and 21 percent respectively.

Despite the military's interference, many Uruguayans rejoiced in the voting that marks the final chapter of this round of military rule. Tens of thousands of exiles flocked back to the country from neighboring Argentina and Brazil to cast their ballots.

Under the military regime, life has been grim for working people. Since the military took power in 1973, with the goal of crushing

the left-wing guerrillas of the National Liberation Movement (Tupamaros) and banning the trade unions, real wages have fallen by 50 percent. Factory workers now often make only \$50 per month.

In order to crush any resistance, the Uruguayan military jailed thousands of people. In 1975, when more than 6,000 political prisoners were in jail, Uruguay had the highest number of political prisoners per capita in the world.

"Uruguay did not have the most bloodthirsty regime, but it was the most totalitarian through its use of fear and terror to demobilize the population," noted Jesuit priest Luis Pérez Aguirre.

Until August, the country's entire population was divided into three categories of political trustworthiness. Those in the B and C categories were considered too politically dangerous for government jobs. Thousands of teachers and health-care workers were thrown out of work for being in the wrong category.

Despite driving down wages and crushing the trade-union movement, the military rulers were unable to extricate Uruguay from a deep economic crisis. Today unemployment and inflation are at historic highs of 16 percent and 70 percent. The country's foreign debt of \$5.3 billion is one of the highest in Latin America in per capita terms.

"The dictatorship is killing us with hunger. How can we live off what we earn?" asked one young woman waiting to vote.

The harsh political and economic conditions have driven more than 300,000 of Uruguay's 2.9 million people into exile.

In recent years a rising tide of mass protests has convinced the military its days in power are numbered. The high command decided to turn over power to civilians under conditions guaranteeing that the armed forces would not be punished for their crimes during military rule.

On August 3, the military, the Colorado Party, the Broad Front, and a smaller group

## Tens of thousands demand total amnesty

President-elect Julio Sanguinetti has promised amnesty to most of the nearly 500 political prisoners who remain in Uruguayan jails. But he has suggested that former guerrillas of the National Liberation Movement (Tupamaros) might not benefit from the measure.

Any exclusion of the Tupamaros from the amnesty is likely to spark large protests. On November 18, tens of thousands of people took part in the funeral of Adolfo Wassen Alaniz, a 38-year-old Tupamaro prisoner who died of cancer in his 12th year in jail.

Wassen was one of nine Tupamaro leaders held hostage since 1973 by the Uruguayan military, which threatened to

kill them if the Tupamaros resumed armed struggle.

Until recently, the Tupamaro leaders had been held without trial. But as the transition to civilian rule approached, the junta began trying the Tupamaros before secret military courts in order to block their future release. On September 17, 60-year-old Tupamaro leader Raúl Sendic was sentenced to 30 years' imprisonment and 15 years' house arrest.

In addition to Sendic, the other Tupamaro leaders in custody are Julio Marenales, Amilcar Manera Lluveras, Eleuterio Fernández Huidobro, José Mujica Cordano, Henry Engler, Jorge Zabalza, and Mauricio Rosencof.

called the Civic Union reached an agreement on holding the November 25 elections. The National Party refused to join the talks in protest of the imprisonment of Wilson Ferreira Aldunate.

Under the so-called Naval Club Accord, in return for agreeing to the elections, the military got a pledge that the unpopular military-backed constitution will not be changed before November 1985 and that the armed forces would retain a voice in any future civilian government.

When Julio Sanguinetti takes office as president on March 1, 1985, he will have to confront the country's sharp economic crisis as well as the population's expectation that the new government will improve living conditions.

Sanguinetti's task will be complicated by the fact that the Uruguayan working class has become increasingly combative and self-confident in recent years and was able to rebuild the trade union movement in the final years of the dictatorship.

In the course of organizing a demonstration for May Day 1983, the first time that event had been marked in a decade, the Inter-Union Workers Assembly (PIT) was established as a central trade-union body. Some 150,000 people took part in the May 1, 1983, demonstration.

Since then, there have been repeated mass demonstrations against military rule. A united meeting of all the opposition groups in the capital, Montevideo, brought out 400,000 people in November 1983.

In January 1984 the PIT called the first successful general strike since military rule began.

The military regime outlawed the PIT after the January 1984 general strike, but the ban had little practical effect. This year's PIT-organized May Day demonstration attracted 350,000 workers in Montevideo.

The Uruguayan capital and many cities in the interior were virtually paralyzed on June 27, when the PIT and opposition political groups called a general strike to mark the 11th anniversary of the 1973 coup. □

larly since early 1978 as an organ of resistance to the dictatorship.

That being the case, what prevents our being taken into the FA? We believe that it cannot be our total opposition to the Naval Club accords,\* because on this question our situation is the same as other organizations in the FA, such as the Independent and Democratic Left (IDI).

Eleven years of participation in the resistance have forged in our party an unshakable determination to see the restoration of unrestricted, unmutated democracy. But obviously this cannot be an obstacle to our membership in the FA.

We have learned of some comments claiming that it is a question of preventing organizations "that are for violence" from being part of the FA, a possible reference to methods that certain movements use or preach.

The PST is not for violence, nor is it in any way pacifist. First and foremost it respects whatever methods the workers and the people adopt at each point to defend their demands. We would have been "for violence" alongside the FSLN and the people of Nicaragua against Somoza in 1979, and we would be for it today with the FMLN in El Salvador, and we are not ashamed to say so.

And we have peacefully demonstrated alongside the people of Uruguay in all the anti-dictatorial demonstrations and meetings in recent years, because that is what the Uruguayan people wanted.

Therefore it cannot be our intransigent position in favor of democracy or our methods, which are only aligned with those adopted by the people to defend their rights, that is preventing our full membership in the Broad Front.

So then, what is preventing a positive decision on our membership in the Broad Front? This is the question we pose today to you, the rank-and-file comrades of the FA. And we hope to get a frank and open response from you, a response that does not cut across the FA's democratic tradition, and that also does not strike a blow against the unity that the FA militants have forged in the streets, shoulder to shoulder with the people as a whole.

We want to take part in all the bodies of the Broad Front, with our obligations and our rights.

We are appealing to the ranks of the FA, and we place our confidence in these militants to see that our entry into the FA is not blocked any further. □

\*In August, the Broad Front, the Colorado Party, and the government signed what was called the Naval Club agreement, fixing the date and the conditions under which the Nov. 25, 1984, election would take place.

The key points in the accord were that there would be no general amnesty prior to the election; that some political parties (including the Communist Party and other left-wing groups) would remain illegal, as would certain leaders of the National Party and the Broad Front; and that the newly elected Constituent Assembly would not challenge these accords for at least one year. — IP

## DOCUMENTS

# Appeal to Broad Front members

## *Uruguayan PST calls for admission to coalition*

[The following open letter was issued by the Socialist Workers Party (PST) of Uruguay in Montevideo on August 25. The text was translated by *Intercontinental Press* from a French version published in the November 19 issue of *Inprecor*, a fortnightly magazine published in Paris under the auspices of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.]

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For three months, from March to June of this year, the PST applied to and approached members of the executive bureau of the Broad Front (FA) to secure membership for our delegate in the FA's assembly, without ever receiving a reply on the subject.

This request was made prior to the first meeting of the FA assembly held inside the country, which took place in April 1984.

During that time, new organizations, which had not been among the founders of the FA, were brought into it, which is something quite positive. But the question of our membership was always avoided.

For three more months, from June to August, the PST applied to the FA assembly for a favorable decision regarding its membership in that body, without receiving a response.

That is why, after six months without any reply whatsoever from the FA's leadership bodies, we addressed ourselves to the grassroots committees, to which the majority of our comrades belong, to inform them of our present relations with the FA.

Under the name Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT), we participated in the creation of the FA [in 1971], and we were part of it right up to the time it stopped functioning inside the country following the 1973 coup.

Shoulder to shoulder with all the antidictatorial fighters, we took part in the resistance for 11 years, providing our share of those imprisoned, tortured, and disappeared. For most of the time during this period, we operated under the name PST, which we adopted in 1973.

And when the FA began to revive, we actively supported all its decisions. We campaigned for the "no" vote [in the military's constitutional referendum] in 1980 and we called for casting blank ballots in 1982 [in the elections to designate the leaders of recognized political parties], at a time when other organizations in the FA hesitated or adopted ambiguous positions regarding the traditional parties.

We have not established any alliance outside the FA, and we certainly have not prioritized or placed ahead of the FA any other convergences outside it.

That is why we are at a loss to explain the obstacles raised to our participation in the assembly and in other FA bodies.

In addition, it must be said that since the coalition was established, we have supported its fundamental programmatic documents. And this support has by no means been passive. We have expressed it in our press, even at the worst times of repression. *Unidad Socialista* ("Socialist Unity") has been published regu-

# Three years since crackdown on workers

## *Bureaucracy fails to stifle all protest*

By Ernest Harsch

Three years after the government of Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski declared martial law on Dec. 13, 1981, the political "normalization" that the authorities so frequently proclaim has still not been achieved.

On November 3, for example, more than a quarter of a million Poles turned out in Warsaw for the funeral of a priest murdered by police officers, turning it into a massive demonstration against government repression. Chanting "Solidarity! Solidarity!" the crowd expressed its continued support for the struggle for workers' rights that had been led by the now-banned Solidarity union movement.

While exceptional because of its size, this action was but a reflection of broader opposition to the anti-working-class policies of the

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This is the first of two articles on the political situation in Poland today. The next one will examine the programs and positions put forward by the various groups and currents that have emerged since Solidarity was outlawed.

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privileged bureaucracy that governs Poland. Strikes, protest meetings, occasional demonstrations, and the publication of antigovernment newspapers and bulletins are still a feature of Polish political life.

Nevertheless, the bureaucracy has had some success in putting down opposition over the past three years. The antigovernment protests are smaller, more disorganized, and less politically focused than before martial law, or even during the first year after it was declared. The repression has succeeded in breaking up Solidarity as a centrally organized force, in suppressing many of the democratic gains that had been won, and in intimidating and silencing a significant layer of former Solidarity members.

Moreover, the failure of the remnants of Solidarity's leadership to put forward a political perspective that can advance the working class's interests has deepened the workers' demoralization and disorientation.

### **Government of the bureaucracy**

For the bureaucracy, however, this is not enough. Its ultimate goal is to take Poland back to the period prior to Solidarity's emergence in August 1980. It wants a working class that is passive, politically disorganized, and willing to acquiesce to the bureaucracy's domination, which has been in effect ever since the workers state was first established in the late 1940s.

The overthrow of capitalism and land-

lordism in that period was an enormous gain for Polish working people. It made possible Poland's rapid reconstruction from the ravages of World War II. It brought economic planning. And it reduced the vast social disparities that had existed before the war.

But the leadership that came to power was not a revolutionary one, despite its use of Marxist terminology. It was a Stalinist leadership. Putting its own narrow interests above all else, it did not seek to use the conquest of the Polish workers state to advance the world socialist revolution. It did not educate the Polish working people to see that advancing toward socialism in Poland can only be accomplished as part of the international struggle of working people against imperialist oppression and capitalist exploitation. Rather, advancing the world socialist revolution was subordinated to promoting a "live and let live" relationship with capitalist governments.

Furthermore, inspiring and organizing the Polish workers and farmers to see themselves as part of an international struggle against imperialism would require encouraging them to take up the reins of government and economic management. The bureaucracy is not about to do this and has blocked it from happening. Its policies, in fact, have undermined the defense of the Polish workers state from imperialism.

The government and leadership of the dominant Polish United Workers Party (PUWP) rest on a petty-bourgeois caste of party officials, factory managers, administrators, army officers, and other bureaucrats whose interests are alien to those of the workers and farmers. They benefit from substantial material privileges far beyond what ordinary working people enjoy. This does not just involve the wage disparities and other inequalities that can be expected to persist in the workers states during the transition to socialism; it involves a policy of systematic privilege for the governing social layer.

To protect these privileges and to prevent working people from challenging the bureaucracy's monopoly of all leadership positions, a totalitarian police system was established.

While the Polish workers state has survived in face of this, and has even registered some important economic advances, the bureaucracy's arbitrary decisions, shortsightedness, and adamant refusal to bring the workers into the administration of the economy have led to widespread waste, inefficiency, and mismanagement. This has made it much more difficult for Poland to withstand the pressures of the world capitalist economic crisis. As a result, there has been a decline in industrial produc-

tion, a fall in exports, and a growth of indebtedness to imperialist banks and governments.

### **Solidarity's struggle**

It was this mismanagement and the blatant violations of workers' rights that Solidarity fought against.

Soon after it emerged out of the massive July-August 1980 strike wave, Solidarity won a mass base in Poland's powerful industrial working class. Its ranks swelled to nearly 10 million members, and its strongholds were in the largest factories, mines, and ports. Its struggle had repercussions throughout Polish society, spurring the emergence of a new farmers organization and student association and even winning the support of most of the working-class base of Jaruzelski's PUWP.

Among other things, Solidarity demanded the abolition of the bureaucracy's privileges. It called for policies aimed at achieving broader social equality among the various sectors of the population. It demanded an end to police repression and censorship. It pressed for the involvement of working people in the making of economic and political decisions and urged that the factories be run by democratically elected workers councils. It championed the rights of farmers and tried to strengthen the alliance between those two producing classes.

The thrust of the workers' struggle led by Solidarity was not antisocialist and pro-capitalist, as the top bureaucrats sought to portray it. The workers stood on the key conquests of the socialist revolution in Poland, including the nationalized property relations. The direction of their fight was to strengthen Poland's economic and social system and to break the bureaucratic fetters on the workers state.

At the same time, however, this objective course of the struggle was not clearly expressed in Solidarity's program, which suffered from some serious political limitations.

Above all, it lacked an internationalist perspective. The Solidarity leadership did not see the fight of the Polish workers as part of the broader worldwide struggle of the exploited and oppressed against capitalism and imperialist domination. It concentrated its fire exclusively against the bureaucracy in Poland (and the Soviet Union), without recognizing that the very existence of such bureaucracies is a reflection of the continued pressures on the workers states by world capitalism. It thus did not seek to consciously build solidarity with the struggles of working and oppressed peoples in other countries.

This narrow outlook was also demonstrated

in the numerous illusions that Solidarity leaders held in the imperialist governments in the "democratic West." Some even falsely view the Reagan administration in Washington, because of its hostility to Moscow and the Polish government, as an ally. There were also big illusions in the pro-imperialist and reactionary trade union bureaucracies in Western Europe and North America.

Closely intertwined with these misconceptions was the Solidarity leadership's failure to see the struggle of the Polish workers as a struggle to deepen and extend the *socialist* revolution, within Poland or internationally. There was no wing of the leadership that consciously identified with and put forward the traditions of Marxism, the traditions of the Bolsheviks and the communist movement they launched after the victory of the Russian revolution in 1917. There is still no such wing today.

These political shortcomings weakened the struggle that Solidarity was leading. They led to confusion about what its goals were. They undermined potential support from the most oppressed and exploited sectors of the working class internationally. They opened the door to the political influence of forces alien to the workers movement, such as the Catholic church hierarchy. And they made it easier for the bureaucracy to crack down.

#### Resistance to martial law

The proclamation of martial law on Dec. 13, 1981, took the Solidarity leadership as well as the union's ranks largely by surprise. Several thousand union leaders and activists were detained, and Solidarity was "suspended" (though not yet fully outlawed).

Despite the suddenness of this crackdown, workers in many large plants responded with occupation strikes. But the government sent out its special riot police, the ZOMO, and broke the strikes with armed force.

It took several months for workers to begin to recover from this shock. Solidarity leaders who had evaded arrest issued calls for resistance against the "state of war," as martial law was officially known. Activists in the plants and in workers' neighborhoods gradually reestablished contacts with each other and set up clandestine groups to aid the victims of repression, to demonstrate opposition to the crackdown, and to keep alive the ideas that Solidarity had put forward.

Numerous bulletins, newspapers, and pamphlets began to appear, clandestinely published by small groups of union supporters and democratic rights activists.

In April 1982, several top Solidarity leaders who had avoided arrest set up the Provisional Coordinating Committee (TKK) of Solidarity, with the aim of giving the scattered groups of union supporters some national direction.

The following month, on May Day and then again on May 3, tens of thousands of workers and others took to the streets of more than a dozen cities to demand an end to martial law and to express support for Solidarity. This

marked the opening of a period of mass resistance.

Most of these actions were spontaneous or were organized by local leaderships. On some occasions, the underground TKK called national protest actions.

The largest of these was on Aug. 31, 1982 — the second anniversary of the signing of the Gdansk accords that led to Solidarity's formation. Braving police attacks, several hundred thousand Poles poured into the streets in massive marches. The government itself admitted that protests took place in 66 cities and towns.

The willingness of such large numbers of people to risk police clubs and bullets reflected not only the extent of popular support for Solidarity, but also a widespread belief that public protests alone could force the bureaucracy to restore Solidarity's right to function legally. That demand was at the heart of the many declarations and proposals of the TKK and other Solidarity groups.

#### Demoralization and decline

But the bureaucracy did not give in. On Oct. 8, 1982, it officially outlawed Solidarity, along with the farmers organization, Rural Solidarity.

This made it clear to Solidarity's supporters that the authorities had no intention of allowing the union to resume legal functioning. As a result, greater demoralization set in. The ability of the remnants of Solidarity's leadership to call mass public demonstrations began to decline markedly.

A call by the TKK for a national general strike in November 1982 to protest Solidarity's banning met with very little response. During Pope John Paul II's tour of Poland in June 1983, hundreds of thousands of Poles chanted the union's name and hoisted union banners; yet those actions were organized by the church hierarchy and did little to revive Solidarity as such. On Aug. 31, 1983, tens of thousands did respond to a call for demonstrations to mark the anniversary of the Gdansk accords, but the actions were much smaller than the previous year. In January 1984, an appeal by the TKK for brief work stoppages to protest new price hikes brought only scattered actions. The TKK did not call any demonstrations to mark Aug. 31, 1984.

This overall decline in open opposition activity showed that the government's repressive policies were having a big impact. More and more workers concluded that the risk of being arrested or dismissed from work was too high. The Solidarity leadership's failure to offer any credible perspective for continued struggle also weighed heavily in their considerations.

As the bureaucracy reestablished greater control over the country, it felt confident enough to ease up on some of its repressive policies. In July 1983, martial law was formally lifted, though various restrictions remained in effect. Many Solidarity leaders were released. In July 1984, a broad amnesty was decreed, freeing almost all the remaining political prisoners. Two activists, Bogdan Lis and

Piotr Mierzewski, jailed in June, were released December 8.

There was another factor behind these moves as well. Jaruzelski and his colleagues had long been aware of the high political price they were paying within the country for the crackdown on Solidarity, which had served to further erode the government's already low level of support. By lifting martial law and declaring an amnesty, they hoped to at least halt that erosion.

Though Jaruzelski has succeeded in imposing a degree of "normalization," active political opposition to the bureaucracy remains quite significant. It is more massive than in any other bureaucratized workers state and still surpasses the level within Poland itself prior to Solidarity's rise.

In a report issued in June 1984, TKK member Bogdan Lis estimated that there were several tens of thousands of Solidarity activists. Those who read various union and opposition bulletins, continued to pay Solidarity dues, or provided other forms of assistance numbered about 1 million, according to Lis.

Such claims are impossible to confirm, given the clandestine nature of much of the opposition activity. But the extent of underground publishing also provides a gauge. There are several hundred bulletins, journals, and newspapers that are published on a *regular* basis, outside the control of the official censors. Some are small mimeographed bulletins. A few — like *Tygodnik Mazowsze*, *Z Dnia na Dzień*, and *Solidarnosc Walczaca* — are published in editions of 20,000 to 30,000.

In contrast to 1980–81, and even the first year of martial law, however, this opposition activity is diffuse and takes many varied forms. There is no central, authoritative leadership. Different groupings and currents have emerged out of the old Solidarity movement. Some still hold on to the Solidarity banner, and base themselves in the factories. Others have arisen outside the Solidarity framework or have left it and pursue goals different from those the union put forward.

The outlawing and breakup of Solidarity has enabled the church hierarchy to gain greater political influence among these activists. Although it claims to support the rights of the workers, it is intervening to advance its own reactionary, anticommunist interests, which are opposed to those of the workers state. Just one sign of its greater role was a student strike in Mietno in March and April 1984, which was encouraged by the church leadership, to demand that religious crucifixes be kept up in the classrooms.\*

#### Organizing on the shop floor

In a minority of the thousands of plants where Solidarity was organized before the imposition of martial law, Solidarity supporters have set up underground union bodies. These are headed by Secret Factory Committees

\* See "Behind the 'war of the crosses'" in the April 30, 1984, *Intercontinental Press*.

(TKZs), usually composed of from 5 to 10 people from different departments in the enterprise.

The TKZs carry out a variety of functions, including the collection of union dues, the payment of benefits to members, and the publication and distribution of factory bulletins. They also organize protests against dismissals or other victimizations and seek to oppose management violations of work rules and safety norms.

The TKZs' level of organization and ability to function varies greatly from plant to plant, depending on the extent of repression, the mood of the workers, and the caliber of the local Solidarity activists.

Wiktor Kulerski, a member of Solidarity's Warsaw Regional Coordinating Committee, stated in an interview in the Nov. 11, 1983, issue of the underground bulletin *Wola*. "The large enterprises are for the most part poorly organized. In others, there is a complete dichotomy: either the organization is very good, dues are collected, the press distributed, the self-help organizations and funds are well-established, or there is simply nothing."

In a letter to *Wola*, a Solidarity member in one Warsaw plant reported that many workers there "are interested only in their own affairs and problems. It is getting gloomier every day. They do not want to take risks, they are tired. For them, Solidarity is already a myth."

In other plants, Solidarity is something more concrete. At the FSO auto plant outside Warsaw, for instance, the union has paid childbirth benefits to nearly 100 members. As of 1983, about half the work force at the Huta Warszawa steelworks continued to pay union dues to the local Solidarity group, although that proportion has since fallen somewhat. At the Hydral communications equipment plant in Wroclaw, the management has not dared take down Solidarity signs from the walls.

In most regions, representatives from the various local union bodies have set up Regional Executive Committees. In addition to the TKK, which functions on the national level, efforts have been made to revive the Siec (Network), an informal grouping of Solidarity representatives from some of the largest enterprises in the country. Of the 17 workplaces that were included in the Siec before martial law, six (the Wujek coal mine in Katowice, the Katowice steelworks, the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk, the Swidnik helicopter factory near Lublin, the Fedroma plant in Wroclaw, and the Ursus tractor factory outside Warsaw) sent representatives to two Siec meetings, in December 1983 and March 1984.

These Solidarity bodies have continued to function not only in the face of direct repression, but in competition with the new, officially sponsored unions that began to be set up in October 1982, when Solidarity was formally banned. Because the government-backed unions are legal, they have many advantages over the Solidarity committees.

Nevertheless, many workers have refused to join them. More than two years after they were

first launched, the government-controlled unions claim 5 million members — compared with Solidarity's former membership of 10 million. But these figures exaggerate the new unions' strength. Nearly a third of the members are retired workers. Management personnel, foremen, clerical staff, and PUWP members comprise a large portion of the rest of their membership.

Another reflection of Solidarity's continued influence in the workplaces has been through local workers' "self-management" bodies. These are management councils elected by all the workers in a given plant, and were first granted official recognition in 1981 under pressure from Solidarity. They deal with certain production matters, work conditions, pay scales, housing allocations, and social benefits. Although the government and appointed management personnel sometimes tolerate the councils, in practice they seek to restrict their prerogatives to a minimum.

Elected Workers Councils exist in less than half the plants in the country. In some cases they have been boycotted by the workers. In others, Solidarity activists have sought to utilize this opening to try to advance the workers' interests, transforming the councils into arenas of struggle.

In Krakow, the management of the WSK radio equipment plant took the Workers Council to court in an effort to decertify it. In Bochnia, the chairperson of the self-management council was arrested. After former Solidarity leaders were elected to the council at the Transprojekt enterprise in Krakow, the elections were declared illegal and the council was dissolved.

Known Solidarity members ran for election to the Workers Council at the giant Huta Warszawa steelworks in 1983. The official army newspaper, *Zolnierz Wolnosci*, warned that "extremists" were attempting to take over the council, and urged workers to vote for candidates from the PUWP. Despite this intimidation, the Solidarity candidates won a sweeping victory, taking a majority of the seats, including the post of chairman.

Lech Walesa has repeatedly urged Solidarity supporters to utilize the Workers Councils wherever feasible. In a March 7, 1984, article published in the underground Warsaw weekly *Tygodnik Mazowsze*, Walesa noted that while some Workers Councils were a "fiction," others "wield authority among the workers and defend their independence. Such self-management bodies should be supported. How else will the workers learn economic management and how to take initiatives? . . ."

#### Frequent strikes

Reflecting the difficult economic conditions facing working people in Poland, strikes around largely economic demands have become quite frequent.

More than 100 strikes were reported in just a six-month period in late 1983 and early 1984. Most were brief, and many were successful. The demands generally involved wage in-

creases, working conditions, and forced overtime on Saturdays, as well as dismissals of factory activists. The strikes often took place in plants where Solidarity bodies existed, but also in ones where they did not.

Women textile workers in Belchatow briefly struck in January to demand an end to forced overtime; the management conceded. The following month, women workers at the Feniks textile plant in Lodz also walked off their jobs, demanding higher wages, which the management agreed to consider. The *Biuletyn Lodzki*, a local underground publication, commented, "It is important to stress that the workers at the factory conducted themselves with discipline and a determined spirit. They did not argue. They did not reveal the organizers of the strike, and none of them behaved in any way that would lead the management to suspect them of being the strike leaders."

A strike for higher wages at the Hutmen factory in Wroclaw was broken in February when the management threatened to fire the entire work force. At the nearby ZNTK railway repair enterprise, all the workers struck, including members of the PUWP and of the new unions. It too was broken by force.

Other strikes were more successful. Workers at the Polmo factory in Tczew won an end to double shifts on Saturdays. Transport workers at the Warsaw Polytechnic won wage increases. In June, workers at the aluminum mill in Konin won a wage increase after a two-month work slowdown.

However, on September 18, workers at the Pafawag plant in Wroclaw went on strike to protest the firing of 10 workers who had taken part in a brief ceremony on the factory premises to mark August 31, the anniversary of the Gdansk accords. The management did not give in; instead, it fired 30 more workers.

#### New openings for public protest

With the formal lifting of martial law and the amnesty, many former Solidarity leaders and opposition activists are now free. Although they must guard their words and face possible reimprisonment at any time, this has enabled them to speak out publicly to an extent and has facilitated the reemergence of some open opposition activity.

Noting the new possibilities for opponents of the bureaucracy's policies to function in a semilegal manner, Andrzej Gwiazda, a former member of Solidarity's National Committee, has stressed the need for a combination of open and underground activity. Speaking shortly after his release from detention, he stated in an interview in the Aug. 23, 1984, *Tygodnik Mazowsze*, "One has to print and distribute publications underground, clandestinely, but the whole society cannot live in hiding. . . . One cannot analyze changes in the wage system or call on workers to boycott the new unions in such a way that no one knows who is doing this. People expressing the views of factory workers on specific matters must do so openly."

Lech Walesa, Wladyslaw Frasyniuk, and

other Solidarity figures who have been released from detention occasionally meet with those in the underground TKK and issue joint declarations around various questions.

One of the main demands that Solidarity figures have frequently raised has been for trade union "pluralism," that is, the right of workers to set up their own, democratically run unions, independent of bureaucratic control.

In a Dec. 16, 1983, speech, Walesa placed great stress on this demand:

The point of departure for a rebirth of our country must be the social accords of August 1980, that great workers' constitution. . . .

The 1980 agreements were based on realistic principles, respecting the leading role of the party and state in connection with the broad international political system, which, from the perspective of state interests, cannot be changed. However, these agreements respected the principle of pluralism in the representation of the workers. This was an important defense for the workers, but the party apparatus did not want to accept it, and instead defended its own interests. It decided to return to a monopoly of leadership in the workers' movement. The results are clear to the naked eye, and everyone knows that the most important question for our sociopolitical system is a return to trade union pluralism.

Allowing workers to set up their own unions, Walesa has emphasized, will encourage them to increase productivity and give them a voice in economic decision-making, as a first step toward overcoming Poland's severe economic difficulties. Workers, Walesa said in March 1984, "want to know what they are working for."

This demand has won broader support than just among former Solidarity members. Twice, in December 1983 and April 1984, leaders of all the unions that existed in Poland prior to martial law signed joint declarations demanding trade union pluralism. These included not just Solidarity leaders, but also those of the so-called "autonomous" unions and of the old government-dominated unions.

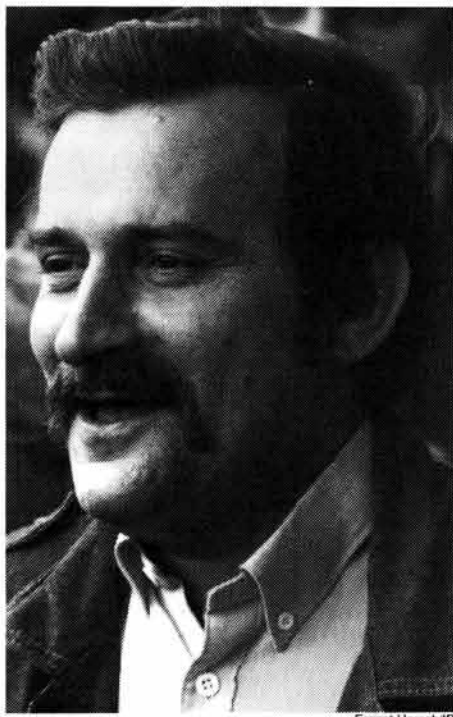
Many other issues and demands have been raised as well, by different sectors of the population.

Artists, journalists, and academics have often criticized the official censorship policies and the purges of those who do not agree with the authorities. Some have organized informal speaking tours on various topics banned from the schools and official media.

New youth and student groups have been formed, some of a clandestine nature, others more openly.

In a number of the universities, leaders of the now-banned Independent Students Association (NZS), which was allied with Solidarity, have remained on the student-faculty councils. Faculty members and students at several universities have elected rectors whom the government has opposed. At the University of Warsaw, they chose a Solidarity supporter in early 1984, only to have their choice overturned by the government. Then in December, they elected another Solidarity supporter.

Private farmers, who account for a majority of Poland's agricultural production, have also



LECH WALESA

Ernest Harsch/IP

been active to an extent. Some former Rural Solidarity members have set up an underground All-Poland Farmers' Resistance Committee (OKOR). Farmers have established contacts with Solidarity groups in some factories, providing workers with scarce foods, such as meat, in exchange for manufactured goods that are difficult to obtain in the countryside.

In July and August 1983, dairy farmers in the Podgorski region in eastern Poland organized a "milk strike." They halted milk deliveries to the official purchasing centers to protest a cut in the price the government paid for milk and an increase in the price of farm machinery. In January 1984, several hundred farmers signed a letter in solidarity with political prisoners.

Broad opposition to the bureaucracy was also expressed through a boycott of the June 17, 1984, elections to local government bodies.

Since all candidates had to be nominated by the PUWP or its front groups, the TKK charged that the elections were "designed to maintain the status quo, in which society is deprived of any influence over the way the state authorities are elected and exercise power." It called for a boycott. Walesa and 40 other former members of Solidarity's National Committee wrote an open letter to the Sejm (parliament) expressing support for the boycott.

In Poland, the names of those who do not vote are filed with the police and state administrative bodies. That can single them out for reprisals, such as dismissal from work, denial of promotion, difficulties in getting housing or admission to universities and technical schools, and direct police repression.

Nevertheless, millions of Poles did not go to the voting stations. According to Solidarity estimates, just 60 percent of all voters turned out; according to the government, 75 percent did. But even the government's figure would mark a success for the boycott effort — the lowest previous voter turnout was 95 percent in Krakow in the 1950s.

In recent weeks, the issue of police repression has stirred wide protests, as shown by the reaction to the police murder of Rev. Jerzy Popieluszko, an outspoken priest who had close contacts with the workers of the Huta Warszawa steelworks. In response to that killing — and those of some 50 other people over the past few years — Citizens Committees Against Violence were set up in Wroclaw, Warsaw, and Krakow in early November.

According to the declaration of the Warsaw committee, which was signed by a number of well-known dissident figures, "Society has a right to defend itself from terror, to organize itself against political gangsterism."

#### A contradictory situation

This continued opposition among broad sections of the population has made it extremely difficult for the bureaucracy to rebuild the various institutions through which it governs the country, many of which were badly shaken by the rise of Solidarity and the subsequent imposition of martial law.

The officially sponsored unions encompass only a minority of the working class and face widespread hostility and contempt in the factories.

The Polish United Workers Party has seen a drastic depletion of its working-class base. At a national conference in March 1984, party membership was down to 2,167,000, of whom only 39 percent were workers. This marked a loss of about a third of the members it had at the time of the last congress in July 1981. Of the 850,000 workers who left since then, some were expelled and others had resigned in protest of the crackdown on Solidarity. The party's various front groups, such as the Patriotic Movement of National Revival (PRON), also have very little following or authority.

These problems have exacerbated the factional divisions within the party leadership, which are based in part on differences over how to deal with the situation.

While there are tactical disagreements over how much police repression to employ, all factions agree that it must be used. This is reflected in the strict limits that have been set around "legal" dissent in Poland today.

According to the terms of the July amnesty, all political prisoners who were released were freed on the condition that they not engage in "the same or similar offenses" for which they were jailed. If they do, they can be rearrested, with their previous charges and sentences reimposed. Their sentences have thus simply been suspended, not nullified.

Several Solidarity leaders, such as Wladyslaw Frasnyniuk and Jozef Piniur, have already been rearrested for participating in protest ac-

tivities. A few others were never freed.

The government's immediate reaction to the formation of the Citizens Committees Against Violence was to declare their activities illegal. On December 8 the government launched an inquiry into the activities of Edmund Baluka and Jan Kostecki, who have defied this order. And some government officials have floated the idea of expelling prominent critics from the

country.

For those seeking to advance the struggle of the Polish workers, the situation today is thus a contradictory and difficult one. There are new opportunities to fight for workers' rights, but the existing leaderships lack a political perspective for effectively furthering that struggle — one consciously directed toward advancing the socialist revolution within Poland and in-

ternationally.

The bureaucracy, moreover, is as determined as ever to keep its grip on the government and economic administration, and will use whatever force it deems necessary to safeguard its power and privileges. That was what the imposition of martial law three years ago made clear to everyone, and the memory of that crackdown is still very fresh. □

## SELECTIONS FROM THE LEFT

[The following selections are devoted to assessments of the defeat of the Grenada revolution and of the trial of Bernard Coard and other defendants in Grenada.]

### GRENADA UPDATE

*Monthly newsletter of the Britain Grenada Friendship Society. Published in London.*

The September issue included a report on a June 1984 speaking tour in Britain by Richard Hart, a Jamaican who was the attorney general of Grenada at the time that the People's Revolutionary Government (PRG) headed by Maurice Bishop was overthrown in a coup engineered by Deputy Prime Minister Bernard Coard in October 1983. Bishop and other leaders of the Grenada revolution were murdered on Oct. 19, 1983, by supporters of the Coard faction.

Describing Hart as a "veteran of almost 50 years of Caribbean labour struggles," *Grenada Update* reported, "Brother Hart gave an account of the Grenada revolution and crisis based largely on his own experience and the evidence of the NJM [New Jewel Movement] Central Committee minutes over the period September 1982 to October 1983. He warned against some of the hasty conclusions which had been drawn about the causes of the crisis, particularly those conclusions fostered by the media which suggested long-term power struggles as the major problem.

"He outlined the enormous objective problems faced by the PRG, stemming from poverty and under-development. He described the PRG approach to these problems, involving the development of a mixed economy, with a role for private investment that was regulated by the state.

"In this sense, Grenada's economy was much like Jamaica's under Michael Manley, but Grenada dealt far more firmly with opposition to its chosen course of anti-imperialist development. Brother Hart saw no evidence for an 'ultra-left' clique wishing to accelerate the transition to socialism, and he pointed out that it was Bernard Coard who was primarily responsible for the mixed economy strategy."

According to the newsletter, Hart noted the U.S. threats against Grenada and maintained that it "was simply a question of when the in-

vasion would take place, and horribly ironic that the Grenadian revolutionaries themselves provided the occasion, saving the US the need to fabricate an incident like the Gulf of Tonkin bombings in Vietnam."

*Grenada Update* continued, "Brother Hart's view was that the NJM, from Maurice Bishop downwards, had shown immaturity in dealing with the crisis in the party, caused in major part, he felt, by too high expectations of rapid prosperity. During 1983 mass participation in active support of the revo had fallen off, and the NJM's small organisation was becoming less effective.

"Brother Hart recalled that on 25 September 1983 a meeting of all full party members, including Bishop, had agreed to adopt the joint leadership proposal. Subsequently Bishop appeared to have second thoughts. Brother Hart's impression was that Bishop decided to take the issue over the heads of the party when the Central Committee would not re-open the issue. Party members, said Brother Hart, were angered by the way that Bishop attempted to rouse the masses 'against Bernard Coard so as to defeat the joint leadership proposal.' This had been effected, claimed Brother Hart, by 'the circulation of a rumour that Coard was conspiring to kill him.'

"It was Brother Hart's view that the Central Committee majority had acted 'without wisdom and due regard for the consequences' in not seeking some workable alternative once it became clear that Bishop would not accept the joint leadership proposal. Instead, a scenario of paranoia, accusation and counter-accusation developed, resulting in tragedy for the entire Grenadian people.

"Brother Hart's analysis ended on a note of optimism, pointing out that even defeats have some positive consequences, as there is much to be learned so that such mistakes need not be repeated."

### Morning Star

*Daily newspaper of the Communist Party of Great Britain. Published in London.*

The *Morning Star* has published several articles on Grenada in recent months, focusing in particular on the trial Bernard Coard and other

members of his faction are now facing before the U.S.-backed regime in Grenada. They are charged with murdering Bishop and his comrades.

The September 1 issue featured an article entitled, "We must defend those on trial in Grenada," written by Chris Searle, a British national who worked for a while in Grenada under the People's Revolutionary Government.

After describing briefly the impact of the U.S. occupation on Grenada, Searle stated, "The trial is but a further attempt to legitimise that resurged colonial presence, and that is why the anti-imperialist movement internationally must firmly defend those in the dock in St. George's. They are faced with the full fury of imperialist determination to see them and the Caribbean Revolution dead.

"Nothing must cause us to forget the suicidal errors that were made by all sections of the leadership of the revolution prior to the invasion: Coard's withdrawal from the central committee that was kept secret from party members, the neglect of the mass organisations and the withering away of the party's close links with the people, the unwillingness of Bishop to faithfully accept a crucial decision made through the party structures and general membership, the lack of institutionalised reconciliation procedures within the party to be able to resolve a conflict situation and the consequent development of general paranoia and mistrust, and finally the self-destructive militarism in resorting directly to the gun in a revolutionary process that gave pride of place to democratic solutions and mass participation. . . .

"With Bishop dead, the easiest thing in the world is to make Coard and those gaoled with him the scapegoats for everything that went wrong in Grenada's fallen revolution. But that is neither an objective or educated approach, for it fails to establish self-criticism by all concerned who survived the events and an honest admission of errors as the way that the Grenadian people and the progressive movement internationally can learn most from what happened in Grenada last October. . . .

"Imprisoned with Coard are some of the makers of the Grenada Revolution, including those who led the attack on [former dictator Eric] Gairy's barracks on the revolutionary dawn of March 13, 1979, and other cadres who worked relentlessly to build a movement the



like of which had never existed within the small nations of the Caribbean.

"Despite the appalling errors that were made, they are the prime targets of imperialism, and thus we must defend them."

Two weeks later, on September 14, the *Morning Star* published excerpts from a letter written by Bernard Coard from prison, describing the conditions he and the other defendants face. He referred to himself and the other defendants as "the entire leadership of the party and army that made the Grenada revolution, that overthrew Eric Matthew Gairy, that built a revolutionary process for four and a half years," and that fought against the U.S. invasion force.

"That we were defeated," Coard continued, "is because of the deep, traumatic and utterly tragic internal political crisis through which we were passing at the time, as a party and country."

The October 25 *Morning Star* again returned to the question of the Coard trial, in an article based on an interview with Carol Davis and Buzz Johnson of the Committee for Human Rights in Grenada (CHRG), based in London.

After describing the conditions in Grenada a year after the U.S. invasion, the article went on, "The CHRG is convinced that a free and fair trial is impossible in these circumstances. Thus, they cannot agree with those former Provisional Revolutionary Government members who have said they will give evidence at the trial.

"Former agricultural minister in the PRG

and present leader of the Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement [MBPM] George Louison has already pronounced the defendants guilty and has agreed to give evidence. He has denounced calls for a free and fair trial as 'an attempt to rehabilitate the Coard clique.'

"In Buzz Johnson's view, this is not a very objective position, since it does not take into consideration the US occupation. 'By giving evidence in this trial, they are not being patriotic. They are not being anti-imperialist. Objectively, they are siding with the US.'

"It is in the light of this stand that the respected former Grenada High Commissioner in London Fennis Augustine has, despite his close friendship and long-standing political cooperation with Maurice Bishop, refused to join the MBPM.

"He also does not believe that Maurice Bishop's name should have been incorporated in the party's name, believing it to be an unusual practice in the Caribbean and also to be divisive in view of the disagreements within the NJM before last October's events. . . .

"Mr. Louison's MBPM is to contest the forthcoming elections, whereas the New Jewel Movement refuses to on the grounds that, although not banned, it is effectively barred from normal political activity." The article here referred to a group of Coard supporters who still use the NJM's name.

"With such divisions in Grenada's progressive movement," the article added, "it is obvious that any return to the revolutionary process in Grenada is some way off."

Daily newspaper of the Communist Party U.S.A. Published in New York City.

The November 19 issue included an article on Grenada written from London by William Pomeroy.

While focusing on the U.S.-sponsored elections in Grenada and other efforts by the occupation forces to roll back the many social programs introduced under the PRG, Pomeroy also touched on the Coard trial.

"As these steps were taken to destroy the Grenadian revolution," Pomeroy wrote, "the 19 revolutionary figures (10 members of the New Jewel Movement's central committee and nine members of the People's Revolutionary Army) held on charges of assassinating Maurice Bishop and other New Jewel members, were denied access to legal representation of their choice and suffered torture and deprivation of privileges (including banning relatives' visits) at the hands of non-Grenadian guards. Their 'trial' began October 16, forming a background for the election campaign."

After noting U.S. efforts to engineer an electoral victory by the New National Party, Pomeroy concluded the article, "It is unfortunate that the people's forces, divided at the critical time of the death of Maurice Bishop, have not yet rebuilt unity. A re-organized New Jewel Movement announced its existence September 15."

## DOCUMENTS

# Assessing the Nicaraguan elections

## Relationship between 'political pluralism' and 'socialist democracy'

By Carlos Rossi

[The following article appeared in the November 1984 issue of *Critique Communiste*, a monthly review published in Paris by the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), French section of the Fourth International. The translation and footnote are by *Intercontinental Press*.]

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The Sandinista triumph on July 19, 1979, opened a process of *permanent revolution* in Nicaragua, which thoroughly overturned the country's political and economic structures: destruction of the bourgeois state's repressive apparatus (Somoza's National Guard), arming the workers (the people's militia), expropriation of the Somozaist and *vendepatria* [sell their country] big bourgeoisie; agrarian reform and literacy; the revolutionary state's growing control over production and distribution.

The bourgeoisie was expropriated from political power, and its economic power has been increasingly limited. Without question, a proc-

ess of *transition to socialism* has been undertaken, even if it takes very specific and unexpected forms (maintenance of a large private economic sector, etc.).

One of the basic aspects of this revolutionary transformation, which combines democratic, agrarian, anti-imperialist, and *anticapitalist* tasks, was the establishment of *people's power* by the FSLN and by the masses of the people themselves. This has meant new forms of revolutionary democracy ensuring *active and direct participation* by the workers, young people, and women in the country's economic and political life: the Sandinista Defense Committees (CDS), the people's militia, the trade unions of workers in the cities (CST) and countryside (ATC), the peasant associations (UNAG), women's associations (AMNLAE), youth organizations (JS-19), the self-managed cooperatives (CAS), etc.

Thus far, through the Council of State, these mass organizations have been assured national representation, together with the political par-

ties and the employers' organizations (which eventually withdrew from the Council).

Why then were elections organized in November 1984? Was this a concession to the bourgeoisie? A compromise with imperialism? A return to bourgeois forms of parliamentary democracy? And why now, when Nicaragua is subjected to the intensified aggression of the mercenary *contras* organized and supported by the USA?

First of all we should note that the FSLN's call for elections (and the free and pluralist election campaign) has already had the result of throwing the "Democratic Coordinating Committee" (a bloc between the employers and the right-wing parties, supported by the Church hierarchy), the *contras*, and imperialism onto the defensive politically.

The Front's initiative has sowed confusion, disarray, and hesitation in the camp of the reactionaries, who no longer know what foot to dance on.

Beyond that immediate tactical signifi-

cance, what is the deeper meaning of these Nicaraguan elections, from the revolutionary Marxist vantage point?

It is important to underscore the fact that in a society in transition to socialism like Nicaragua, truly democratic elections have nothing in common with those in a bourgeois democracy (and still less with the pseudo-elections held in most countries of Latin America). Because:

a. The bourgeois state apparatus having been broken, there is no longer a reactionary army waiting in the wings to exercise its veto power or take center stage through a coup if the election results are unfavorable to the bourgeoisie. In short: there is no danger of the scenario of Chile in 1973 (or Guatemala in 1954).

b. The bourgeois monopoly over the means of communication no longer exists and revolutionary ideas have a mass base among the workers.

c. The masses of the people are actively involved in the revolutionary process and participate in structures of direct democracy at the grassroots level.

To summarize: the social and political function of elections is radically different depending on the character of the government, on whether there is a bourgeois state or a revolutionary state in transition to socialism. The political expropriation of the bourgeoisie in Nicaragua gives an entirely new significance to the November 4, 1984, elections.

Furthermore, these elections have nothing in common with the empty bureaucratic ritual practiced every four years in Poland or in Czechoslovakia, where you can always predict in advance that the result will be the "triumph" (with 98 percent of the vote on the average) of the single party or the "national front" serving as its facade.

In Nicaragua, an *authentic political pluralism* exists. Despite the situation of war and imperialist intervention, the FSLN did not exclude anyone from the elections except the counterrevolutionary army. The most reactionary sector of the bourgeoisie (directly linked to imperialism) — the "Coordinating Committee" and its candidate, Arturo Cruz — eventually opted for a boycott in a vain attempt to destroy the legitimacy of the electoral process. It *excluded itself* from the political legality instituted by the revolution.

In addition to the FSLN, three parties on the left participated — the Nicaraguan Socialist Party and the Communist Party of Nicaragua (both pro-Soviet Stalinists), and the People's Action Movement—Marxist-Leninist (pro-Albanian) — and three bourgeois parties — the Democratic Conservative Party, the Independent Liberal Party, and the People's Social-Christian Party.

The Stalinist parties accuse the FSLN of having capitulated to Social Democracy (by organizing the elections). The bourgeois parties accuse it of collusion with International Communism.

Parties have total freedom of expression and

of criticism. The election law guarantees them equal access to radio and television and a grant of 9 million córdobas each (indispensable for the small parties to be able to run their campaigns).

The press is free (except for reports that present a military or economic danger) and *La Prensa* does not hold back from spewing out its daily carload of lies and insults against the Sandinistas.

In no way does this stop the great majority of the population — meaning the workers and poor people of the cities and countryside, the young people (the right to vote was given to all from the age of 16), and the progressive Christians — from supporting the FSLN. The gains of the revolution in terms of health, education, living standards, and *regained dignity* speak more strongly than all the reactionary arguments!

For a long time the Fourth International was alone in asserting that the socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat in no way imply the suppression of civil liberties and political pluralism. (See the United Secretariat document "Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.") *The example of Nicaragua is the living and concrete demonstration of this possibility.*

As our comrade Ernest Mandel stressed this summer in a speech in Brazil: "Under conditions of extreme adversity, the Sandinista comrades are the first ones since the Russian Revolution of 1917 to try to combine the social and economic advances of the revolution with an enlargement of political freedoms in the revolutionary process for the masses of the people. One could discuss certain specific features of the political process in Nicaragua, but what must be clear is that the principles of political pluralism that our current of the international left has preached for decades are being applied for the first time, and under very difficult conditions.

"The fundamental political conclusion that we must draw from this experience is that political pluralism, political freedoms, proletarian and socialist democracy are not a luxury, are not a concession to the bourgeoisie, are not a compromise with petty-bourgeois ideology.

"No. They are a source of political strength. ... The revolution, rather than becoming weaker, emerges from the elections strengthened" (*Em Tempo*, São Paulo, Sept. 13, 1984, p. 8).

In fact, the pluralist and democratic elections in Nicaragua, far from cutting across the FSLN's vanguard revolutionary role, effectively help to consolidate it.

First, because the national and international legitimization of Sandinista power through universal suffrage makes imperialist aggression more difficult.

Second, because the FSLN's election campaign — carried out primarily through "door-to-door" visits by militants to the homes in their neighborhoods — *will raise the political level* of the rank-and-file members of the Front since all members of the Front have to *arm*

*themselves ideologically* to take on the reactionary arguments and the propaganda of the right wing. (In conversations with FSLN leaders in Managua, we were able to learn that they saw this aspect as one of the principal gains of the electoral process.)

Third, because through this *direct dialogue* with the broadest layers of the masses, the Front will be able to both enlarge and strengthen its hegemonic political influence and concretely familiarize itself with the works and demands of the working people.

The documents we are publishing in this issue of *Critique Communiste*\* show the open, democratic, critical, and self-critical manner in which the Sandinista militants conducted the campaign. The goal was not simply to win votes for the Front, but to *convince the workers and the people themselves to organize and act* (through the CDSs, the unions, etc.).

That leaves the more complex question, the question of the form of representation ("parliamentary") of the November 4, 1984, elections. Doesn't that form contradict direct democracy (represented in the revolutionary proletarian tradition by the soviets and councils)?

In the bourgeois state, representative democracy (the parliament) and direct democracy (the councils) are mutually exclusive and cannot coexist except in the transitory form of dual power. It is different in a society in transition to socialism, like Nicaragua. There is no reason why the revolutionary government of the workers should not combine both representative and direct forms of democracy. We should recall that the Paris Commune (the first experience with the dictatorship of the proletariat) elected an assembly by universal suffrage on March 26, 1871. (At the same time it made sure that those elected were subject to recall.)

Representative democracy is always *insufficient* to insure real power to the workers: that is why it must be *integrated* into a much deeper and vaster democratic system that insures the active, *on-going, daily, direct* participation of the workers in the economic and political administration of the country — and not simply through a vote every five years!

In Nicaragua this participation is concretely expressed through the mass organizations like the CDSs, the unions, the AMNLAE, the JS-19, etc. Shouldn't there be some thought given to direct representation of these mass movements through a second chamber, a "Workers Assembly"? It is true, as the Sandinista comrades point out, that many of the leaders of the mass organizations will be in the legislative assembly, elected as FSLN representatives.

But in our opinion that does not take the place of a structure in which the independent social movements would be directly represented as such, independent of their ties with the

\* "Guide for the Front Propagandist," "Women Support the FSLN," and brief excerpts from the FSLN's "Plan of Struggle." For the full text of the "Plan of Struggle," see *Intercontinental Press*, October 1, 1984, p. 569.

Front, through delegates subject at any time to recall by their organization.

These questions and others relating to revolutionary democracy are discussed with passionate interest in Nicaragua. The FSLN has succeeded in overcoming certain authoritarian errors of the first years: arresting members of and trade-unionists linked to the small left groups (especially the MAP) and prohibiting their press, ignoring the national demands of the Miskitos, prohibiting strikes, etc.

It cannot be excluded that in the future, if the war situation worsens, certain restrictions on freedom of expression or trade union freedom may again be introduced. But the basic thing is that despite the terrible economic difficulties, despite the imperialist blockade, and despite the counterrevolutionary aggression di-

rected by remote control from Washington, the Sandinista revolution is continuing its march toward socialism while insuring the broadest civil liberties. From this vantage point, this is an experience of *world historic importance*. For the first time since the bureaucratic degeneration of the USSR, a revolution in power provides the example of an authentic and pluralistic democracy.

The Sandinista people's government applies the golden rule of revolutionary democracy in real life: you must respond to reactionary arguments with revolutionary arguments; you must respond to counterrevolutionary aggression and sabotage with the iron fist of the people's army and militias.

We need one, two, three, many Nicaraguas! □

## Road to 'socialist democracy'

### *Combining workers power and national assembly*

By Ernest Mandel

[The following article was published in the November 16 issue of *La Gauche*, French-language fortnightly newspaper of the Socialist Workers Party (POS), Belgian section of the Fourth International. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

\* \* \*

The manner in which the election campaign was organized in Nicaragua, the way it unfolded, and the results that flowed from it contain important general theoretical lessons. These lessons are of such scope that they deserve to be highlighted.

For the first time since 1917-21 in Russia, a victorious and living socialist revolution organized free elections, that is, elections allowing the workers and peasants to choose between different political parties, different political platforms ranging from the bourgeois right to ultraleft grouplets.

This advance toward political pluralism — which is an indispensable prerequisite for any real socialist democracy worthy of that name to be able to function in real life — is all the more remarkable in that it took place in the midst of full-scale civil war, when the acts of imperialist aggression and the attacks and crimes of the Nicaraguan *contras* are escalating daily.

The Sandinista comrades were completely correct to reject any political rights for the murderers and organizers of armed aggression. They were completely right to grant the right to participate in the legal political life and freely express ideas to any organization that in real life respects revolutionary legality, whatever its ideology and goals might be.

Far from constituting some kind of concession to the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie or to bourgeois and petty-bourgeois international public opinion, this concept of political life

and of the role of elections under the workers and peasants power completely conforms to the interests of the revolution. It constitutes the best means of consolidating this power, enlarging its popular base, and ensuring an increase in the level of activity and class consciousness of the workers.

The Sandinista comrades are in the process of showing in practice that the conquest of political power by the workers, the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the construction of socialism in no way mean a restriction of democratic freedoms for the masses. On the contrary, they permit a considerable enlargement of the right to assembly, association, free expression of ideas, freedom of the press, etc., for the greatest number.

It is not socialism that is responsible for the dictatorship in power in the workers states such as the USSR or China, but rather the counterrevolutionary bureaucracy that usurped the power of the workers and peasants, thereby allowing the international bourgeoisie to drape itself in the mantle of "democracy."

By acting in this way, the Sandinistas are coming back to the Marxist tradition on this subject. Need we recall that Marx and Engels considered the Paris Commune a model of the dictatorship of the proletariat? That Commune was elected by universal suffrage, with a plurality of parties and political currents, with public, free, and impassioned political debates.

To assert that the elections in Nicaragua were elections for a bourgeois parliament confuses the form of institutions with their content. A parliament is not bourgeois because of its form. It is bourgeois if it is elected in the context of the political power of the bourgeoisie.

It would obviously be absurd to assert that after the disarming of the bourgeoisie, after the elimination of the bourgeois state apparatus,

after the conquest of political power by the workers allied with the working peasants, the parliament elected under these specific conditions remains by definition bourgeois.

The Nicaraguan bourgeoisie had no illusions in this regard. In its great majority, the bourgeoisie boycotted the parliamentary elections because it knew through its own experience that the result of these free elections would even more deeply legitimize the revolutionary power in Nicaragua. This expectation proved to be completely correct. Would one imagine that the bourgeoisie boycotted the elections for "their own" parliament?

The essence of the problem is simple. The political struggle, the ideological struggle, the conflict between different conceptions cannot be resolved through administrative measures. The conservative ideas that are deeply rooted in important layers of the population cannot be eradicated through repression, censorship, imprisonment.

Such measures generally have the opposite effect on the level of ideas. The struggle against these ideas cannot be carried out properly except on the level of ideas, obviously with practical experience aiding ideological clarification. Far from fearing the influence of bourgeois ideas, a true people's revolution should encourage debate over these ideas before the broad masses, and with the participation of these masses. That is the best way to raise the political consciousness of the workers and the toiling population in general.

Obviously, to consolidate workers power, organs of power of the *workers and people's council type* are more effective than a parliament. But by itself this does not answer the question of whether, alongside such councils, a body of the national-assembly type remains useful or necessary. Nor, in particular, does it answer the question of how these councils and the assembly should be elected.

Comrade Tomás Borge, one of the main Sandinista leaders, gave a perfect explanation of the correct way to look at the question:

"We don't censor them, we debate and refute them. . . . [W]hen only the voice of one political force is heard it tends to fall prey to arrogance. The existence of these remnants of the past are [sic] explained by the very strength of the Sandinista People's Revolution. Our Revolution developed a style of ideological confrontation and political debate that prevents everyday life from becoming boring.

"The existence of critics, opponents, dissidents, nonconformists and reactionaries gives life and vigor to the revolution. Confrontation and debate are going to keep the people's political-ideological muscles in shape. It's a permanent gymnasium that doesn't allow for any atrophy and passivity" (interview published in *Granma Weekly Review*, October 7, 1984, p. 10).

Whatever the future vicissitudes of the Nicaraguan revolution might be, this political position and the practice that concretizes it will remain a lasting contribution to the world cause of socialism. □

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