

INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS

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with **inprecor**

Vol. 23, No. 11

June 10, 1985

USA \$1.25 UK £0.65



U.S. Marines in Honduras.

NICARAGUA

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- Managua Gets Pledge of Soviet Oil

Special Feature

World War II: Not a War for Democracy



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Student Leader**

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in Burkina
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Reagan official raises sending GIs to Nicaragua

By Doug Jenness

President Ronald Reagan's administration has explicitly raised, for the first time, the prospect of sending U.S. combat troops into Nicaragua. In a May 23 speech, Secretary of State George Shultz warned that if Congress fails to beef up aid to the mercenary army known as the *contras*, "we will be faced with an agonizing choice about the use of American combat troops." This threat comes three weeks after Washington announced an economic embargo against Nicaragua.

Although Shultz's speech is the first open acknowledgement by a top spokesperson for the Reagan administration that the use of U.S. troops against Nicaragua is being considered, this is clearly what Washington has been preparing for some time.

The CIA first set up the contra bands in Honduras and Costa Rica in late 1981 and early 1982 in order to conduct raids into Nicaragua. At that time, Washington denied that it was footing the bill for the operation or that any U.S. military personnel were involved.

As more facts were brought to light exposing U.S. government involvement, the White House admitted it was aiding the *contras*. The purpose, it claimed, was to pressure the Nicaraguan government to halt alleged arms shipments to the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front in El Salvador. The Reagan administration urged Congress to increase this assistance.

In February of this year, Reagan acknowledged for the first time that the aim of his administration is to overturn the Sandinista government unless it says "uncle" to Washington's demands. He launched a drive to win majority support in Congress from both Democrats and Republicans for this perspective. This effort was focused around the proposal to appropriate \$14 million in aid for the *contras*.

This bill was voted down. But the Reagan administration made big headway in the course of the congressional debate in winning bipartisan support for the goal of overthrowing the Nicaraguan government. The day after the vote in the House of Representatives, the *Washington Post* wrote, "it is significant for the future that most Democrats probably would agree with Shultz's goals for Central America."

The framework of the debate in Congress was not *whether* the Sandinista government should be overturned. The differences were over what tactics and timing are necessary to limit the political price the U.S. government will pay internationally and at home in attempting to achieve this goal. Some legislators, including liberal Democrats, called for applying more firm economic measures and other forms of pressure. Others supported aid

for the *contras* but disagreed with the White House on how to disburse it.

The broad bipartisan agreement on the main objectives of U.S. government policy was shown clearly on May 1 when Washington escalated its war against Nicaragua by declaring a "national emergency" and imposing an economic embargo against Nicaragua. No substantial section of Congress — either Democratic or Republican — challenged Reagan's menacing declaration that "the policies and actions of the government of Nicaragua constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States." In fact many legislators who had voted against the \$14-million aid package hailed the trade sanctions.

Congress is rediscussing financial aid for the *contras*, and many senators and congressmen who voted against the previous bill have announced they will now support an aid bill. The main proposal under consideration is to appropriate \$42 million for 1985 and 1986. Details are still being worked out over whether to dress up its image by labeling it "humanitarian" aid and whether to channel it through the State Department or the CIA.

The significance of approving the \$42-million aid proposal is that it would register the commitment of both the White House and Congress, the majority of both the Republicans and Democrats, to politically reinforce the *contras* at a time when their prospects are sagging.

The *contras* have suffered numerous blows to their attempts to establish a foothold inside Nicaragua. One of the most recent was the stinging defeat they were dealt May 16 by the Nicaraguan army when they attempted to take Bluefields, capital of the southern region of the Atlantic Coast.

Shultz's warning to Congress implies that if it gives more aid to the *contras* this will decrease the likelihood that U.S. GIs will be sent to Nicaragua. But this is false.

Nicaragua gets Soviet oil pledge

By José G. Pérez

MANAGUA — President Daniel Ortega returned here May 20 after a trip to the Soviet Union and other countries, announcing that Nicaragua had succeeded in obtaining additional foreign aid that will help it resist U.S. aggression.

Speaking at an airport news conference, Ortega said, "These resources will make it possible for our economy to survive" despite

The White House has no illusion that the *contras* can overthrow the workers and farmers government in Nicaragua. It hopes to use them as an advance guard to create a more favorable situation for using U.S. troops. If the mercenaries can take and hold a town or piece of territory in Nicaragua, then Washington could send in troops to support a counterrevolutionary "provisional government." It would attempt to rally support at home and internationally for the "legitimate" government set up on Nicaraguan soil by the "freedom fighters," as Reagan calls them.

But if the *contras* cannot establish a foothold in Nicaragua — and they have so far been unable to — Washington is not going to give up on overturning the Nicaraguan revolution. It will still have to send in massive numbers of U.S. troops. The timing and nature of such an invasion will depend on many political considerations both inside the United States and internationally. But whether or not the *contras* are successful, Washington is preparing a military invasion.

Honduras has a key role to play in Washington's plans. A provocative situation is being set up on the Honduras-Nicaragua border, whereby a frame-up case can be fabricated that "communist" Nicaragua is attacking poor little Honduras and U.S. troops are needed to save it. This is the meaning of a joint communiqué issued May 21 by Reagan and Honduran President Robert Suazo Córdova affirming that Washington will "take appropriate measures" to defend Honduras "in case of an armed attack."

Reagan stated that the two countries share "serious concern over the threat to the entire region posed by the Communist, Sandinista regime in Nicaragua and its Cuban and Soviet supporters."

The Nicaraguan government has repeatedly explained that its operations on the border are solely intended to repel the U.S.-backed contra forces who invade from Honduras. It has reiterated many times its willingness to discuss the border situation. But the Honduran government has rebuffed these offers.

Altogether, the economic embargo, Shultz's explicit warning about U.S. troops, and the Reagan-Suazo communiqué are part of the escalating threat of direct U.S. military intervention in Nicaragua. □

the CIA-sponsored mercenary war and the economic blockade.

"We cannot create expectations of bonanza or abundance," Ortega added, saying the Nicaraguan economy will have to be "a survival economy, a very rigorous economy."

"The blockade has its effects, but international cooperation is greater than the policy of economic strangulation sponsored by the U.S. government," he said.

The Nicaraguan leader visited the Soviet Union, other workers states of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA), the Yugoslav workers state, and several imperialist European countries governed by Social Democratic parties. He said the trip was made necessary because Nicaragua had to get oil.

Seeking oil

Until 1984, Ortega explained, Nicaragua had been importing its petroleum from Venezuela and Mexico under terms of a special offer to Central American nations known as the San José Agreement.

By 1984, Nicaragua could no longer afford even the relatively favorable terms of the San José Agreement for purchasing oil, "given the deterioration of the Nicaraguan economy due to U.S. aggression." At that point, Venezuela stopped sending oil to Nicaragua.

"The Mexican government, in a very generous way, and making an extraordinary effort, maintained its supply of oil to Nicaragua," Ortega explained. But in 1985, the Nicaraguan government could no longer "carry out its commitments as to the forms of payment" for Mexican oil, even though he called the terms offered by that country "generous and good."

Commander of the Revolution Henry Ruíz, who together with Ortega is a member of the National Directorate of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), then made a trip to Mexico to ask that Mexico sell the oil to Nicaragua on credit, through medium- and long-term loans.

The Mexican authorities responded that given their own country's mounting economic crisis, they could not afford to do this.

Ortega reported that during his visits to Montevideo and Brasília, for the Uruguayan and Brazilian presidential inaugurations, he raised this problem with various Latin American leaders. Given the severe economic crisis afflicting the entire region, they did not think they could offer assistance to Nicaragua.

It was at that point, Ortega said, that Nicaragua turned to the Soviet Union, which had already begun to send some oil.

Ortega reported that the Soviet Union has agreed to guarantee between 80 and 90 percent of the country's oil needs this year.

No colony of U.S.

Ortega charged that the U.S. government "has tried to manipulate the trip" by claiming it showed Nicaragua is becoming a "satellite" of the Soviet Union.

He also took up accusations that his mission was a slap in the face of Democratic Party congressmen who had voted down President Reagan's request for \$14 million in aid to the *contras* only a few days before Ortega left for Moscow.

Calling it "a fundamental question of principles," Ortega explained that "at no time in the meetings we had with U.S. congressmen did we come to an agreement that if they voted against the \$14 million, we would break our

relations with the Soviet Union."

"Our country is a sovereign country," he explained. "I had not heard that we had become one more state of the United States. Only thus would we have been obliged to ask permission from the U.S. president or congress to visit Moscow, Brasília, Paris, or Rome.

He said the Soviet Union "is a country that is a friend, that offers collaboration in a framework of respect, in a framework of true friendship."

Ortega received a similar response from other CMEA countries. He especially singled out East Germany, where he found "great understanding, great solidarity, and a willingness to help us concretely."

This contrasts sharply with the attitude of the capitalist government of West Germany, which has cut off all aid to Nicaragua.

In addition to visiting CMEA member countries, Ortega went to Yugoslavia. He also visited the capitalist European countries of Spain, Italy, France, Finland, and Sweden. On his

way back to Managua, Ortega stopped in Havana where he met with Fidel Castro.

He said in his meetings with government leaders "who have diverse political and ideological positions," he had found agreement on several points. These included "total rejection" of the U.S. government's "policy of force" against Nicaragua, calls on the U.S. government to renew the Manzanillo negotiations with Nicaragua, and support to the Con-tadora negotiations.

"Nobody, not a single one of the countries visited," Ortega reported, "joined the boycott," despite pressures from the Reagan administration that they do so.

In addition, Ortega said it was very important "to single out the demonstrations of popular solidarity we found everywhere."

Whereas Reagan's trip to capitalist Europe was punctuated by countless demonstrations against him, in many countries Ortega was welcomed by demonstrations demanding an end to U.S. aggression against Nicaragua. □

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

Signed articles represent the views of the authors, which may not necessarily coincide with those of Intercontinental Press. Insofar as it reflects editorial opinion, unsigned material stands on the program of the Fourth International.

Editor: Doug Jenness.

Contributing Editors: Livio Maitan, Ernest Mandel, George Novack.

Managing Editor: Ernest Harsch.

Editorial Staff: Steve Craine, Will Reissner.

Business Manager: Patti Iiyama.

INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS (ISSN 0162-5594) is published biweekly except for one issue in January and one issue in August for \$30 per year by Intercontinental Press, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014. Second-class postage paid at New York, NY. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Intercontinental Press is indexed by the Alternative Press Index, P.O. Box 7229, Baltimore, MD 21218; tel.: (301) 243-2471.

To Subscribe: For one-year subscriptions in the U.S. or Canada send US\$30.00. Subscription correspondence should be addressed to: Intercontinental Press, 410 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014. Telephone: (212) 929-6933.

For airmail subscriptions to Britain, Ireland, and continental Europe send US\$40.00 for one year; US\$20.00 for six months. Write for subscription rates to all other countries.

For air-speeded subscriptions to Australia: Write to New International Publications, P.O. Box 37, Leichhardt, N.S.W. 2040. In New Zealand: Write to Socialist Books, P.O. Box 8852, Auckland.

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

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

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

World War II: not a war for democracy

Working people were cannon fodder for imperialist rivals

By Will Reissner

On the very day that the United States entered World War II, a federal judge sentenced 18 leaders of the Socialist Workers Party to prison for expressing their political views. Not one of the defendants was convicted of any overt act.

Days later, in the rush of patriotic fervor following the U.S. declaration of war against Japan, the American Red Cross announced that Blacks would not be accepted as blood donors for the war effort. The Red Cross stated it was "acting pursuant to the requests and instructions of the army and navy" and had been "asked to supply only plasma from white donors."

This was hardly an auspicious beginning for what President Franklin Roosevelt described as a war for the "four freedoms" — freedom of speech and expression, freedom of religion, freedom from want, and freedom from fear.

In fact, throughout this entire war for the "four freedoms," the U.S. armed forces were totally segregated. And Washington's most trusted ally — Britain — was the world's foremost colonial power, holding half a billion people in its empire by force.

During this war for the "four freedoms," London was constantly worried that Washington planned to steal "British" colonies and protectorates at the war's end. At one point British Prime Minister Winston Churchill wrote to U.S. President Roosevelt: "Thank you very much for your assurances about [making] no sheep's eyes at our oil fields at Iran and Iraq. Let me reciprocate by giving you the fullest assurance that we have no thought of trying to horn in upon your interests or property in Saudi Arabia" (March 4, 1945).

What World War II was not about

An almost impenetrable veil of myths has been erected around the aims of the British and U.S. governments in fighting their imperialist rivals — the Axis powers of Germany, Italy, and Japan — in World War II.

While the war was going on, the allied propaganda machines were cranked up to full speed to rally the working people of Britain and the United States behind the war effort. Every form of propaganda, from the most exalted to the most base, was employed.

Roosevelt and Churchill spoke in stirring and poetic terms about the struggle to rid the world of the scourge of Nazi totalitarianism. But the proclamation of this lofty goal was combined with constant appeals to racial and national hatred, as the media spewed endless propaganda about "rapacious Huns" and "sneaky Japs."

The horrors committed by the Nazi regime in Germany showed the horrible face of capitalism in a country where the workers movement had been brutally crushed. Working people throughout the world needed no convincing that the fascist regime in Germany should be crushed, and that that goal was worthy of a mighty struggle.

But a study of the record shows that the destruction of fascism was never the main goal of the British and U.S. governments during World War II. Despite their rhetoric about democracy and antifascism, the goal of London and Washington in World War II was to defend their primacy in the world capitalist economy against challenges from three imperialist rivals — Germany, Italy, and Japan.

British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden admitted as much in a 1942 radio broadcast. "The trouble with Hitler," said Eden, "was not that he was a Nazi at home. The trouble with him was that he would not stay at home."

World War II was actually many different wars taking place simultaneously.

It was a reactionary war between imperialist powers to redivide the world — a war in which the workers were used as cannon fodder by the ruling families in their own countries.

It was a defensive war waged by the Soviet Union, the world's first workers state, against the German imperialist invasion.

It was a war of national liberation by the Chinese workers and peasants against Japanese imperialism's attempt to conquer China.

Imperialists use 40th anniversary

The 40th anniversary of the defeat of German imperialism's military forces has been an occasion for the capitalist politicians and press in the victorious Allied countries to unleash an avalanche of statements, articles, oratory, and special activities giving their version of what World War II was all about.

This campaign has actually been going on for more than a year, beginning with the celebration last June of the Allied invasion of Normandy in France. Since then several anniversaries of prominent military engagements, including the Battle of the Bulge in December, were observed. The commemorative barrage reached a peak around the observance of Victory in Europe Day on May 7. This also became intertwined with the debate around President Ronald Reagan's visit to the Bitburg cemetery in West Germany in early May.

Many different themes are being sounded in this political offensive. But they all point to one conclusion — the Allied imperialist governments waged a just war for democracy and against fascism. This is all designed to reinforce patriotic sentiments among working people in the imperialist countries, from Britain to Australia and from France to the United States.

The ruling families in these countries have been steadily tightening the screws against working people at home and stepping up military aggression to defend their profit interests abroad. As part of their ideological efforts to get working people to

go along with cutbacks and reduced living standards and support imperialist military actions in Central America, Chad, Ireland, New Caledonia, and other battlegrounds where oppressed people are fighting for national and social liberation, the capitalists are asserting that there was a great time 40 years ago when all classes joined together in a noble cause to defend democracy.

"The war against Hitler which ended 40 years ago this week was the people's war," the *Daily Mirror*, a London big-business paper wrote May 7. And above all it was "the war of the British people, who stood alone and saved Europe, the only people who fought from the beginning to the end and never surrendered."

On the same day the *Daily Telegraph*, another London paper, wrote, "We should also remember that the cause in which the allies fought was just, that, for most of the time, it was defended honorably and cleanly and with exemplary valor, and that the world would be an infinitely worse place than it is had it not triumphed."

As part of the effort to show that working people in Britain, the United States, and other Allied countries were part of an "honorable" and "clean" "people's war," instead of serving as cannon fodder for the ruling families in their own countries, the German people, as a whole, are often portrayed as collectively responsible for fascism and the war.

Liberal columnist Anthony Lewis, who writes for the *New York Times*, asserted

It was a war of partisans in Yugoslavia, Greece, Italy, and elsewhere against German and Italian occupation.

The war between the imperialist "democracies" and the fascist regimes was not a just conflict between democracy and fascism. Nor was it the doing of a single madman. It was a war between rival capitalist powers that was being prepared since the end of World War I.

It is important to clarify that Germany and Italy under the fascist regimes were capitalist countries where a tiny handful of families ruled.

Big business backed Hitler

Many leading industrialists and financiers lavished money and material aid on Hitler's Nazi Party for a decade before it was installed as the governing party in Germany in 1933.

During the 1920s, these capitalists used the Nazi's Brown Shirt goons as hired thugs against the powerful German workers movement.

But as the depression deepened and the strength of the German Communist and Social Democratic parties grew, capitalists feared that

the capitalist system itself could be overthrown in Germany, and they wholeheartedly threw their weight behind the Nazis.

In January 1933, President Paul von Hindenburg invited Hitler to become chancellor. Once installed, the Nazis immediately began using the state apparatus, buttressed by their own thugs, to smash the German workers movement.

Within months of taking governmental power, the fascist regime had banned the Social Democratic and Communist parties and had disbanded all independent trade unions. The country's prisons could not begin to accommodate all the working-class activists who had been arrested, so before 1933 was over, the Nazis had opened their first concentration camps to house thousands of Communists and Social Democrats. Later these camps would be expanded to deal with Jews, Gypsies, Soviet prisoners of war, and other special targets of the Nazis' wrath.

Many foreign capitalists with investments in Germany also provided financial support to Hitler.

They viewed the Nazi movement led by Hit-

ler as a potential bulwark against the growing strength of the workers movement in Germany and the rest of Europe during the worldwide economic crisis and as a force to be used against the Soviet Union, where capitalism had been overturned as the result of the October 1917 revolution.

One of Hitler's earliest foreign financial backers was Sir Henri Deterding, head of the giant Royal Dutch/Shell oil company.

Another was Henry Ford, founder of the Ford Motor Company. As far back as 1922, complaints were made to the U.S. ambassador in Germany about Ford's financial backing of Hitler.

In 1923 the vice-president of the Bavarian state parliament testified that "the Hitler movement was partly financed by an American anti-Semitic chief, who is Henry Ford. . . . Herr Hitler openly boasts of Mr. Ford's support and praises Mr. Ford as a great individualist and a great anti-Semite. A photograph of Mr. Ford hangs in Herr Hitler's quarters," he added.

Ford's support for Hitler did not end when the Nazis took over the government. In August 1938, Henry Ford was presented with the "Grand Cross of the German Eagle," the highest Nazi decoration, by German diplomats at a ceremony in Detroit.

The General Electric Company, through its German subsidiaries, was also an early and large contributor to the Nazi Party.

Another U.S. capitalist who developed a long and profitable relationship with Hitler was Sosthenes Behn, founder and head of International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation. ITT developed what author Anthony Sampson described as "a very special relationship" with Hitler's Third Reich. Once Hitler came to power, Behn asked for the names of men acceptable to the Nazis who could be placed on the boards of directors of ITT's German companies.

In fact, the close relationship of companies like Ford and ITT with the Nazis proved to be extremely profitable, even when the war was in its full fury.

Leading political figures in the "democracies" of Europe and the United States also looked with favor on the growth of fascist power in the 1930s. U.S. ambassador to Britain Joseph Kennedy, the father of President John Kennedy, was outspoken in his admiration for Hitler and in advocating U.S. cooperation with the Nazis.

The real views of the British, French, and U.S. governments regarding democracy was shown in their attitude toward the 1936-39 Spanish Civil War. During the Spanish Civil War, thousands of German and Italian troops fought alongside Gen. Francisco Franco's rightist forces against the Spanish Republic. Yet London, Paris, and Washington refused to allow sales of arms to the loyalist forces defending Spain's elected government. Under the guise of "neutrality," they showed that they preferred a victory by the pro-fascist Franco to the continuation of a Spanish government that included cabinet ministers from the Com-

to spin myths about World War II

May 9 that "Hitler was not alone. Millions voted for him, mouthed his ideas, hated and killed with him." Lewis, like other liberals, ignores the fact that Hitler's regime was backed by Germany's capitalist rulers and that it had smashed Germany's working-class movement. The truth is that Germany's workers and peasants were no more responsible for the war policies of German imperialism than British and U.S. workers can be held accountable for the war efforts of the imperialists in their countries.

Lewis' comments were in response to President Reagan's visit to Bitburg to honor German soldiers. Reagan, of course, had his own reactionary objectives for making this trip. He wanted to show that in spite of the war between imperialist rivals more than 40 years ago, Germans and Americans can unite today against Soviet Russia and the spread of communism. In his speech at Bitburg every victim of repression that he listed was a "victim of communism" — from Vietnam to Nicaragua.

Another thread in the commemorative propaganda campaign is the falsification of the fight waged by the working people of the Soviet Union during World War II. Some hardline cold warriors dismiss out of hand that the Soviet Union accomplished much at all during the war. They argue that without U.S. lend-lease aid and the help of the British merchant marine, the USSR would have been crushed.

Then there are those politicians who tip their hat to the achievements of the Soviet workers in rolling back the German inva-

sion of their country because they seek détente with Moscow today. But in making this gesture, they also add that Russian nationalism was the driving force.

"What inspired the mass of the Russian people," the *Glasgow Herald* wrote May 10, on the occasion of the 40th anniversary celebrations in Moscow, "was nationalism and patriotism."

Unfortunately the statement issued by Mikhail Gorbachev, general secretary of the Soviet Communist Party, on the 40th anniversary gives the same assessment. "The past war has gone down in the history of our homeland as the Great Patriotic War," he said.

The facts are that the Soviet workers and peasants, who suffered far more casualties than anyone else in the war, fought to defend the revolutionary conquests of the October 1917 revolution that resulted in the overturn of capitalism in Russia. It was defending their own state, won through their own revolution, that inspired working people of all nationalities in the USSR, not Russian nationalism.

In order to help counter capitalist mythmaking and expose its reactionary objectives, we are carrying two articles in this issue of *Intercontinental Press* that deal with several of the issues that have been raised. In subsequent issues we will take up other questions. Our aim is to describe what World War II was about from the standpoint of the working class.

— Doug Jenness

munist and Socialist parties.

Recarving the world

World War II was not caused by fascism. The roots of the war lay in an existing division of the world among the major imperialist powers that no longer reflected their real strength.

In the last quarter of the 19th century the European capitalist powers had divided up virtually all of Asia, Africa, and the Middle East among themselves.

The cliché “the sun never sets on the British Empire” was, in fact, true. Britain’s colonial empire stretched around the world. In Asia alone, Britain with its 45 million people ruled as the colonial master over 430 million subjects.

The second-largest colonial empire — spanning vast expanses of Africa, Asia, and the Middle East — had been grabbed by France.

Even tiny Belgium, the Netherlands, and Portugal ruled over colonies many times their own size and population.

By the time Germany, Italy, and Japan — all three late developers as capitalist powers — began to seek foreign markets and areas for investment, the world had already been largely

divided up.

Prior to the outbreak of World War I in 1914, Germany had surpassed the other capitalist powers of Europe in its economic might. But that economic might was not reflected in what the German imperialists viewed as their “fair share” of the world.

The German Empire was limited to five relatively unimportant colonies in Africa — Tanganyika, South West Africa, Togo, Cameroon, and Ruanda-Urundi — and a few scattered Pacific islands. German capitalists looked with longing at the advantages of their rivals in Britain and France who had vast empires at their disposal.

Washington, happy to see its imperialist rivals exhaust each other, stayed out of the war until April 1917, when it joined with Britain, France, and Russia (where imperialist rule lasted until October 1917) to insure that the German imperialists did not ultimately win and establish their preeminence in the world capitalist economy.

As a result of the German defeat in World War I, even the few colonies Berlin had assembled were redistributed among the victors. Some of the Pacific islands were, ironically,

given to its future ally Japan.

The military defeat suffered by Germany in World War I did not ultimately resolve anything. There remained the contradiction between the economic power of German capitalism and its lack of colonies compared with its economically weaker rivals.

Once German imperialism recovered from its defeat, it would make a second attempt, this time under Hitler, to redress the balance between itself and its imperialist rivals. The German capitalists cast their glances not only on the colonies of Britain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Portugal, but also on the vast expanses of the Soviet Union. If they could overturn the workers state that had been established there and set up a German sphere of influence, German capitalists could look forward to vast opportunities for investment of capital and profit.

In the early 1930s, two other “have not” capitalist powers — Japan and Italy — began expanding their colonial possessions.

The Japanese imperialists, who had established control over Taiwan in 1895 and Korea in 1905, expanded their economic interests in China. In 1932 Tokyo established a Japanese puppet government in an “independent” Manchuria and then turned its eyes to the rest of China.

In 1935, Italy, which controlled Libya, Eritrea, and “Italian” Somaliland, invaded Ethiopia, the only country in Africa that had escaped formal European colonization.

Germany, Italy, and Japan joined together in a mutual alliance in November 1937. While each was motivated by their own political and economic interests, all three felt themselves cheated of what was rightfully theirs and felt that by banding together they improved their chances of redividing the world to their benefit.

War in Europe

When the German army invaded Poland in September 1939, the French and British imperialists declared war on Germany. But they gave Poland little effective help, and within one month the Poles had surrendered. Germany took over the eastern two-thirds of Poland.

Britain and France remained technically at war with Germany. But for six months after the German conquest of Poland, there was so little military activity that journalists took to calling this the “phony war.”

In April 1940, however, the calm was broken as the German army invaded and occupied Norway and Denmark. The following month it marched into Belgium, the Netherlands, and France. By June 22, all three had surrendered, and a puppet French government was established at Vichy, while German troops occupied northern France.

Britain remained at war with Germany, but until 1943 that war was fought in the air, on sea, and in the French, Italian, and British colonies and protectorates of North and East Africa. Only in September 1943 did British and

Propaganda among German soldiers

During the Nazi occupation of France, many members of the Internationalist Communist Party (PCI), a group in the Fourth International, were arrested, deported, and murdered in the course of their underground struggle. Despite the heavy blows of repression, the PCI was able to bring out 73 clandestine issues of its newspaper *La Vérité* (“The Truth”).

In addition, the PCI worked with German revolutionary Marxists living clandestinely in France to put out a unique publication aimed at soldiers in the German army — *Arbeiter und Soldat* (“Worker and Soldier”).

Arbeiter und Soldat circulated clandestinely among German troops in France and other countries in Europe. Its standpoint was that German workers in uniform had no political interest in the war aims of the imperialist government in their country. It called on the soldiers to collaborate with the workers and farmers of occupied Europe and to direct their struggle against and turn their weapons on their real enemy — German imperialism and the Nazi dictatorship.

The first issue of *Arbeiter und Soldat* was dated July 1943 and the last issue was July 1944. The newspaper was edited by Martin Monat (known to his comrades under a number of pseudonyms — Victor, Paul Wenteley, Paul Widelin). Monat never lived to see the final issue that he edited. He was captured by the German secret police — the Gestapo — in July

1944.

Monat was tortured and taken to the Bois de Vincennes near Paris, where he was shot and left for dead. A passerby found him and took him to a hospital, where he was operated upon. While recuperating, his presence was revealed to the Gestapo by a member of the hospital staff, and Monat was recaptured and murdered.

Monat, born in Berlin in 1913, had been active in the Zionist youth movement Hashomer Hatzair before becoming a revolutionary socialist. He joined the Trotskyist movement in Belgium in 1940 and arrived in Paris in 1943, where he took responsibility for work among German soldiers.

The initial work in distributing the newspaper to German troops was carried out by French revolutionary socialists in Brest, who scattered copies around areas frequented by the German occupation troops. In time they gathered more than a dozen German soldiers around them. These soldiers began distributing *Arbeiter und Soldat* among their trusted friends in the barracks.

These German soldiers also produced their own newsletter called *Zeitung für Soldat und Arbeiter im Westen* (“News for Soldier and Worker in the West”).

In October 1943 a security breach led to the arrest of more than 20 of the French PCI members in Brest. It has been reported that 15 German soldiers were shot by firing squads, although the number has never been verified.

U.S. troops again land on the continent of Europe, in Italy, and only in June 1944 was a landing made in France.

Meanwhile, after June 1941, when the German army invaded the Soviet Union, the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union waged a gigantic struggle to defend their workers state (see following article).

Although the British government did not commit troops right away to fight the German military forces in Europe, it sent troops to the Far East to try to defend its colonial possessions there from the Japanese advances.

But in short order, the British lost Malaya, Singapore, and Burma to the Japanese armies. As Samuel Grafton reported in the Feb. 5, 1942, *New York Post*, the Japanese advance through Malaya was extremely rapid because "the natives of Malaya did not care whether the British won or the Japanese won."

The same story was repeated in Burma, where the United Press reported on May 15, 1942, "there was no attempt to win Burmese support by the British Imperials, so that many Burmese joined the Japanese or remained passive."

In India, too, it was a perilous time for the British colonial rulers, as Indian nationalists stepped up their campaigns for independence. In August 1942, the Indian National Congress began a "Quit India" campaign of direct action to demand that Britain grant India its independence immediately. The British rulers responded by jailing Congress leader Mohandas Gandhi and many other independence activists.

While Gandhi was in jail, another Indian patriot, Subhas Chandra Bose, tried a different

tactic to win independence. Bose organized an Indian army to fight the British.

Turning to Japan, the enemy of his enemy, for backing, Bose's Indian National Army soon raised some 90,000 troops recruited partly from among Indians in the British Army who had been captured by the Japanese in Burma and from volunteers from Indian communities in Singapore and elsewhere in South-east Asia.

Although the British ruling families were able to maintain their colonial domination over India throughout the war, they were to concede India's independence in 1947.

In Indonesia, too, the Japanese were initially hailed by Indonesian nationalists as liberators from Dutch colonialism. Such nationalist leaders as Sukarno and Mohammad Hatta, who later became respectively president and prime minister of an independent Indonesia, took posts in the Japanese-sponsored government set up after the defeat of the Dutch colonialists.

Within a short time, however, the Indonesian nationalists learned that the Japanese were also imperialists, albeit Asian imperialists, and that while Japanese rule might be no worse than its Dutch counterpart, it was no better either.

In fact, despite Tokyo's "3-A" propaganda theme that proclaimed, "Japan the Leader of Asia, Japan the Protector of Asia, Japan the Light of Asia," the Japanese imperialists showed in China, Vietnam, and elsewhere in Asia that they were just as ruthless and just as exploitative as the European imperialists they sought to replace.

In May 1945, Nazi Germany agreed to an unconditional surrender. In August, following the U.S. atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Japanese government also surrendered unconditionally.

The six years of war had resulted in the loss of as many as 50 million lives and indescribable devastation.

But even before the war had ended, the British, French, and Dutch governments were rushing troops to their colonies in Asia to reassert their control.

Even before the war ended, British troops had been shipped to Greece in order to drive the Communist Party-led National Liberation Front partisans out of Athens and to force Greeks to accept the return of the pro-Nazi monarchy.

The Greek partisans, who had liberated their country from the German occupation, now had to fight off the British Army. For 33 days British armed forces bombed and machine-gunned Athens before they succeeded in driving the partisans out of the city. Some 11,000 Greeks were killed in the block-to-block fighting.

In China, the civil war between Chiang Kai-shek's capitalist regime and the Communist Party forces led by Mao Tse-tung continued after the end of World War II, and was only settled with the victory of the Chinese Revolution in 1949.

The postwar situation, rather than bringing peace and democracy, was accurately summarized by the banner headline in the Aug. 18, 1945, issue of the *Militant*, the newspaper reflecting the views of the U.S. Socialist Workers Party, announcing the conclusion of the war: "THERE IS NO PEACE!" □

The Soviet Union in World War II

How workers and peasants rolled back German imperialist invasion

By Steve Craine

Celebrations of the 40th anniversary of the defeat of German imperialism's military forces in 1945 are being used by the U.S. government and its media mouthpieces to rewrite history and distort the real role of the working class in the Soviet Union in World War II. President Ronald Reagan's gestures of "reconciliation" with Germany, like his visit to a war cemetery in West Germany, have not been matched by any reconciliation with Washington's wartime ally, the Soviet Union.

The Reagan administration ordered U.S. diplomats in Moscow to boycott the Soviet celebration of the end of the war in Europe, May 9 (known as V-E day). It also canceled official participation in a joint commemoration of the April 25, 1945, link-up of Soviet and U.S. troops on the Elbe River. The excuse given by Washington for refusing to participate in these events was the killing of a U.S. officer by an East German guard on March 24. But the action fit in with imperialism's anticommunist

propaganda war against the Soviet Union.

Meanwhile, the big-business press in the United States has cooperated in distorting the Soviet role in World War II. In all the retrospective articles and TV coverage of anniversary events, the great struggle of the working people of the Soviet Union to defend the workers state from imperialist attack is downplayed and often directly denied.

An example of this rewriting of history was a column in the April 30 *New York Times* by Amos Perlmutter, a professor of political science at American University in Washington, D.C. "The Western democracies," he wrote, "are making a mistake in inviting the Soviet Union to participate in our celebrations of V-E Day. Why, after all, must we maintain the pretense that the Soviet Union helped us to liberate Europe?"

Perlmutter proposed to "put to rest the myth" that Germany could not have been defeated without the effort of the Soviet Union. "In the end," he claimed, "Hitler was defeated

primarily by American industrial and economic power."

To bolster his argument, Perlmutter cited the non-aggression pact between Stalin and Hitler, which was in effect from 1939 to June 1941 when the German army invaded Soviet territory. He belittled what the Soviet Union accomplished by emphasizing the aid it received from the United States and Britain.

In addition to misrepresenting the facts about German imperialism's military defeat, Perlmutter looked at the war only from the standpoint of the governments in Washington and London. He only saw the Soviet Union's role in relation to what it may or may not have contributed to the war efforts of these two capitalist powers against their imperialist rival. He did not see the question at all from the perspective of the Soviet workers who were defending the conquests of the October 1917 revolution and were defending their own state.

This is related to his inaccurate presentation of Washington's and London's political mo-

tives in the war. "We should . . . remind ourselves," he wrote, "just why the war was fought and what it was supposed to achieve. The goal was the liberation of Europe and the possibility of spreading democracy throughout the world."

In reality, despite the rhetoric about fighting fascism, the "Western democracies" were fighting an imperialist war to win new spheres of influence, markets, sources of raw materials, and arenas for investment from their imperialist rivals in Germany, Italy, and Japan.

The true extent of their antifascism is shown by their role in the Spanish Civil War of 1936-39. When the rightist general Francisco Franco, with the aid of fascist governments in Italy and Germany, led a revolt against the elected government of Spain, London, Paris, and Washington declared strict neutrality and prevented aid from reaching the loyalist forces.

President Reagan revived this view of the civil war several months ago. Referring to the U.S. volunteers who joined the International Brigades to fight Franco, Reagan asserted that "the individuals that went over there were, in the opinions of most Americans, fighting on the wrong side."

Defense of the Soviet Union

There was a fundamental difference between the Soviet defense effort and the war-making of all the imperialist powers. Soviet workers and peasants fought to defend the important conquests of the 1917 revolution. Workers and peasants conscripted into the imperialist armies were used as cannon fodder to protect the profits of the capitalist ruling classes.

As a result, Soviet citizens participated fully in the defense of the country. Often they fought from house to house or village to village without direction from the army itself. Along with the Soviet army and irregular partisan guerrillas, the Soviet people were able to deliver devastating blows to the invaders.

It is impossible for anyone to deny the magnitude of the Soviet defense effort. The Soviet people faced an invasion force of 5.5 million men, 5,000 aircraft, 4,300 tanks, and 47,000 artillery pieces. This invasion force was about twice the size of the Soviet army at the time, and beginning in June 1941 it overran some 1.25 million square miles of Soviet territory, capturing the breadbasket of the workers state and many of its important industrial installations. Moscow and Leningrad both suffered long sieges.

More than 20 million Soviet soldiers and civilians were killed defending their workers state. In comparison, U.S. losses in the war totaled 400,000. But even more telling is a comparison of German losses on their eastern and western fronts. By the end of the war, German imperialism and its allies had lost 607 divisions on the Soviet front, while on the western front (including North Africa) they had lost 176 divisions.

In defending the city of Sevastopol in June



Workers militia in Stalingrad. Battle marked turning point of World War II.

and July 1942, the army and civilian fighters destroyed as many of German imperialism's forces as had been lost in all engagements of the war prior to the invasion of the USSR. And Sevastopol was just a prelude to the battle of Stalingrad, which began in August 1942.

Stalingrad: turning point of war

Stalingrad was the most important turning point of the war. It marked the furthest advance of the German invasion into Soviet territory. After its defeat there, the German army never again was able to mount a successful strategic offensive.

More than 1 million German troops were thrown at Stalingrad in an attempt to secure the strategic city on the Volga River before marching north to attack Moscow from the rear. The Soviet army and civilian workers of Stalingrad defended the city from August 1942 to early February 1943, fighting for every block. Finally they turned the tide, surrounding their attackers and trapping some 800,000 German soldiers and officers.

Once putting the invaders on the run, the Soviet forces were able by the end of March to liberate 185,000 square miles and destroy the equivalent of the entire force used by the German imperialists to roll over France, Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands in the summer of 1940. Partisan bands played a big role in harassing and sabotaging German operations in Soviet territory.

By the time U.S. and British troops landed at Normandy, 75 percent of all German forces were committed to the eastern front. All the skirmishing of U.S. and British forces in North Africa pale by comparison to the battles fought on Soviet soil. The blows inflicted on the Axis armies in the USSR in those three years made the Normandy landing and subsequent Allied push into Germany much easier.

During the war itself, U.S. military and political leaders admitted the importance of the

blows dealt the German war machine by the Soviet army and Soviet people. Dwight Eisenhower, commander-in-chief of the U.S.-British forces in Europe, stated at the end of the war that the "Red Army campaigns played the decisive role in defeating Germany." British Field Marshal Viscount Montgomery commented, "Russia has performed a great military feat. The Soviets had to bear, almost unaided, the full onslaught of Germany."

Lend-lease

It is also simply untrue that the Soviet war effort was dependent on material assistance from the United States and Britain. The "lend-lease" program shipped military supplies and food from the United States to the Soviet Union and other countries engaged in combat against the German armies.

The program was authorized by the U.S. Congress in March 1941, but very little of the aid reached the Soviet Union before the decisive battles of Moscow and Stalingrad. Even the total lend-lease aid delivered throughout the war — valued at \$10 billion — amounted to only some 4 percent of the Soviet Union's own war production. In comparison, Britain received some \$30 billion worth of U.S. aid. While the United States shipped 13,300 planes and 6,800 tanks to the Soviet Union, Soviet workers produced 134,000 aircraft and 102,800 tanks — many of them built in factories that had been evacuated from the German-occupied western part of the country.

The meager level of assistance through lend-lease and the long delay in opening a second front in Western Europe indicate the real intentions of the "democratic" imperialists in Washington and London. They were quite happy to see the German imperialists bleed the USSR white, and hoped that the German forces would crush the world's first workers state. At the same time, they thought that the cost of this operation to German imperialism would be so great as to weaken it to the advantage of the rulers in Britain and the United States.

As British Aviation Minister J. Moore-Bradbazon, himself a big capitalist, explained at the time, "The best outcome of the struggle on the Eastern front would be the mutual exhaustion of Germany and the USSR, as a consequence of which Britain would be able to attain a position of dominance."

Washington and London did eventually throw more substantial forces into the war against their imperialist rival in Europe, beginning with the Normandy landing, because allowing the Soviet Union to single-handedly defeat German imperialism would have made it more difficult to hold back the revolutionary forces set in motion by the Soviet victories.

The military triumphs scored by the Soviet people, especially after Stalingrad, inspired working people throughout Europe. They gave a powerful impetus to the struggle of workers and peasants in Yugoslavia, who threw off imperialist oppression and eliminated capitalist rule. In many of the eastern European countries liberated by the Soviet armed forces, this

upsurge of workers and peasants led to the overturning of capitalism.

British and U.S. imperialism were able, with the collaboration of Moscow, to prevent this revolutionary wave from succeeding in Greece, France, Italy, and other countries where the working class posed a real threat to capitalism immediately after the war.

Stalinists celebrate 40th anniversary

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union and its followers around the world have also been honoring the 40th anniversary of the military defeat of German imperialism. In the United States, the Soviet Union, and other countries, Communist parties have attempted to set the record straight on the Soviet role in World War II. In the course of answering the lies of the imperialist propagandists, however, they have added a few lies of their own.

Since early this year, the *Daily World*, published by the U.S. Communist Party, has been running articles on World War II in nearly every issue. On May 15 it printed an answer to Perlmutter's *New York Times* article. *Daily World* columnist Tom Foley answered some of the factual distortions of the Perlmutter article but added his peculiar view of Washington's motives for going to war. The United States "found itself at war," according to Foley, because of the "Japanese sneak attack on Pearl Harbor."

A special May 9 issue of the *Daily World* featured a front-page editorial entitled "Victory over fascism." It argued that the whole world owes "a debt of gratitude to the millions who gave their lives to liberate conquered nations, stop genocide and prevent worldwide enslavement. We especially acknowledge the role of the Soviet Union, which lost 22 million people and suffered vast destruction, and to the 400,000 U.S. soldiers who were killed."

Like Perlmutter, the *Daily World* editors implied that the U.S. Army was fighting to stop genocide and prevent enslavement. They spelled out this apology for U.S. imperialism by stating that "World War II was the last just war in which U.S. soldiers participated."

Also like Perlmutter's article, the thrust of most of the *Daily World's* coverage on World War II has been on the Soviet *contribution* to an allegedly united effort against fascism. The only difference being that the Stalinists give the true figures on the extent of the Soviet defense effort, while Perlmutter obscures the facts.

The May 9 editorial also revealed how the Stalinists' view of World War II fits in with their current political perspectives. "V-E Day was proof that detente could work. The United States and Great Britain, capitalist countries, and the Soviet Union, a socialist country, fought together against a common foe to attain world peace," it stated. "And in fighting the Nazis this historic alliance was also combating nazism, which gives vent to the most virulent racism, anti-Semitism, chauvinism, and anti-communism."

But by portraying the U.S. war aims in this

way, the CP, continuing the approach it took during the war itself, ignores the imperialist character of the war and of the "democratic" governments of the United States, Britain, and their capitalist allies.

Combined character of war

The fact that there were progressive battles fought in the context of the world imperialist conflict (namely the defense of the world's only workers state and the struggle of China to free itself from Japanese imperialist domination) does not mean that the actions of Germany's imperialist rivals were progressive.

Revolutionary Marxists distinguished between the various aspects of the war and clearly defended the Soviet Union while continuing their fight against U.S. and British capitalists.

Before the world war began, the movement for the Fourth International explained the consequences for the world revolution of the defeat of the different countries and why workers throughout the world must defend the first workers state. At a July 1936 conference for the Fourth International, a resolution was adopted, entitled "The Fourth International and the Soviet Union."

"The defeat of an imperialist land in the new war," the resolution stated, "will lead not only to the collapse of its state form but also of its capitalist foundation, and consequently will also replace private by state property. The defeat of the Soviet Union would not only signify the collapse of the Soviet bureaucracy but also the replacement of the state and collective property by capitalist chaos. The choice of the political line under these conditions is obvious."

'Elementary duty of all workers'

After the German invasion of the Soviet Union, a Fourth International manifesto began, "The Soviet Union is at war! The Soviet Union is in mortal danger! . . . At this hour of supreme danger the Fourth International proclaims what it has constantly said to the workers: Defend the USSR! The defense of the Soviet Union is the elementary duty of all workers true to their class."

The proletarian internationalism motivating this defense of the Soviet Union against its attackers had nothing in common with the interests of the British, French, or U.S. capitalists in "helping" the Soviet working people defend the gains of the Russian revolution from German imperialism. As statements of the capitalist politicians show, they were at least as interested in smashing the workers state as in vanquishing a rival bloc of imperialists.

Harry Truman, who was to become president of the United States before the end of the war, said in 1941, "If we see that Germany is winning we ought to help Russia and if Russia is winning we ought to help Germany and that way let them kill as many as possible."

The fact that German capitalism and its competitors had come to blows over a redivision of the world's spoils did not mean one of

the two warring camps had become a friend of the working class or the Soviet Union.

Therefore revolutionary Marxists argued that support for the Soviet Union must not imply any kind of support for its imperialist allies of the moment.

The 1936 resolution on "The Fourth International and the Soviet Union" quoted a 1934 document of the International Communist League (a precursor of the Fourth International): "The proletariat of a capitalist country which finds itself in an alliance with the USSR must retain fully and completely its irreconcilable hostility to the imperialist government of its own country. . . . The policy of a proletarian party in an 'allied' as well as in an enemy imperialist country should therefore be directed towards the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the seizure of power. Only in this way can a *real alliance with the USSR* be created and the first workers' state be saved from disaster."

The Stalinists, on the other hand, painted first the German regime (during the Stalin-Hitler pact), and later the allied governments, in rosy colors. They called on workers to support those capitalist governments that happened for whatever tactical reasons to be allied with the Soviet Union. In these countries, the Communist parties used their influence in the working class to stifle strikes, agitation for democratic rights, and other struggles.

Taking the anti-Nazi statements of Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill for good coin, they tried to direct the real antifascist sentiments of the workers into support for these "democratic" capitalists. The Fourth International's Emergency Conference, held in 1940, exposed the false distinction between "democratic" and fascist capitalism. "Naturally there exists a difference between the political regimes in bourgeois society just as there is a difference in comfort between various cars in a railway train. But when the whole train is plunging into an abyss, the distinction between decaying democracy and murderous fascism disappears in the face of the collapse of the entire capitalist system."

The resolution continued, "Hitler provokes naturally the sharp hatred of workers the world over. But between this legitimate hatred of workers and the helping of his weaker but not less reactionary enemies is an unbridgeable gulf."

Instead of looking to class collaboration with the group of bosses that is temporarily willing to work with the workers' organizations, a working-class defense of the Soviet Union should look to the workers of all the imperialist countries as the decisive ally of the workers state. After the German invasion in 1941, the most critical ally was the German working class, since it faced exactly the same enemy as the Soviet Union — German imperialism.

Moscow undermines internationalism

But Moscow's call for British and U.S. workers to support their governments' war ef-

forts could only help strengthen Hitler's appeal for patriotic support from the German masses. In the USSR itself, the Stalin regime motivated the war primarily on patriotic, anti-German grounds, not as a part of the world working-class struggle. Soviet workers and peasants were encouraged to view the German soldiers as the enemy, rather than as fellow workers who had been forced into the war contrary to their own class interests.

A policy of appealing to German working people in uniform and fraternizing on the front could have weakened the hold of anticommunist ideology on the German troops.

The Fourth International summed up its policy in its August 1941 manifesto as follows: "We defend the Soviet Union with our own methods. We represent the revolutionary interests of the working class and our weapon is the revolutionary class struggle. The imperialist allies of the Kremlin are not our allies. *We go on with the revolutionary struggle, even in the 'democratic' camp.* To support the imperialist masters of England or the United States would mean to aid Hitler in maintaining his hold over the German workers."

The Fourth International called on workers in the Soviet Union to "be the best soldiers at their combat stations." It advocated "sabotage of the German military machine" by the "Ger-

man workers and peasants in soldiers' uniforms."

Supporters of the Fourth International in the capitalist countries whose governments were at war with the German capitalists campaigned politically against the war aims of their governments. They took this campaign to the workers movement and to the ranks of the imperialist armies, where revolutionaries fought alongside other young workers and farmers of their countries. And they continued to press the fight for the economic and social needs of the working class at home, refusing to subordinate these struggles to the imperialist war effort.

War and colonial revolution

Since the end of World War II, some apologists for "democratic" imperialism have sought retroactive justification for their positions from post-war developments, including the rise of the colonial revolution. The *Daily World*, for example, argued in its May 9 editorial that "V-E Day symbolizes the beginning of the downfall of colonialism."

World War II did give a tremendous impetus to the anticolonial upsurge, which was a revolution of unprecedented scale. In the post-war years, hundreds of millions of people from the Philippines and Indonesia to the Indian sub-

continent and Africa fought free from direct colonial rule. Hundreds of millions more in China, Korea, and Vietnam broke with capitalism and established workers states.

The wartime rhetoric of the victorious imperialist powers about "democracy" made it more difficult for them to suppress this upsurge. An example of this was the unwillingness of U.S. troops to remain in Asia and the Pacific after the surrender of the Japanese government to carry out Washington's plan to keep revolutionary movements there in check.

Independence was won from, not given by, the "democratic" imperialists. Their camp had been far and away the biggest holders of colonies before the war, and they fought to retain their domination of the rest of the world, not to liberate oppressed nations. In fact, the capitalist ruling families in Britain, France, and the United States all continue to this day to cling to their remaining colonies and defend their exploitation and oppression of those that are now formally independent.

The lesson from World War II for workers and farmers in the major capitalist countries should be that the policies of imperialist ruling classes must always be opposed by independent working-class action. Today that means especially action against Washington's war against the Nicaraguan revolution. □

DOCUMENTS

ANC's call to the people of South Africa

'Make the apartheid system more and more unworkable'

[The following is the text of a statement issued on April 25 by the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress (ANC) of South Africa. The text is taken from issue No. 8, 1985, (published in late April), of *From the Front-Line*, a fortnightly published in Gaborone, Botswana, by Solidarity News Service. The footnotes are by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Events in our country are moving with astonishing speed. In our January 8th message we issued a call for the intensification of the liberation offensive on all fronts, the transformation of more and more localities into mass revolutionary bases, and the need to take further strides toward rendering the country ungovernable.¹

Only three months have passed since that call was made and already the surge of people's resistance and active defiance have reached new heights. The face of our country

is changing before our very eyes.

- In the Black ghettos of the urban areas the legitimacy of authority of all types is not just under attack, it has been largely destroyed. Most of those who served white rule in so-called urban councils have suffered the wrath of the people. But many have respected the demands of the people by resigning.

- The tri-cameral Parliament has exposed its complete impotence in the present crisis and continues to be shunned. The Bantustans are universally held in contempt.²

- Well organised stay-aways [strikes] in localised areas have once again drawn atten-

2. In 1984, the apartheid regime set up a new parliamentary system, with one chamber for whites, one for Coloureds (those of mixed ancestry), and one for Indians. Coloureds and Indians are part of the oppressed Black population, along with Africans. This tri-cameral parliament was designed to further the regime's policy of divide and rule toward the Black majority and to disguise the continuation of white supremacist rule.

The 10 Bantustans are rural African reserves, likewise designed to foster divisions among Africans, along language lines.

tion to the potential of the organised workers to bring the ruling class to its knees.

- The people by their actions are teaching Black police and soldiers that there is no place in our communities for those who wear the uniforms of apartheid and who carry out orders to kill, maim, and torture their brothers and sisters.

- All attempts to tame our fighting students have failed, and more and more schools and universities are becoming flashpoints for freedom.

- The continuing street confrontations with the enemies' armed forces show that our people, in massive numbers, not only want a new order in our country but are also prepared to sacrifice life, if need be, to bring it about.

- Fired by the heroic example of Umkhonto we Sizwe,³ more and more of our youth are searching for ways to organise themselves into effective combat units to defend the people, deal with the collaborators, and to hit back selectively at the enemy's armed personnel.

- The people, undaunted by massive state

1. For the text of the January 8 speech by ANC President Oliver Tambo, see the March 4 *Intercontinental Press*.

3. Spear of the Nation, the ANC military wing.

repression, are openly demonstrating, over and over again, that the ANC is their legitimate and overall leader on the road to people's power.

On the side of the people the conditions for a revolutionary leap forward are beginning to mature. On the side of the ruling class the economic and political crisis has reached new heights.

It is clear that the racists cannot continue to rule in the old way. The bankrupt and dying regime is being kept alive by those who carry arms in its defence. All attempts by it to find alternative solutions have landed on the rocks. All [Prime Minister Pieter] Botha's reforms designed to diffuse the developing revolutionary assault trigger off even more vigorous mass opposition.

The promised alteration to the sex laws is the latest pathetic manoeuvre.⁴ It is another gesture to help the external allies of apartheid to stem the mounting international tide for the total isolation of South Africa. There will be real love across the colour line only when South Africa is completely free.

The growing ferment from below and the deepening crisis from above demand the urgent attention of our whole liberation front and all sectors of our struggling peoples.

The historic conditions which are necessary to ensure the collapse of the apartheid system and the creation by the people of a new social order are beginning to take shape in a greater measure than ever before in our history. Yet much remains to be done. It is the urgent task of our liberation movement and of all patriots to stimulate the further growth of those conditions which could bring the day of the people's seizure of power within our sight.

It is against this background that we once again call on all sections of our people to make the apartheid system more and more unworkable and the country less and less governable. At the same time we must work endlessly to strengthen all levels of mass and underground organisation and to create the beginnings of popular power.

More particularly:

We call on our nationally oppressed working class to strengthen and unite the trade union movement and to sharpen the weapon of workers' power at the point of production in the struggle for national liberation. A long-lasting national work stoppage, backed by our oppressed communities and supported by armed activity, can break the backbone of the apartheid system and bring the regime to its knees. All patriots active in industrial organisations must examine the lesson of the recent successful stay-aways in the Transvaal and Eastern Cape⁵ and must set their sights on

combining national stay-away action with countrywide mass popular actions.

We call on our communities in Black ghettos to replace the collapsing government stooge councils with people's committees in every block which could become the embryos of people's power.

We call on our people and, more especially, our fighting youth in every Black community, school, and university to find ways of organising themselves into small mobile units which will protect the people against anti-social elements and act in an organised way in both white and Black areas against the enemy and its agents. Every Black area must become a "no-go area" for any isolated individuals or pockets of the enemy's police or armed personnel. The people must find ways to obtain arms by whatever means from the enemy and from any other source. Appropriate forms of combat tactics must be developed for situations in which the enemy is on the rampage against the people. The proliferation of such units and their functioning in accordance with all the rules of underground secrecy will add inestimable power and strength to the armed wing of our liberation movement — Umkhonto we Sizwe.

We call on all those among the Black oppressed who serve in the machineries of apartheid to resign now. The Bantustans, the so-called parliaments for the Coloured and Indian people, the community councils and the other organs of the racist power must cease to function. They must find fewer and fewer participants as patriots join in the bitter struggle for power. At a time when so many have fallen and are falling to racist bullets, those who continue to sell their people's birthright will be shunned and made to feel the anger of the masses in both town and countryside.

We call on the unemployed Blacks now in uniform to stop shooting their brothers and sisters in defence of white rule. They must refuse to carry out such orders. They must organise secretly to turn their guns against their masters.

We call on those in the white community who have been conscripted into the army to refuse, in their own interests and those of their children, to be used as instruments of massacres and military domination over their Black fellow citizens and over the people of Namibia and Angola and other parts of southern Africa.

We call on all social institutions — religious, cultural, civic, and sporting — which retain a belief in the true brotherhood of man, to side even more vigorously with the cause of people's liberation and stand firm against racist intimidation.

We call on the people everywhere to defy in an organised way the imposition of laws founded on race discrimination, to resist all attacks on their living conditions and to promote

and police repression. Two similar general strikes took place this March in Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage, both in the Eastern Cape region.

united resistance and action against the apartheid system and its agencies.

We call on the white community in whose name racist barbarities are being perpetrated daily against the Black majority, to move away from its support of apartheid and to increase the ranks of the growing number of democratic whites who are participating in our liberation struggle.

We call, in this Year of the Cadre, on all political and military activists to work unceasingly to strengthen the ANC's underground presence and to reinforce our leadership core in every part of the country. The ANC-led liberation movement is the indispensable guide to the whole revolutionary process.

We call on Umkhonto we Sizwe to intensify the armed struggle with all the means at its disposal and, more particularly, to concentrate more and more on actions against the enemy's armed forces and police. We also call on our underground to help make such an intensification of armed activity possible by working day and night to create and strengthen our internal political revolutionary bases.

The period ahead presents all of us — whether in or out of the ANC — with an awe-inspiring challenge. Under the leadership of our liberation movement we can and must answer this call of history. Let the blood of our martyrs who are falling before the enemy bullets nourish our battle for freedom. Let our watch-words be: Unity in mass action! Confront the enemy on all fronts!

Make apartheid unworkable, make the country ungovernable.

Forward to people's power.

Long live the ANC — the vanguard of our revolution.

Book on South Africa to appear soon in Swedish

The Swedish publisher, Röda Rummet, has announced that it is publishing a Swedish-language edition of *South Africa: White Rule, Black Revolt*, by Ernest Harsch.

The book was published in 1980 by Monad Press in New York. A second edition appeared in 1983.

Harsch, managing editor of *Intercontinental Press*, has traveled in southern Africa, meeting and interviewing leaders and participants in the South African struggle. He recently visited Burkina, Ghana, Ivory Coast, and Senegal in West Africa. His articles from this trip are presently appearing in *IP*.

South Africa: White Rule, Black Revolt is the story of South Africa's Black majority — from Dutch colonialism to the apartheid regime. It describes the foundations of the colonial-settler state, the development of industry and the working class, and the emergence of South Africa as an imperialist country.

The Swedish edition, which is scheduled to appear soon, was translated by Gunvor Karlström. Röda Rummet is the principal Swedish publisher of the works of Russian revolutionist Leon Trotsky.

4. In April, the regime announced that the Mixed Marriages Act and sections of the Immorality Act, which outlawed marriage and sexual relations between Blacks and whites, would be scrapped.

5. In November 1984, some one million Black workers struck in the heavily industrialized region of the southern Transvaal to protest apartheid policies

Brutal life for Haitian immigrants

Fleeing from misery to more misery

By Ramón A. Rodríguez

[The following article is taken from the May issue of *Caribbean Contact*, a monthly newspaper published in Barbados by the Caribbean Conference of Churches.]

* * *

At the end of February, the Conference of Bishops of the Dominican Republic and Haiti called for an "urgent" solution for the problem of Haitian immigrants in the Dominican Republic, who live and work in "inhuman and unjust" conditions.

In a joint communiqué released in both countries and written in Spanish, French, and Creole the bishops, as a contribution to the defence of the basic human rights of the Haitian immigrants, announced the setting up of a Pastoral Animation and Co-ordination Centre for Haitian immigrants. The Centre will have its headquarters in the Dominican Republic.

The stand taken by the bishops is highly significant, since it emphasises the constant condemnation of the continuous abuses to which Haitian labourers have been and still are being subjected. It also touches for the first time on the political aspect of the problem: "the refugees," the majority of whom are persecuted by the harsh dictatorship of the Duvalier family.

Official immigration of Haitian nationals as labourers to the Dominican Republic originates from 1916, when both Haiti and the Dominican Republic were occupied by troops of the U.S. armed forces.

From that time, many members of the capitalist plantation class, either because of their foreign interests, or their close alliance to North American monopolistic capital, proceeded to traffic in farm labourers as workers for the sugar plantations in the Dominican Republic.

For more than 70 years, both the Dominican government and the private sugar companies have taken advantage of the unstable economic and political conditions in Haiti to exploit the immigrants.

Structural causes of emigration

The Republic of Haiti, with 6,000,000 inhabitants, in an area of about 27,750 sq. km., is today the poorest country in the Americas and the Caribbean. 90% of its population is made up of peasants, of whom about 84% exist in the most dire poverty, and who have on an average, only three meals a week.

Nevertheless, according to World Bank statistics, about some 200 millionaires live in Haiti, and about 3,800 families have an annual income of more than \$84,000.00. This contrasts sharply with the salary earned by many

peasants, which is between US\$30.00 and US\$60.00 a year.

15% of the landowners own 66% of the land, while two-thirds of the rural population, made up mostly of peasants, own only 10% of the land.

More than 300,000 peasant families have no land at all. Malnutrition is the second highest cause of death and the majority of the population lives in houses lacking any kind of sanitary facility. At present 85% of the Haitian people are illiterate, and the unemployment rate is about 40%.

Added to this wretched state of affairs are the multiple forces of oppression, extortion and exploitation imposed on the Haitian people by the security forces and the political repression practised by the regime, a base on which the Duvalier dictatorship has preserved itself for over 27 years. From 1957 to the present, more than 50,000 Haitians have lost their lives for political reasons. The gaols are overflowing with people known to be opposed to the regime, and over a million people have been forced to live outside of their country.

It is the double combination of abject poverty and political repression which has caused such a huge number of Haitians to migrate to the Dominican Republic and other countries to work.

Living conditions of laborers

Today there are about 400,000 Haitian nationals resident in the Dominican Republic, and about 70,000 of them have been absorbed into the Dominican work force.

An average of 19,000 Haitian newcomers are allowed into the country every year through the terms of a collective work contract between the State Sugar Council (CEA) and the Haitian government, which allows Haitians to work as cane-cutters. The contract in question is considered to be illegal, since the Dominican Congress knows nothing about it. In view of this fact the bringing of labourers every year constitutes trafficking. A large amount of manpower is rented en masse from the Haitian government, which receives US\$2,250,000 as a pay-off in return for the contracting of these workers.

As soon as the Haitian workers arrive on Dominican soil, their I.D. cards and other documents are confiscated. Then they are assigned to specific plantations, where they live huddled together in the clearings scattered across the cane-fields.

Cane-cutters live herded together in groups of up to 10 people in a room, generally lacking sanitary services, sleeping facilities, drinking water, and electricity.

There is no social security and their wages are often withheld for the flimsiest of reasons. The withholding of their salaries is illegal and is prohibited by the Salary Protection Agreement, according to which employers will not be able to restrict in any way the employee's freedom to do as he pleases with his salary.

Diverse internal and external factors prevent the unionisation of Haitian workers. Among these are the nature of their temporary stay in the country, their ignorance of trade union laws and activities, the isolation that they are made to suffer, their lack of knowledge of Spanish, the restrictions imposed on their freedom of movement, the strict surveillance to which they are subjected, and the fear of reprisals when they return to their country.

The view has been expressed that in practice some Haitian immigrants live in conditions akin to slavery in the Dominican Republic, because they are forced to remain on the sugar plantations to which they are sent depending on when the sugar harvest begins. They are then rounded up and forced to return to their place of work, then they are sent out again to other places, completely ignorant of the conditions of work under which they are contracted.

Restriction on free movement is a firm rule in the case of all Haitian nationals whose documents are not duly legalised, including those born in the Dominican Republic of Haitian parents. In the case of the latter, their status continues to be illegal because their situation has not been regularised since they have been unable to procure documentation of their identity.

The Dominican Armed Forces, as well as the private police on the plantations, take an active part in keeping the Haitians in place and in arresting those illegal immigrants in order to return them once more to work on the plantations. This situation runs contrary to the international treaties regarding the abolition of forced labour of which the Dominican Republic is a signatory.

Indiscriminate deportation

Many detainees are usually indiscriminately deported to Haiti, including sometimes even those born in the Dominican Republic. Sometimes these people are returned to the Dominican Republic because they have not been accepted by the Haitian authorities, and after having been subjected to various types of ill-treatment. On some occasions, it has reached the extreme where the authorities themselves have destroyed personal identity papers when they have been presented as proof of Dominican nationality by people of Haitian extraction.

Besides the official labour traffic indulged in by the governments of both countries, there is also an underground traffic of Haitian agricultural workers to the Dominican Republic, organised by a network which operates with impunity.

Those workers, including women and children, are bought and sold by the highest bidder as if they were merchandise.

After repeated condemnation of the practice

by both organisations and influential people in the Dominican Republic, the Haitian ambassador took steps to carry out an investigation into the matter in June 1983. He was able to prove the accuracy of the reports, the places and ways in which the workers were recruited, transported, and sold in the Dominican Republic. In a document sent to the Foreign Affairs Minister of the Dominican Republic, José Augusto Vega Imbert, the Haitian embassy protested upon the revelation of such acts and involved the Dominican soldiers in these acts.

Political refugees

The political Haitian refugees who reside legally in the Dominican Republic are about 600 in all, and they live in conditions which are much more deplorable than those experienced by the ordinary immigrants.

Because of their status of political opponents of the Duvalier regime they are closely watched both by the Dominican authorities as well as by the political police of the Haitian regime, which takes action in the Dominican Republic without any sort of restriction being imposed on them.

During the years 1982–1984 Haitian exiles were persistently persecuted. They were prevented from holding any type of meetings, and massive networks were set up to apprehend and intimidate those who tried to organise themselves. On more than 10 occasions people were detained, and some of the members of these groups deported.

In January 1984, the police began one of their customary round-ups, detaining about 12 refugees while others hid in order to avoid detention. On this occasion five exiles took shelter in the Venezuelan embassy in Santo Domingo alleging that they were persecuted by the police and receiving immediate diplomatic protection and the right to asylum from the Venezuelan government.

According to a strong criticism made by professor Emmanuel Blarchard, exiled in the country, in 1983 the Duvalier regime spent more than \$5,000,000 for the purpose of spying on the Haitian refugees resident in Canada, Venezuela, Trinidad, Jamaica, and the Dominican Republic. He claimed that in Santo Domingo alone, the Jean Claude Duvalier regime spent \$1,020,000 in persecution and in distorting the revolutionary struggle with the purpose of confronting refugees.

The official harassment to which Haitian refugees are subjected has been condemned many times in the Dominican Republic as being the outcome of policies co-ordinated by the two governments as a result of mutual favours.

Several national organisations, such as the Dominican Union for the Defense of Human Rights (UDHU) and the Dominican Human Rights Committee (CDH), have condemned the systematic witch-hunting and repression of which Haitian refugees in the provinces of San Pedro de Macoris and La Romana are the object. □

Sweden

Civil servants win pay raise

Three-week strike breaks government wage limits

After striking for three weeks, public workers won a victory May 20 when Sweden's Social Democratic government was forced to partially grant the workers' demands for a wage increase.

The 265,000-member Central State Civil Servants Organization won a 2 percent wage increase that will begin in December. The union had sought a 3.1 percent pay raise in addition to the 5 percent that it had already received as part of a national agreement accepted by the country's unions in February.

The strike was Sweden's largest in five years and one of the sharpest conflicts ever between the Swedish government and public employees.

The civil servants union launched a selective strike May 2 by calling 20,000 of its members off the job. This action shut down the airports, cut most rail transport, drastically reduced operations at customs houses, and curtailed many other government activities.

When union and government negotiators could not come to an agreement the government imposed a lock-out May 11 against another 80,000 public employees, mostly teachers. The objective of the lock-out was to drain the union of its funds. The union pays the full salary of striking members.

But the crippling of transportation and customs inspections disrupted trade and was costing the Swedish capitalist rulers more than \$9 million a day.

In this context, government negotiators offered a 2 percent wage increase. The union accepted the offer, which Rune Larsson, the union's chief negotiator, declared was "a victory for us."

The civil servants union did not go along with the national wage agreement approved by the labor movement as a whole in February because, it said, there was a gap between the wages paid in the private and public sectors. Public workers needed at least 3.1 percent more in order to catch up with workers employed by private companies.

Finance Minister Kjell-Olof Feldt had convinced the officials of most of the unions to accept a 5 percent limit on pay raises in order to help fight inflation. As a trade-off, he promised that consumer prices would not go up by more than 3 percent. He imposed a price freeze on March 8 that would give the government the power to enforce this freeze.

The civil servants union, however, did not go along with this proposal to limit wage increases to 5 percent. It argued that the two-year wage agreement it had negotiated last year gave it the right to seek wage adjustments to catch up with wage increases in the private sector.

The top officials of Sweden's main trade union federation, Landsorganisationen (LO — National Union Federation) attacked the Civil Servants Union as "irresponsible" in its May Day message.

With general elections coming up in September, the Social Democrats, who have been governing since 1982, hope to keep the lid on inflation. And most of the union officialdom is collaborating with them on achieving this goal.

Their aim of holding inflation under 3 percent, however, is utopian. Last year, in spite of a price freeze that lasted for several months, prices rose 8.2 percent. And in the first four months of 1985 they had already gone up 2.3 percent. With this inflation rate, the limits on pay raises will end up cutting workers' real wages.

Farmers have also been protesting against Prime Minister Olof Palme's policies. Shortly before the public employees' strike, farmers demonstrated against the government, demanding, among other things, the end of sales taxes on food products.

Since Palme's government was installed in October 1982, with the backing of most of the labor movement, its policies have been against the interests of Sweden's working people.

Its first measure was to devalue the krona by 16 percent. This made Swedish goods more competitive on the world market and helped keep up the profit levels of Swedish capitalists. For the workers it meant sharp increases in the prices of imported consumer goods. This, in effect, was a big cut in real wages.

Moreover, the Social Democratic government increased sales taxes and engineered cut-backs in social security, welfare, child care, and education. It is no wonder that support for the Social Democrats has been slipping in the opinion polls. A recent poll by the Sifo Institute showed a combined 53.3 percent support for the three main capitalist parties against the Social Democrats' 40.5 percent.

Palme admitted, "We offered the people hardships — more taxes and no increases in real wages, and that is what they have seen so far. But when we explain the record to them our support will rise." That optimistic note was sounded, however, before the public employees' strike. □

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Land reform targets poverty of countryside

Peasants benefit from agrarian law, development projects

By Ernest Harsch

OUAGADOUGOU — Burkina's popular revolution may have begun here in the capital, the largest urban center. But its future lies in the countryside.

Burkina is an overwhelmingly agrarian country, with very little industry. More than 90 percent of its 7 million people live and work on the land, most of them still engaged in subsistence farming or livestock herding. They are extremely poor, and have been kept so by nearly a century of imperialist oppression.

While most Burkinabè farm, the country still does not produce enough food to adequately feed its population, and each year food must be imported. Hunger and famine are a constant feature of life.

Ever since the National Council of the Revolution (CNR) seized power on Aug. 4, 1983, it has projected its twin goals as the elimination of imperialist domination and the development of Burkina's backward economy. Given the agricultural foundations of the economy, CNR leaders repeatedly stress that such development can only be based on major advances in farm production and a progressive transformation of agrarian relations. And without at least self-sufficiency in food, they add, there is no way Burkina can feel free from the imperialist grip.

"The CNR has chosen to make agriculture the nerve and principal lever of our economic and social development," President Thomas Sankara declared in a speech to tens of thousands last year during the celebrations marking the revolution's first anniversary.

"For the CNR," Sankara continued, "the point is to devote most of our investments and modernization efforts to the fields of agriculture and animal husbandry, especially in favor of food crops. This modernization policy, without which no social progress can be made, will be based on the increase in agricultural yield and on the actual development of all land that can be developed, as well as on the reorganization of agricultural production channels."

Social backwardness

The various agrarian reform measures initiated by the CNR flow from the specific features and level of development of Burkina's rural economy and social structure that existed on the eve of the revolution.

Unlike some other semicolonial countries — as in Latin America, for example — Burkina did not have a class of big landlords who owned large tracts of land and exploited a mass of land-hungry peasants or farmworkers. Burkina's rural society never evolved to that point.

Instead, the countryside was marked largely by precapitalist, and even prefeudal, forms of property and production relations.

When the French colonialists first arrived in the 1890s, they found that the land was not privately owned by individuals, but was communally owned. The indigenous societies were organized in tribes and kinship lineages, with each village collectively owning the land around it.

Traditionally, everyone who wanted to farm had a right to as much land as they could cultivate. One of the responsibilities of the village chiefs was to allocate land to households, and redistribute it when the need arose. If a peasant moved out of the area or died without leaving any descendants who wished to continue farming, the land automatically reverted to the use of the village as a whole. Newcomers or married sons setting up new households were entitled to allotments of land.

Though most peasants were very poor, there was generally no problem of landlessness.

There were social inequalities, nevertheless. Chiefs received tributes of various kinds and could demand that villagers work on the chiefs' fields. This system of tribute was especially developed among the Mossi, who today make up nearly half of Burkina's population. Among the Mossi, the chiefs and their lineage formed a nobility, called the *nakomce*. There were also forms of domestic slavery and servitude, primarily involving non-Mossi captives working in Mossi households.

Mossi society, like that of other peoples in what is now Burkina, was patriarchal. Women were subordinate and had few rights. They

were subject to forced marriage, and most Mossi marriages were arranged on the basis of exchanges of women between two lineages. Women could also be given to chiefs as tribute. (Forced marriage is still a problem today. Although officially abolished in 1940, it persists in fact in some parts of the countryside.)

Polygamy also existed and was connected to economic inequality among households. Chiefs and wealthier peasants had more wives and bigger families; they could thus cultivate larger amounts of land and had bigger harvests.

But because of the generally low level of economic development, these inequalities did not reach the same extremes as under capitalism or even under the semifeudal relations that developed, for example, in Ethiopia or the countries of North Africa. Social stratifications were blurred by various kinds of collective activity and by reciprocal obligations among members of the same community. During poor harvests, peasants with larger grain stocks were required, by custom, to give food and seed to those less fortunate.

Impact of colonialism

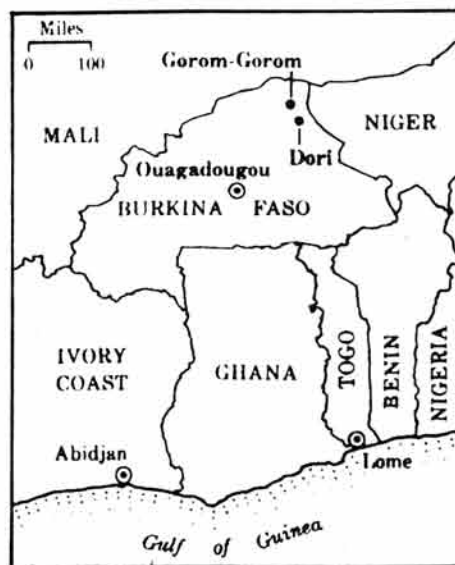
The advent of French colonialism greatly disrupted the indigenous societies. But because of the particular forms colonial rule took in Upper Volta (as Burkina was then called), many of the features of traditional society survive even today.

Unlike other European colonies in northern, eastern, or southern Africa, large tracts of land were not expropriated by European settlers. And unlike some of the other colonies of West Africa, trade, mining, or cash-crop production was not as extensively developed. This was because of Upper Volta's long distance from the main ports along the West African coast, its hot, dry climate, and the fact that it then had few known deposits of exploitable minerals.

But colonial rule did have a serious impact nevertheless. In some parts of the country, the colonial administration imposed the forced cultivation of cotton, and to a lesser extent peanuts (groundnuts), for export to the French market. These crops were grown on the basis of individual peasant cultivation.

Those peasants who grew cotton received extremely low prices for their produce; few were able to rise above a bare subsistence level. And because their labor was now devoted to growing cotton, they could not raise as many food crops and had to buy some food on the market. In years of drought, they fell prey to usurious merchants and tribal chiefs, sinking into debt and obligation.

Most peasants remained engaged in subsis-



tence food crop production, however. Yet they too felt the exactions of colonial rule. The French authorities imposed a so-called head tax on every rural resident between the ages of 18 and 60, with nonpayment punishable by imprisonment. Since the traditional societies traded largely on the basis of barter and non-convertible local currencies (cowrie shells), this forced villagers to seek new sources of French money. Some got it through the cultivation of cash crops, others by migrating on a seasonal basis to neighboring colonies to work on French-owned plantations, mines, or railways.

In fact, Upper Volta's main economic role within so-called French West Africa was as a supplier of cheap migrant labor, particularly to Ivory Coast and Niger. Since the head tax itself was insufficient to compel enough peasants from Upper Volta to seek work as migrant laborers, the French authorities also imposed forced labor. Young men were conscripted by chiefs or seized by police and sent abroad, under the most barbaric labor conditions and for miserably low pay.

So severe were the exactions of French colonial rule that some 100,000 Mossi had fled to neighboring Ghana, then a British colony, by the early 1930s.

While colonial rule brought capitalist market relations into the countryside to a limited extent, it did not overturn the previous communal property relations or significantly raise the overall technical level. Even in the areas of cotton cultivation, land remained communally owned.

The French imperialists basically harnessed the existing precapitalist social forms to their system of colonial exploitation. This required a minimal investment on their part, but ensured handsome colonial superprofits.

In the process, however, the role of the tribal chiefs themselves was substantially transformed. In the past, they had been accountable to the villagers and could be deposed if they demanded too much tribute or governed in an especially arbitrary or despotic manner. But under French colonialism they became virtual agents of the colonial administration, and could be appointed or removed at the will of the French governor.

In place of the customary tributes (or in addition to them), the chiefs collected the colonial taxes, reserving a portion for their own use. They imprisoned those who could not pay. They "recruited" labor for the French companies. They forged close ties with private merchants and themselves engaged in usury. They often treated the land under their control as if it were their private property, demanding payment from peasants for land allocations. Chiefs became richer, and members of the royal lineage, the *nakomce*, developed into a stratum of better-off farmers.

Even before the end of direct colonial rule in 1960, some of the most repressive features of colonialism were formally ended, such as forced labor and the compulsory cultivation of cotton. But by then market forces were strong



Burkinabè peasants rely almost entirely on hand tools.

enough to maintain many of the same economic patterns.

Mired in poverty

Because of the abysmal poverty of the countryside and the continued need for at least some cash income, hundreds of thousands still sought employment abroad each year. But the money they brought back was usually not enough to do more than pay taxes or buy a few household goods. And the fact that many young men were absent from their villages meant that agriculture itself stagnated.

Cotton was still grown for the world market, as were other cash crops. The peasants thus continued to be exploited and oppressed by imperialism, despite the attainment of formal independence.

Today, cotton accounts for nearly half of the country's export earnings. Stockbreeding, which is carried out primarily in the northern regions by seminomadic Toureg, Bella, and Peul herders, accounts for 13 percent of the gross domestic product. Much livestock is also exported, mainly to Ivory Coast.

The countryside as a whole remains extremely poor. Burkina's overall per capita income is one of the lowest in the world, just a little more than \$100 a year; in the countryside it is even lower. Little health care or other social services are available outside the main towns. Schools are practically nonexistent in rural areas; some 98 percent of rural inhabitants cannot read or write. Only 10 percent of all peasants use draft animals for plowing; the rest must rely on the *daba*, a traditional hand tool. Wood burning accounts for more than 90 percent of Burkina's energy production (a practice that exacerbates soil erosion and de-

forestation).

Every neocolonial regime since independence in 1960 promised to carry out agrarian reforms and invest new funds in agriculture. This was pure demagoguery. In 1982, just 4 percent of the budget was allocated to the Ministry for Rural Development.

Those resources that were invested in agriculture were devoted primarily to boosting cash crop cultivation for export. Since the 1960s, the area devoted to cotton production has increased significantly (following a major slump in the 1940s and 1950s). A few large-scale agricultural projects along the Volta River, which were managed by government institutions and French companies, often led to increased indebtedness for the peasants involved. Moreover, the terms of trade for these export crops continued to worsen, as the prices the peasants received for them fell in relation to what they had to pay for imported foods or manufactured goods.

The development of the Banfora sugar refinery in the southwest, which now exports sugar, led to the displacement of 400 peasant families from their land.

At the same time, the production of traditional food crops (like millet, sorghum, and maize) has stagnated. Last year, the same amount of millet and sorghum was grown as in 1960, although the population is now 50 percent larger. Even in the best of times, Burkinabè only consume an average of 1,859 calories a day (compared with 3,411 in France).

In some areas, private property in land began to develop, as wealthier peasants engaged in production for the market secured individual titles of land ownership. Land

speculators arose, primarily in urban areas, but also in some of the more fertile parts of the countryside. As population pressures increased and the earlier abundance of arable land declined, some peasants were forced to rent land or enter into sharecropping arrangements. Peasants with individual land titles who fell into debt could lose their farms. To a very limited extent, the problem of land hunger and landlessness also emerged.

All these trends were likely to become much sharper with any further development of capitalist relations in the countryside.

In his speech to the revolution's first anniversary celebrations, Sankara stressed that this agricultural strategy of the previous regimes, "which consisted of investing first of all in the most profitable sectors in the hope that the benefits from these investments would accrue and serve to develop the other sectors, has rather contributed to the disorganization of the national economy and to the worsening of social injustices between urban centers and rural areas."

The disastrous state of agriculture has been highlighted by the current drought. Since most peasants live at a bare subsistence level, poor rains and crop failure have now exposed some 1 million of them to serious hunger and famine conditions. In the north, at the edge of the Sahara Desert, many livestock herders have been forced to sell off their cattle at low prices in order to buy food.

Massive hunger — that is the result of nearly a century of imperialist domination.

Land reform law

Within weeks of coming to power, the CNR adopted a series of emergency measures to deal with the immediate effects of the drought. This included mobilizing resources and volunteers to get food to those in the hardest hit regions.¹

More important than such short-term steps were the measures designed to transform the very face of agriculture in Burkina: to fight the exploitation of the peasantry, to give them land security, to increase production and productivity, and to build up the foundations for Burkina's future industrialization.

In an interview in the May 3, 1984, Italian daily *Il Manifesto*, President Sankara outlined the basic thrust of the CNR's agrarian reform policy. It would help "modernize and diversify agriculture," he said, to the detriment of those interests that "have always exploited the peasants." It would also "give land back to the people. This is fundamental. If the land is not owned by the people who till it, there is no incentive to improve it and introduce the needed transformations."

Three months later, on Aug. 4, 1984, the first anniversary of the revolution, the CNR promulgated its main agrarian reform law (see following document).



Women sell farm produce at market in Pô.

This law declared all land in Burkina to be state property, whatever its previous status. It also nationalized all forests, mineral deposits, sources of water, and other natural resources.

Since most peasants did not previously own the land they worked, this nationalization — going from communal property to state property — did not appear to them to bring any big change in their legal relationship to the land. But it did eliminate the private property in land that had already developed in some areas, either legally or in practice, and it prevented any further extension of it.

Since farmland cannot now be bought, sold, or mortgaged, peasants who fall into debt to village chiefs, merchants, or wealthier peasants need no longer fear losing their land. Instead of a title of ownership, they can get, if they want, a title of occupation, which guarantees them the secure right to work the land.

In January 1985, a supplementary measure provided for the imposition of an occupation tax on undeveloped estates and developed commercial and industrial estates in order to raise funds to make land available to those peasants who do not now have any. It also formally ended the issuance of land titles.

A Burkinabè News Agency dispatch commented on this measure, "The abolition of the land ownership title brings an end to the tendency of a minority to abusively exploit the people through property transactions. Before this law was passed, the affluent people in society were able to buy several estates at the same time to the detriment of the majority of the people."

The nationalization of the land likewise affects the few French and other imperialist con-

cessions that exist here. Though they can no longer own the land they rest on, they can obtain leases or permits from the government to continue their operations.

By declaring all land and resources state property, the government is now in a position to determine the rational and planned use of the land. Market forces will still have a strong influence over what is produced, but they can be more easily regulated, and peasants can be better protected from their negative effects.

The traditional village chiefs, who previously controlled the distribution and allocation of communal land, can no longer do so. This had been an important basis of their power, enabling them to distribute uncultivated lands for their own profit in return for favors or direct cash payments. Those powers of distribution, according to the August 1984 agrarian reform law, are now in the hands of the government, the peasant organizations, and the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution (CDRs), the popular bodies that have been set up in virtually every one of Burkina's more than 7,000 villages.

The role of the peasants themselves in carrying out land reform measures is stressed repeatedly in the agrarian reform law. Acting through the CDRs and other mass organizations, they are being encouraged to take an active part in deciding how to best exploit the land, in establishing credit facilities, in setting up cooperatives, in helping determine producer and consumer prices, and in attending literacy classes.

"The rural masses must be organized in democratic structures to rationally occupy and exploit the rural land," the decree states.

Weakening the chiefs

In addition to the agrarian reform law, the CNR has taken other steps that will further undermine the political and social power of the traditional chiefs, who often stand as an obstacle to progressive change in the countryside.

In late 1983, the government decided to cut off the free supply of electricity and water to the palace of the Moro Naba, the Mossi king who traces his dynasty back to the 11th century.

This was followed in early February 1984 by the publication of a CNR decree abolishing all "payments, gratuities, and other benefits of the traditional chiefs." They can thus no longer collect tributes from their subjects, demand that villagers work for free on the chiefs' farms, or receive the monthly government subsidies they had gotten ever since independence in 1960.

The same decree also outlined a strict separation between the chieftancies and political and government institutions. It overturned a 1974 law that facilitated intervention by political parties in the selection of new chiefs following the death of previous ones, a measure that had enabled bourgeois politicians to place their own supporters in positions of tribal authority and to engage in all sorts of political maneuvering. The CNR's decree also deprived

1. For a more detailed account of the seriousness of Burkina's famine and the steps being taken to combat it, see the April 15 *Intercontinental Press*.

the chiefs of any role in collecting state taxes.

That latter task is now carried out by the mass-based CDRs. By taking on this and many other tasks in the villages, the CDRs are providing an alternative pole of political authority to that of the chiefs. Since they function through regular public assemblies of villagers and through elected leadership bodies, they have proven especially attractive to rural youth, who are most estranged from the old, authoritarian tribal structures.²

"By no longer sustaining the idea of the Mossi chiefs' irresistible hold over power," President Sankara said in an interview last year, "we are letting that hold die out of its own accord."

That will take some time, and cannot be accomplished by the simple signing of a decree. The chiefs are also custodians of cultural traditions and religious beliefs. They are family patriarchs, and many villagers are related to them, directly or indirectly, by ties of kinship. Some chiefs have sought to use their authority in those spheres for political purposes. Because of the chiefs' continued influence, the leaderships of some of the early CDRs, in the first months after the revolution, were captured by supporters of the chiefs (often acting in league with leaders of the outlawed bourgeois political parties).

Overcoming such influence will require some care by the revolutionary leadership — and not only in the villages. There are employees of government ministries here in Ouagadougou, including progressive-minded individuals, who continue to hold the Moro Naba in high esteem. They regard him as a symbol of Mossi cultural traditions and of the past resistance of the Mossi empire to the French colonial conquest.

While opposing any attempts by the chiefs to continue playing a political role, the CNR leaders have vowed to let them carry out their cultural and religious functions. According to Sankara, that will be the case as long as the chiefs practice them "in their [proper] setting and do not attack the revolutionary process."

Blows against traders

Just as the CDRs are providing a counter to the chiefs, they are also undermining the power of another stratum that has long exploited the peasantry — the rural traders.

These merchants, some of whom have become quite wealthy, have dominated the domestic market for decades. They sell food and other consumer goods to villagers. They buy up most of the food grains sold by those peasants who produce more than they need for their own subsistence. The state-run National Grain Board (OFNACER) only has the capacity to buy up some 10 to 20 percent of the grain sold on the market.

Because they own transport and storage facilities, the merchants often hoard scarce commodities, such as food grains, to force up prices. And because of the isolation of the countryside, villagers in the past had few alternative sources of supply. Rural traders also engage in usury, lending out money or seeds at exorbitant rates.

Shortly after the CNR came to power, it imposed price controls on key essentials, including food. This only had a limited impact, since the CDRs were not yet strong enough to effectively enforce the price controls, and the traders could in any case retaliate by simply withholding their goods from the market.

Over time, however, the CDRs and various state agencies have been able to offer the peasants alternative services to those of the private traders. The CDRs have begun to distribute emergency food aid directly to people in famine areas, bypassing the traders. The OFNACER is expanding and decentralizing its grain storage facilities, with CDR activists taking on a direct role in managing them. It has also raised the prices it pays to farmers for their grain. CDR volunteers have built scores of new outlets for the state consumer distribution agency, Faso Yaar, most of them located in the villages.

Steps have been taken to combat smuggling by the private traders. In February 1984, for example, CDR activists in Gorom Gorom, in the far north, arrested some traders who were caught trying to smuggle agricultural produce across the border. But in Dori, some 50 kilometers away, it was members of the local CDR executive bureau who were caught acting in league with a group of traders to buy up green beans for illegal sale abroad. The CDRs' national secretary-general, Pierre Ouédraogo, intervened to dissolve this corrupt CDR bureau. A new one was then elected at a mass meeting.

To lessen the peasants' dependence on the rural traders and usurers for credit, new sources of rural funds have been established since the beginning of the revolution: the National Agricultural Credit Fund (CNCA) and

the Revolutionary Union of Banks (UREBA).

The UREBA was set up specifically to promote agricultural and agroindustrial development projects in the provinces. Its capital is entirely Burkinabè (51 percent of the shares being held by the government). The UREBA makes funds available only to peasant organizations, cooperatives, and other associations. This will benefit the poorer peasants the most, since the better-off peasants have easier access to other sources of credit, on an individual basis.

One measure that has lightened the financial load on all poor peasants was the abolition, as of January 1 of this year, of the old "head tax" imposed under French rule. Under it, every peasant had to pay between 300 and 550 CFA francs³ a year, whatever their income. For the majority who farm at a subsistence or below-subsistence level, often without even selling any produce on the market, this was an onerous burden.

Technical and marketing assistance is also being provided to peasants. Some is being channeled through government agencies and some through various international organizations, such as UNESCO and a Swiss agricultural assistance agency.

Among the state-run bodies are the Rural Promotion Centers (CPR) and the Young Agriculturalists' Training centers (FJA). They provide credit, tools, and instruction in modern farming techniques.

The FJA has existed here since before the revolution. But it now combines its technical instruction with political education. According to Topan Mory Ahmed, the FJA head in Dé-dougou, in western Burkina, "A farmer without political and ideological training is a citizen who can be manipulated and exploited at will."

The National Agricultural Equipment Center (CNEA) now has 10 workshops that produce plows, carts, and other farming implements. The CNEA has already gotten 33,281 pieces of farm equipment into the hands of farmers, at low prices.

Special attention is being paid to training rural women — who make up a majority of the rural population and who perform much of the hardest labor in the fields. Trained women cadres, called *animatrices*, are organized by the Provincial Organs for Agricultural Development (OPDA) to teach and organize other women in the countryside to improve agricultural production, as well as sanitation, health, contraception, and maternal care.

Peasant organizations and cooperatives

There is no national peasants organization today. That means that the CDRs (the majority of whose members are peasants) provide the main instrument for advancing their interests.

Nevertheless, there are numerous local organizations and cooperative movements, some of which were set up before the revolution.

In Bam Province, north of Ouagadougou,



Emblem of the Revolutionary Union of Banks. UREBA provides financial assistance to peasant cooperatives.

2. For more on the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution, see the article on the CDRs in the May 13 *IP*, as well as the interview with CDR National Secretary-General Pierre Ouédraogo in the same issue.

3. About 500 CFA francs are equivalent to US\$1.

the Bam Cooperative Society (SCOBAM) was first launched in 1966. It is composed primarily of farmers engaged in the cultivation of green beans for the export market, grown on irrigated fields around the perimeter of Lake Bam. But they too have been severely hit by the drought, as well as by marketing problems. Since there are insufficient storage facilities, the beans must be quickly shipped by plane to their markets in Europe. But last year, when the sole international airline servicing Burkina (Air Afrique) reduced its flights, much of these peasants' crops perished.

In Baadnogo, in the same province, 81 women in a village of 609 people have organized to collectively cultivate a field. They are receiving some technical assistance from UNESCO.

In the northwestern province of Yatenga, pre-cooperative formations called *groupements* are organized by the Regional Development Organization (ORD), which comes under the government's Ministry of Rural Development. The ORD provides them with technical aid and credit and helps them set up cereal banks, village stores, and pharmacies. There are some 1,000 *groupements*, with a total of 26,000 members. About a third of them are specifically for women.

Alongside these *groupements*, which are supervised by the government's ORD, there are also self-managed cooperatives in Yatenga, as there are in other provinces, called *naam* cooperatives. Under the slogan, "You do not develop someone, you develop yourselves," these cooperatives organize collective cultivation of fields and other tasks. There are about 1,500 of them in Burkina today, each with at least 60 members.

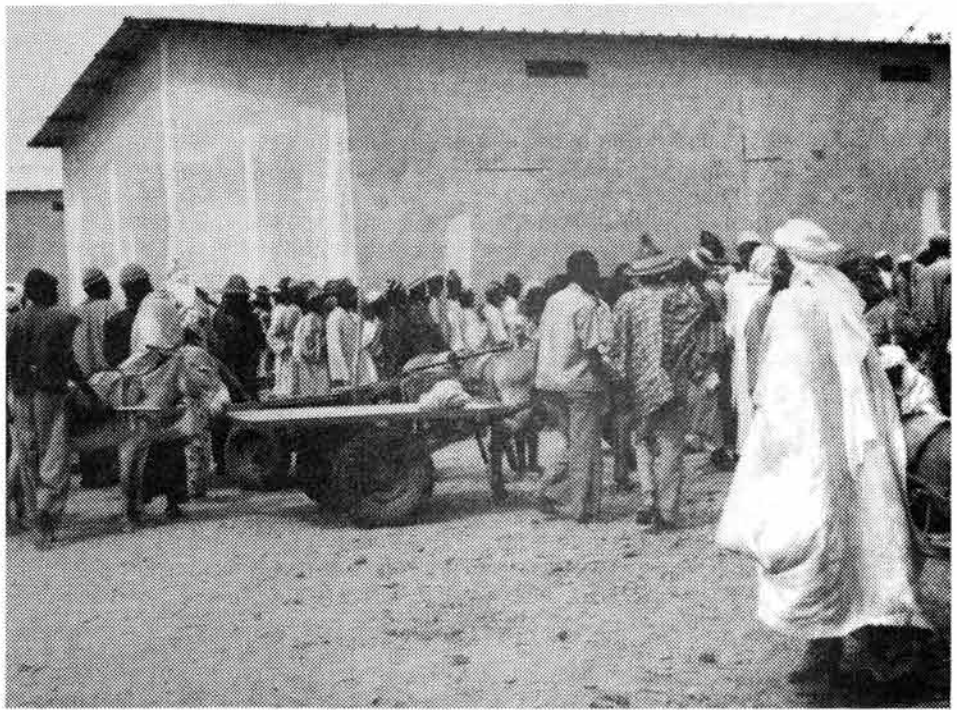
The *naam* cooperatives take their inspiration from the forms of collective labor that existed among the Mossi prior to the colonial conquest. Similar forms existed among other peoples as well. For instance in Kéné Dougou Province, in the west, which is populated mostly by the Sénoufo people, peasants in each village are today organizing to collectively cultivate common fields, devoted to both food crops and cotton, in addition to their own individual fields.

These examples show how some of the vestiges of traditional communal society can be used to advance more modern forms of collective labor and production.

The CDRs, both in the villages and urban neighborhoods, have also taken advantage of this tradition of collective work to organize voluntary labor projects, called Works of Common Interest (TIC), such as building classrooms, health clinics, markets, and other public facilities.

The CNR is directly encouraging this development. According to the August 1984 agrarian reform law, "In the zones developed by the state or under its responsibility, collective forms of occupation and exploitation should be applied."

At the same time, it has made it clear that the peasants are free to farm individually or



Peasants outside state-run grain warehouse. Government is expanding facilities to purchase grains from farmers, and to build up stocks for periods of poor harvests.

cooperatively, as they choose. "We will not impose the creation of cooperatives," Sankara has said, "but obviously we will support their spontaneous formation."

Increasing production

The CNR has set an ambitious goal of increasing agricultural production as rapidly as possible.

This includes crops destined for export, which bring in valuable foreign earnings. To further encourage those peasants engaged in their cultivation, the government raised the producer prices on cotton, karité nuts, and sesame seeds just before the 1983-84 season. Those prices had been set too low in the past, contributing to a drop in production and to smuggling of crops to neighboring countries, where they fetched higher prices.

Above all, however, the government is stressing greater food production. In an interview with *Intercontinental Press* Youssouf Ouédraogo, the minister of planning and popular development, stated that the government has "a strategic objective of self-sufficiency in food."

The producer prices for millet, maize, and sorghum have also been raised. This year, output of these crops is projected to reach 1.5 million tons, about 50 percent more than last year.

In an effort to better coordinate the domestic market for commercially grown food crops, a national committee has been set up to organize agricultural, livestock, artisanal, and trade fairs in various provincial centers. These fairs not only help give a clearer idea of what kinds of foods are produced in the different provinces, but will help promote greater interpro-

vincial trade.

Ways to increase the total area of Burkina's cultivated farmland are also being studied. At this point, some 20 percent of the country's total land surface is considered arable, but only 5 percent of it is actually under cultivation.

Water holds the key

The biggest single obstacle to greater agricultural production — either by expanding the amount of farmland or raising the productivity of existing farms — is Burkina's serious shortage of usable water.

This affects farms and farmers alike. Some two-thirds of the entire population does not have easy access to water, especially drinking water. Women and men must often travel more than 10 kilometers to find some. And even then it is generally not safe. Only 18 urban centers have any running water at all, and usually it is extremely inadequate.

In the entire country, only some 8,500 hectares (about 21,000 acres) of farmland are irrigated, out of an estimated 150,000 hectares that can potentially be irrigated.

So today, farmers must rely almost entirely on the rains. Even when the country is not experiencing drought, as it now is, the rains are insufficient and unreliable. The climate is marked by a long dry season and a brief rainy season. Burkina's soil does not retain water well, and much of what falls during the rains evaporates quickly. Sometimes when it does rain it comes down in torrential downpours that strip away the topsoil.

Overcoming this problem is a central feature of Burkina's rural development program. For the first time in the country's history, the CNR

has set up a Ministry of Water. It has launched numerous projects, both large-scale and small, to better utilize the existing sources of water and to tap new ones.

The most ambitious project so far has been the construction of a dam and irrigation canals in the fertile Sourou Valley west of here — a project that every government since 1960 demagogically promised to carry out, to no avail. It has taken the revolution to realize it.

The construction of the Sourou dam, which began in late April 1984 and was completed within a few months, was carried out almost entirely by volunteer labor mobilized through the CDRs. It was done at a fraction of the cost estimated by previous regimes.

"Our land was always used to nourish the imperialists and their lackeys. The Sourou Valley must be used exclusively for food crops," the CDRs declared during the construction of the dam.

Out of the nearly 30,000 hectares that are being developed in the Sourou, some 16,000 will be irrigated. Most of the rainfed land and about half of the irrigated land will be devoted to food grains, rice, and market gardening. Some land will also be used for growing sugar cane for a new sugar refinery. In addition, grazing lands will be developed for cattle, so that stockbreeders can also benefit from the Sourou project.

Throughout the country, many small retention dams, reservoirs, and wells are being built. During 1984 alone, some 1,150 water sources were developed, out of 17,856 that are planned by the year 1990. If that is achieved, it may be possible to provide each rural inhabitant with an average of 25 liters of water a day, a very modest amount. Today, there are many peasants who do not have access to even 5 liters a day, especially during the dry season.

Development program

The development of such water sources is only one part of a broader economic program that is currently under way. Called the People's Development Program (PPD), it began in October 1984 and is slated to last 15 months. At its conclusion, a new five-year plan will be drawn up.

Much of the PPD is directed at improving the economic and living conditions in the countryside. With investments slated at some \$320 million (a large amount for Burkina), it involves the construction of roads, hundreds of grain storage bins and animal vaccination centers, housing, schools, health clinics, sports fields, markets, electrical lines and transmission centers, etc. Some of these facilities have already been built, often in the areas around the provincial capitals. Despite shortages of resources and other difficulties, efforts are being made to extend them into the rest of the countryside as well.

Most of the specific projects in the PPD were proposed and discussed at the local level, through the CDRs.

"The PPD, in its central outlook, breaks with all the technocratic, bureaucratic methods

that we had in the past for drawing up our programs," Planning Minister Youssouf Ouédraogo told me. "Contrary to the practice of the reactionary regimes, we have established a program that was elaborated with the participation of the masses. The masses themselves, in the villages, expressed their needs, identified the projects they required, and determined how they would be accomplished and according to what schedule."

Some of the funds — and most of the labor — for these projects is being provided by the villagers themselves. Because of the local involvement in their planning, Ouédraogo pointed out, it was possible to cut costs. The animal vaccination centers in practice cost less to build than the authorities in Ouagadougou had originally budgeted for.

In addition to these rural projects, aimed largely at improving agricultural production and the conditions of the peasants, the PPD also includes some important projects aimed at strengthening Burkina's small industrial base. This primarily involves the development of various agroindustries, such as plants for the production of edible oils, soya milk, soap, absorbent cotton (for medical purposes), textiles, etc.

Beyond the immediate framework of the PPD, some longer-term industrialization projects have also been launched, or are in the planning stages. These include the Poura gold mine, which began production in October 1984 and promises to earn Burkina some \$12 million a year. The construction of a railway from Ouagadougou to Tambao in the north has begun, opening the way for the eventual exploitation of the rich manganese deposits near Tambao. International financing is now being arranged to launch the construction of the Komienga hydroelectric dam in the southeast.

As Burkina's industry develops, the countryside will benefit in various ways. Local agroindustries will provide a greatly expanded domestic market for agricultural produce. Mining ventures can earn the country much-needed foreign exchange, which can be used to further develop the economy as a whole and lessen Burkina's dependence on the exports of just a few agricultural products. New industries can also provide jobs for unemployed youths in the villages.

The development of mining and industry will likewise lead to a growth of Burkina's tiny working class, which now numbers only some 20,000 industrial workers. The largest enterprise is the Banfora sugar refinery, which employs 2,700 workers, and only a few others employ more than 200 workers.

The small size of the working class is also reflected in Burkina's low level of urbanization. Ouagadougou has at most 300,000 inhabitants and Bobo Dioulasso some 100,000, out of a total population of 7 million. In contrast, in neighboring Ivory Coast, which is much more economically developed, Abidjan alone has nearly 3 million people, out of a countrywide population of 8.5 million.

The growth of Burkina's working class will

be important for the future of the Burkinabè revolution, and will open up new possibilities for social advance. And since the workers are the peasants' surest allies, that will also greatly strengthen the struggles that they are waging in the countryside.

'A popular school'

The agrarian reform, the PPD, and the other economic development projects are all expressions of the class struggle within Burkina and of Burkina's overall fight against imperialist domination.

In trying to carry through these programs, the revolution's leadership has met with opposition, both abroad and at home.

While some of the imperialist hostility has been overt (support for Burkinabè counterrevolutionaries, blackmail, and direct threats), it has also been reflected in a reluctance to provide Burkina with the kind of loans and economic assistance it needs to finance its development projects. This is despite the fact that Burkina has been successful in obtaining some important economic aid from imperialist countries.

"Of course," Youssouf Ouédraogo commented, "some of our enemies are not glad of what we are doing through the PPD. They are trying to sabotage it." He noted that although certain "financial elements" abroad had signed agreements with Burkina, "they are hesitating to give the money" by raising all sorts of bureaucratic obstructions.

A similar situation is evident here within the country. There are traders, corrupt officials, and businessmen who do not favor the PPD, because they do not see any way to rake in extravagant profits from it. Some have sought to sabotage it.

According to an editorial in the Dec. 21, 1984, Ouagadougou weekly *Carrefour Africain*, "The attitude of reaction is not surprising. It sees the PPD as another way for the revolution to take concrete measures to benefit the people. It has turned out, especially in the provinces, that the entrepreneurs do not find the PPD of benefit to their businesses."

That is why, the editorial continued, the Council of Ministers expanded the scope of the People's Revolutionary Tribunals to deal with economic crimes, so that it would be possible "to penalize the greedy entrepreneurs and their accomplices who aim to sabotage the PPD for their own profit."

The leadership here has meanwhile made it clear that it does not propose outlawing private business as such, but illegal business practices.

"We say that private investment is guaranteed and even helped by the CNR," Youssouf Ouédraogo told me. "But private investment must follow the political line that has been defined, to put into place a national economy that is self-sufficient and independent."

By carrying through the PPD, the agrarian reform, and the other measures in face of political opposition and enormous objective diffi-

culties, Burkina's working people will also learn much.

"The PPD is a popular school for the masses," Ouédraogo said, "to raise their level of political consciousness, to train them, to bring them new methods of work and new forms of

organization, so that they will be able to themselves solve the problems that come up in the provinces."

In an introduction to a booklet outlining the various aspects of the PPD, Sankara stressed that the program will "educate our people to

count primarily on their own forces, to test their capacity for mobilization and organization. . . . Through carrying out its projects, the People's Development Program aims to affirm our will for independence and demonstrate our ability to be ourselves." □

DOCUMENTS

Burkina's agrarian reform law

'To improve the conditions of the laboring masses'

[The following is the text, slightly abridged, of Burkina's agrarian reform law. It was signed by President Thomas Sankara on Aug. 4, 1984, in Ouagadougou, the Burkinabè capital. The portions that we have omitted cover the procedures for demarcating rural and urban land and for publicizing titles of tenure. The text and subheads have been taken from the Aug. 17, 1984, issue of the Ouagadougou weekly *Carrefour Africain*. The translation from the French is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Preamble

As the Discourse on Political Orientation* emphasizes, because of imperialist domination and exploitation Burkina Faso remains a backward agrarian country where the primary sector (notably agriculture and stockraising) occupies more than 90 percent of the population, but without assuring self-sufficiency in food for the courageous Burkinabè people.

This paradoxical situation combines with other factors to explain the rural exodus, the massive migration of the youth from our countryside toward other countries, but especially toward the national urban centers, thus creating many social problems, of which the most pressing is the housing problem.

These two economic and social factors adequately show the importance of the land in our country, especially since the advent of the CNR [National Council of the Revolution] and the launching of the RDP [democratic and popular revolution].

To give full meaning and reality to the revolutionary principle of "all power to the people" and to guarantee to our militant people the necessary material, political, and legal conditions to fully attain it, the CNR and its government, by expressing the profound aspirations of the basic classes and strata of the democratic and popular revolution, especially the workers and peasants, have decided to elaborate a new land code and to lay down the guiding principles for a reorganization of rural society.

Indeed, the revolutionary objectives of self-sufficiency in food and housing for all can only

be attained with an agrarian and land system that allows a rational occupation and utilization of the soil, that is, from the perspective of productivity and social justice.

Because of the interaction between the sociopolitical structure on the one hand and the land and agrarian structures on the other, land and agrarian law in Burkina Faso was marked by a bourgeois and feudal stamp and thus used against the laboring masses.

The struggle launched on Aug. 4, 1983, by our militant people is an anti-imperialist struggle, a struggle for national independence, hence a struggle for genuine economic independence. It is within this noble course that the present land and agrarian reform must be placed and understood. It is a reform that aims to promote the country's economy on the basis of its own resources and to improve the physical conditions of all the laboring masses.

Homeland or death, we will win.

Article 1. National Landed Property (DFN) is created, composed of all the land situated within the national territorial borders and that acquired by the state and its subsidiary public organizations abroad.

Composition of the DFN

Article 2. This National Landed Property includes:

- a. The lands previously defined or classified as the public property of the state and its subsidiary public organizations.
- b. The lands — whether allocated or unallocated, whether granted or ungranted — of the state and its subsidiary public organizations.
- c. The lands covered by property titles (land titles) in the name of individuals or legal entities holding them as a private right.
- d. The lands affected by custom.
- e. The lands belonging to the state and its subsidiary public organizations situated abroad.

Article 3. The National Landed Property is by full right the exclusive property of the state.

Article 4. The property titles (land titles) previously issued to individuals or legal entities are annulled.

They may be replaced by titles of tenure [occupation].

Article 5. The lands of the DFN — except for those located abroad and those that may be

ceded according to international conventions determining national boundaries with neighboring states — are inalienable, unalterable, and unattachable.

Management of the DFN lands

Article 11. The management of the DFN is assured by the minister of lands and, by delegation, the subsidiary public organizations and Burkinabè diplomatic and consular representatives abroad.

Article 12. The minister of lands will see to the surveying and registering of the urban and rural zones.

Article 13. Certain immovable properties of the DFN, because of their character, purpose, or attribution, benefit from special management and protective measures. They are:

- a. Waterways and their channels, their sources and tributaries, lakes, ponds and their surrounding land, within their legal limits.
- b. Railways, roads, telegraph and telephone lines and posts, all kinds of transport routes, with their legal lands and dependencies.
- c. Airports, hangars, and terminals, as well as their dependencies, with their lands and services, as defined by international regulations and national laws.
- d. Public water and energy utilities.
- e. National ground and air defense installations.
- f. Public monuments, halls, markets, and demarcated cemeteries.
- g. Mineral deposits and quarries.
- h. In general, properties of any kind that have a direct public usage.

Article 14. The immovable properties enumerated in Article 13 include grounds bordering on public facilities, whose nature and extent will be determined according to the purpose assigned to the said lands.

Article 15. No compensation is due to owners of buildings and other installations because of these conditions, unless their implementation requires the destruction of structures or plantations belonging to such owners.

Article 16. The protection, conservation, and utilization of the immovable properties enumerated in Article 13 are regulated by the authorities responsible for the lands in question.

* A major programmatic speech given by President Sankara on Oct. 2, 1983. For the text of the speech, see the Jan. 21, 1985, *Intercontinental Press*.

Different titles of occupation of DFN lands

Article 17. Administrative services occupy DFN lands through administrative titles that give them a right of tenure.

Other legal public and private entities, Burkinabè and foreign, as well as individuals, benefit from either:

a. A lease (a contract of a determined or undetermined duration),

b. A permit for urban residency or exploitation (conferring on the beneficiary the ownership of its products and development), or,

c. Ordinary or special administrative authorizations of a strictly individual and revocable character, conferring on these individuals or organizations the right to extract materials; establish water sources; exercise the right to hunt, fish, or cut trees; or set up a trade.

Conditions of allocation, occupation, and exploitation of DFN lands

Article 18. The urban or rural lands of the DFN are allocated to those who have a real social need for them, without distinction of sex or matrimonial status, according to the priorities established by the law.

In certain cases the occupation of DFN lands involves payment of rent.

All beneficiaries of a title of tenure for a portion of DFN land will continue to occupy and actively exploit it in accordance with its purpose and specific conditions.

Article 19. Urban lands of the DFN set aside by the residential allotment plans are allocated by committees that must include the competent CDR [Committee for the Defense of the Revolution] bureaus, according to the principle of one lot per person or household.

Article 20. The allocation of rural land is made in the same way, with the participation of the village CDR bureau.

Article 21. The management of rural land will be carried out with a view to integrating all rural activities — agriculture, stockraising, and forestry, taking into account the natural vocation of the area — into the strategy of self-sufficiency in foodstuffs.

Article 22. Every economic and social development project, of a national or local scope, must necessarily include a forestry program in the form of planting tree groves, plantations, parks, or public gardens.

Article 23. Any part of the national territory may be classified as a conservation area for flora, fauna, soil, subsoil, water, atmosphere, and generally any natural environment of a particular interest that needs to be protected from degradation or artificial intervention that would alter its appearance, composition, or evolution, conforming to the provisions of the Forestry Code.

Article 24. For a better integration of rural activities, an area for animal pasturage will be set aside in each developed zone, according to the conditions set forth in the Rural Code.

Article 25. The rural masses must be organized in democratic structures to rationally occupy and exploit the rural land.

All action to modernize agriculture, stock-

raising, or soil conservation must have this collective strategy.

Article 26. In the zones developed by the state or under its responsibility, collective forms of occupation and exploitation should be applied.

Article 27. The equipment of the peasant groups, both in materials and productive factors, will be assured through popular savings funds and self-managed credit banks.

Article 28. The ministers in charge of rural development and the National General Secretariat of the CDRs will see to the setting up of these structures.

Article 29. However, this does not exclude individual or family forms of occupation and exploitation.

Article 30. The educating, informing, and organizing of the peasant masses must be made

an integral part of their CDR structures.

Article 31. Exchanges of information and the training of the peasant masses will be done within the framework of intervillage, interdepartmental, and interprovincial relations, through meetings, conferences and debates, fairs, and mass literacy classes.

Article 32. The fixing of purchase prices to producers for agricultural and livestock products, as well as prices for the sale of consumer goods, must involve the democratic organizations of the farmers and livestock raisers.

Article 33. The ministers of trade and rural development, in collaboration with the National General Secretariat of the CDRs, will organize institutions for the marketing of agricultural and livestock products, favoring interprovincial trade with the aim of organizing and integrating the national market. □

10 AND 20 YEARS AGO



June 9, 1975

More information has come to light implicating former President John F. Kennedy in attempts to assassinate Cuban Premier Fidel Castro.

Retired Maj. Gen. Edward G. Lansdale told the *New York Times* in a May 30 interview that in late 1961, Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, acting on behalf of President Kennedy, ordered him to prepare "contingency plans" to eliminate Castro.

General Lansdale told *Times* reporter Nicholas M. Horrock that he tried to find "20 or 30" carefully selected Cuban exiles with "political support" who could start a popular uprising against the Castro government. The plan, as it evolved in 1962, was "never feasible," he said, because he "never found such Cubans."

It is doubtful, to say the least, that the White House or the CIA actually believed that Castro could be overthrown by a mass insurrection in Cuba. The real plan was to kill the Cuban leader.

The Rockefeller Commission is reported to possess a 1962 memorandum written by General Lansdale directing the CIA to develop contingency plans for the possible assassination of Castro.

The Lansdale memo was written two days after a secret meeting on August 10, 1962, at which leading officials of the Kennedy administration discussed the possibility of assassinating Castro. The meeting was attended by [Defense Secretary Robert] McNamara, Secretary of State Dean Rusk, CIA director John McCone, and McGeorge Bundy, Kennedy's adviser for national security affairs.

The disclosure of the existence of the Lansdale memo contradicts previous reports that these same officials had "immediately dismissed" the idea of killing Castro.

WORLD OUTLOOK

PERSPECTIVE MONDIALE

(Predecessor of *Intercontinental Press*)

May 28, 1965

"Virtual civil war," was the succinct label Col. Oscar Quiroga, spokesman of Bolivia's military junta, put on the situation there May 24. "Growing insurrection," was the phrase used by the United Press International in a La Paz dispatch the same day.

General René Barrientos Ortuño appeared to have staked his regime on the deployment of the armed forces against the entire union movement in Bolivia and especially its main bulwark, the organized miners. The would-be strong man ordered the armed forces to occupy or encircle the principal mining centers. In some places they were reported to have succeeded in seizing certain mines. In others the miners were said to have put up a successful resistance, using the armed militia to defend their positions.

Guerrilla warfare loomed as armed miners in some areas moved toward mountain retreats.

The efforts of the military junta to work the same "Communist plot" angle used by the Johnson administration in Santo Domingo were intensified. After "discovering" a vast international conspiracy allegedly involving [mine union leader] Juan Lechín Oquendo and requiring his exile, the junta carried out a raid on Communist party headquarters in La Paz. They padlocked the place and claimed that they had discovered "documents" proving that the Communists were involved in a "conspiracy to assassinate" Barrientos.

Students in the fight against Marcos regime

Interview with student leader Manny Calonzo

[The following is an interview with Filipino student leader Manny Calonzo. As his first official task as recently elected secretary-general of the Asian Students Association (ASA), Calonzo toured several major Australian cities in April. He is also the former secretary-general of the League of Filipino Students, a militant nationalist student organization, and a former member of the board of directors of the Nuclear Free Philippines Coalition. His Australian tour was organized by the Australian Students International Network. This interview was conducted in Sydney by Deb Shnookal.]

* * *

Question. What is the role of the Asian Students Association and how does it function?

Answer. The Asian Students Association is a representative body of national student unions and organizations in Asia and the Pacific. It is the only regional body of student movements in the area. We now have 21 member organizations from 17 countries. The ASA is united in defense and promotion of student and human rights. It recognizes the right of the peoples of the world to self-determination and self-reliance and is active in the movement for a new international order that is free from all forms of foreign and local oppression and exploitation.

The ASA frequently conducts seminar workshops on vital social issues and concerns. Aside from this, the ASA also declares solidarity weeks and days in support of student and social struggles. For example we have declared October 6 as our day of solidarity with the students and the people of Thailand. May 14 has been declared a day of solidarity with South Korea. May 14 was the infamous Kwangju massacre by the U.S.-backed Chun Doo Hwan dictatorship in 1980.

Q. When you propose campaigns against student repression, what countries specifically do you focus on?

A. It is very ironic that 1985 has been declared by the United Nations as International Youth Year. But what we see is greater repression of students and youth and the use of military force in smashing student protest and activities.

For example in Nepal, 4,000 students and teachers were arrested March 10-16, 1985, for their part in a campaign for education reform. The protest was led by the Nepal National Teachers Organization, with 62,000 members who were calling for salary increases, the rec-

ognition of their organization, the recall of dismissed teachers, and other demands.

Aside from Nepal, there is an ongoing massacre of the Tamils in Sri Lanka. In fact, the immediate past-president of the University of Jaffna Students Assembly was killed by the military in December 1984, together with six others, while delivering relief goods to Tamil refugees.

In Bangladesh on March 1, Gen. H. M. Ershad imposed martial law and arrested 150 trade unionists, student leaders, and others, including a Bangladesh student leader of ASA. The offices of political groups were occupied and colleges and universities were closed for some time.

Q. What sort of activities does ASA organize in solidarity with the struggles that are already quite advanced in the region, such as the Philippines or Kanaky (New Caledonia)?

A. In the Philippines the ASA has declared September 21 as its day of solidarity with the students and people against the U.S.-Marcos dictatorship. Some organizations belonging to ASA have held their own activities such as the forum held in Nepal, a fundraising dinner in Australia, and the New Zealand tour of a Filipino student leader last year.

Q. What about New Caledonia? Has the ASA discussed that at all?

A. Yes, we have passed and reaffirmed resolutions about the struggles in East Timor and New Caledonia and other states in the Asia-Pacific region. We support the struggle for liberation of the people of East Timor and New Caledonia because support for such struggles is a basic principle of the ASA.

Q. Does the ASA have any position on the conflict in Kampuchea?

A. No. That is a fairly sensitive issue that we have not yet discussed in the general conference.

Q. What are the main problems faced by Filipino students?

A. The problems of Filipino students in the educational system stem from the basic features of Filipino education.

Firstly because it is commercialized. This means we are suffering from annual tuition fee increases ranging from 5 to 150 percent. Ninety percent of the colleges and universities are privately owned and charging exorbitant tuition fees.

For this reason the enrollment rate for last year has declined to as low as 50 percent, and the government announced that 3,500 schools have to increase their tuition fees to break even. This will mean that education, especially at the tertiary level, will be less accessible to the ordinary people, especially the children of workers and peasants.

The drop-out rate from the schools is alarmingly high. Out of 100 students who enter the first grade, only 66 percent finish the primary level, and only 14 percent finish secondary level.

Q. This figure of 66 percent completing primary education must be higher than for most other countries in the region. How do you explain that?

A. Yes, the literacy rate in the Philippines is very high. But literacy is not only the capacity to read and write. Philippine education is not an education suited to our needs but beneficial to the interests of the ruling elite and the transnational corporations.

Education at the primary and secondary level is generally free. But a student needs books, notebooks, pencils, etc. These are luxuries most people in the Philippines cannot afford. Ninety percent of Filipinos have been classified as living below the poverty line, that is, earning less than 80 pesos [about US\$4.50], and they can therefore no longer afford the price of education.

Q. How will the proposal for national military service, supposed to be implemented this year, affect students? I understand it includes students right down to the primary level. How have students responded to this?

A. There has been a growing protest against the national service law, which proposes compulsory military training from the primary to college levels. The government's main objective is to counter the growing nationalist consciousness and critical thinking in the Philippines, brought about by the effective education and publicity campaign by the protest movement.

The National Service Law hopes to preserve the docility of the students and their subservience to the Marcos regime. Actually that is part and parcel of the brain-washing efforts of the government and the forcible dissemination of the so-called "New Society Movement" ideology in the schools.

Q. You mentioned that the object of the National Service Law is to reinforce the docility of students, however the student movement has

not appeared very docile or subservient to Marcos in recent years. What is the role of the students, as you see it, in the anti-Marcos movement?

A. The student movement is an integral part of the overall people's movement. It is not a leading force in the struggle, but plays a very significant role in the task of raising consciousness, organizing, and mobilizing, not only the greatest number of students, but also other sectors.

The youth and student movement has developed into its full bloom since the [Benigno] Aquino assassination of 1983. The economic difficulties and the massive violation of human rights have contributed to the maturity of the student movement. It is now a potent political force that can launch and sustain militant struggles having a national impact and forcing a reaction from the dictatorship.

Aside from this we have used militant forms of protest like marches and demonstrations. We have barricaded the campuses as a protest against the education crisis and against the regime. In some schools they have succeeded in launching student strikes, like the strikes of workers in factories, as a more militant form of protest.

But the stage now reached by the student movement was made possible by the painstaking effort to combat the repressive situation brought about primarily by the declaration of martial law [in 1972] and the more than 12 years of dictatorial rule of the Marcos regime.

They have painstakingly organized, educated, and mobilized a greater number of students in support, not only of campus demands, but around the fundamental issues like economic restructuring, halt to foreign aid and investment, and an end to political repression etc.

Q. So the student movement has been a prominent part of the legal democratic movement against Marcos. What do you see as the relationship between the urban movement and the armed struggle that is taking place in the provinces?

A. We clearly recognize the option chosen by those people, especially the workers and peasants, in their armed resistance to the dictatorship. We are very much aware that so many lives have been sacrificed in the revolution of the people against the regime. We see that the urban protest movement and the armed resistance in the countryside complement each other in the overall people's struggle to bring down the Marcos regime.

Actually a number of student and youth activists have gone to the hills to join the NPA [New People's Army]. In the NPA you will find not only peasants and agricultural workers but other sectors like professionals, students, and even some Roman Catholic clergy.

Now, most people in the Philippines are supporting, either directly or indirectly, overtly or covertly, materially or otherwise, the armed revolution.



Deb Shnookal/TP

Manny Calonzo (left) addressing a student rally in Manila in August 1984.

Q. Students have not only been prominent in the urban protest movement and in the NPA, but they have also been the victims of considerable political repression. Could you explain how this political repression has affected the student movement?

A. Well, there was the case of the student activists who were summarily executed in March 1984 after the boycott march. Most of the victims were from the Western University in Batangas City. One of them, Ismail Omali, had deformed legs due to childhood polio, but he still decided to be involved in the movement and join the march in support of the boycott of the May elections to the National Assembly.

Because of their involvement in the protest movement in Batangas City, the students had received death threats and various forms of harassment and intimidation from the military.

On March 7 they were abducted after the culminating rally of the campaign, attended by 60,000 people in the Luneta [or Rizal] park. Twenty-one days later their bodies were discovered in a shallow grave, which had been dug up by a dog. The bodies had been severely mutilated.

Q. What other forms of repression have there been?

A. The officers of the League of Filipino Students [LFS], from the local chapters to the national level, are listed in the military death list. This list is widely used to scare students away from joining protest activities or specifically from supporting the LFS.

The liquidation of student activists has become very alarming in the last year. Human rights organizations have documented 45 cases of summary executions of youth and student activists, especially in Mindanao, the most militarized area.

Aside from that, the violent dispersal of peaceful assemblies has resulted in countless injuries and casualties among students.

Q. Could we talk about the general situation in the Philippines? A new proposal has been made for a Popular Democratic Coalition. What is the possibility of an alternative to the Marcos dictatorship?

A. The Popular Democratic Coalition, or "Bayan," was conceived by the progressive forces considering the growth of the protest movement, especially the "Parliament of the Streets," the forthcoming elections, and the threat of a military junta in case Marcos dies or is incapacitated.

The boycott movement [of the May National Assembly elections last year] led by CORD [Coalition of Organizations for the Restoration of Democracy] resulted in a rift between the boycotters and the participationists. So there is a need to form a viable organization to unite those who boycotted and others who are also serious about dismantling the Marcos regime. This is of course posed with the 1987 presidential elections.

Q. One of the things you have stressed in your speeches here in Australia is the threat of U.S. intervention in the Philippines. What circumstances do you think would bring about such military intervention, and how do you see this as related to the U.S. war in Central America?

A. The primary factor that would lead to an outright U.S. intervention in the Philippines will be the maturity of the protest movement and the rapid growth and advancement of the people's national democratic revolution.

The growth of the revolutionary forces is inevitable because of the great hardship most Filipinos suffer and the violation of basic human rights. Besides this, the revolutionary forces are very disciplined, organized, and determined in the pursuance of their objectives. For this reason they have been able to withstand the military operations against them.

The U.S. has many reasons to intervene in

the Philippines: their bases and facilities here and their vast economic interests. Aside from this, the Philippines plays a vital role in maintaining U.S. dominance in the Asia-Pacific region.

Q. What do you see as the U.S. strategy toward the Philippines, given its difficulty in containing the revolutionary developments in Central America?

A. The U.S. is involved now against so many struggles for national liberation in numerous Third World countries, not only in Central and South America, but also in the Asian region.

Since the attention of the U.S. is diffuse, it must use its allies in its overall scheme of maintaining, preserving, and enhancing its economic, political, and military interests.

For example, the U.S. has been very active in building military blocs. In the Far East it has the so-called "Team Spirit '85" — a military alliance of the U.S. with Japan and South Korea. Here in Australia the U.S. initiated the ANZUS alliance, not simply as a military bloc, but in order to involve its allies in U.S. acts of aggression or intervention against liberation movements.

Q. Australia itself plays an important role in propping up Marcos, for example through military aid.

A. Although it has not been as great as the military assistance being provided by the U.S., the Australian assistance does aid in suppressing the rights of the people and in propping up the Marcos regime.

All the foreign aid and assistance legitimize the continued repressive rule of Marcos and represent an outright denial of the sovereign rights of the Filipino people to self-determination.

Q. You have a letter written by Kim Beazley [minister for defense in the Australian Labor government] to a Labor Party branch in Victoria in which he defends continued Australian assistance to Marcos.

A. Yes, the Croydon Labor Party wrote a protest letter against Australian military assistance to the minister for defense in October 1983. It was only answered in March 1985. In his letter, Beazley made many debatable points:

Firstly, that the military assistance is intended to benefit the civilian community. This is very erroneous since the military assistance and development projects, like road building, are widely used in the counterinsurgency efforts of the government and result in massive killings, especially in the countryside. The road building allows the military to enter dissident-controlled areas, resulting in massive militarization and the violation of human rights, with strategic hamletting, massacres of peasants, and so on.

Aside from that, Beazley described the as-

sistance as just a small-scale project. But whether it is small or large, it aids in legitimizing the regime and the suppression of human rights.

Thirdly, he said that the military assistance is intended to develop the Philippines government's capability to counter external threats.

Netherlands

Union leaders back out of fight

Workers face ongoing struggle for shorter workweek

By Åge Skovrind

[The following article appeared in the May 20 issue of *International Viewpoint*, a fortnightly review published in Paris under the auspices of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.]

* * *

In April, confrontations seemed to be shaping up over the new contracts in key sectors of Dutch industry. These battles appeared likely to become the sharpest labor struggle in northern Europe after the Danish protest strikes at the beginning of the month. However, the rug has been suddenly pulled out from under the workers by the union leaderships.

Under the headline, "The Union Leaders Did Not Want to Fight," René Visser wrote in the May 1 issue of *Klassenstrijd*, the paper of the Dutch section of the Fourth International [Socialist Workers Party SAP]:

"At a rapid pace in the past weeks, contract agreements have been reached, one after the other. With some important exceptions (the printing industry and various medium-sized plants), there was no real breakthrough toward the 36-hour workweek. Not only that, but the bosses got off this time with giving minimal wage increases."

The employers and the union bureaucrats put off any confrontation by signing contracts for one year only instead of the usual longer terms. One reason is that the eyes of the Social Democrats are on next year's elections.

The new contracts just signed in the biggest industries in the Netherlands will doubtless determine the trend for the rest of the labor market in the country. They provide full wage increases of 1% to 1.5% for the year (in some cases supplemented by cash bonuses), full coverage for illness (in compensation for the cutbacks in public insurance that the bourgeois government has undertaken this year). They bid a farewell to automatic cost-of-living increases. And the whole thing is sweetened by nonbinding promises that a study will be made about the possibilities for reducing the workweek below the present 38 hours.

The workers' main demand for cutting the workweek to 36 hours, in other words, will be put on ice.

We do not have any *external* enemy. Although the SS-20 Russian missiles are targeted at the Philippines, this does not mean that the Russians are our enemies. The missiles are targeted at the Philippines because of the presence of the U.S. military bases and facilities. □

More overtime, speedup, more temporary workers — these have been the results of the two-hour cut in the workweek introduced two years ago. Moreover, the Dutch workers had to pay for this cut in working time themselves by giving up automatic cost-of-living increases. This has meant that in the last two years real wages have fallen by 5% to 7%. The objective of all this was to increase the number of jobs. But very little has been achieved in this respect.

The official statistics indicate that this measure has created new jobs to take up only 20% of the slack created by the workweek reduction. This could happen first and foremost because it was not really a reduction of the working week. The two hours were given in the form of 13 more holidays a year. This gave the bosses the opportunity to make their production schedules more flexible without hiring significantly more workers.

The disillusionment at the small gains from the reduction of working time in 1982 has meant that the Dutch unions are continuing to lose members at an undiminished rate. For example, over the last five or six years, the Industriebond, the big industrial workers union, has lost nearly a third of its membership (which has fallen from 300,000 to 220,000). But the rank-and-file discontent also led union leaders to stiffen their demands in negotiations this year. This time they demanded a reduction of the workweek to 36 hours and in a very different form.

"The first time, we were the ones who paid for it, now it's your turn," the union leaders said in effect. Among other things, they could point to record profits by Dutch businesses. This time, the lack created by the reduction in hours should be taken up 100% by new hiring, the union leaders argued, but without indicating in practice how this could be controlled.

On the other hand, the Industriebond failed to raise the demand for restoration of cost-of-living increases. The leadership figured that automatic increases would not make the need for the union as clear to the members as regular wage negotiations.

The bosses had already rejected the demand for the 36-hour week in the fall. And in the be-

ginning of March the negotiations were temporarily broken off. In a lot of workplaces, there was a readiness for action. Action plans were worked out and warning strikes took place, rallies were held. In the meantime, it became clear quickly enough that the union leadership did not want to *fight* for the union demands but only to put pressure on the employers.

The leadership in the largest labor confederation, the FNV (Netherlands Federation of Unions) supports the Social Democratic PvdA (Labor Party). And the PvdA is hoping to be able to participate in a coalition government with one or a number of bourgeois parties after the parliamentary elections in 1986. The opinion polls show a clear advance for the PvdA, indicating that as of now over 40% of the voters would support it (this is a large percentage in view of the many parties represented in the Dutch parliament).

The experience with the 13 extra days off a year has been, as I noted, that the bosses have carried out a speedup, increased the number of hours the plants operate, and increased the number of temporary workers. Their response to a concerted demand from the unions for a shorter workweek with no cut in pay and all the slack taken up by new hiring was flat refusal.

But that has not been an obstacle to the bosses signing local contracts where the conditions are favorable to them. The most striking example is the big metallurgical plant HOLEC in Nijmegen, where the management itself proposed reducing the workweek to 36 hours. In return for that, they wanted to introduce two six-hour shifts a day and Sunday work! The unions in the plant expressed a positive interest in the proposal.

A similar development has taken place in Belgium, where Saturday and Sunday have already come to be considered normal working days. Two years ago, the contracts opened the way for weekend work, if the "social partners" in given factories agreed on this. A few weeks ago, the bourgeois government considered a law that would eliminate the need for the workers' consent. The government could point to the fact that this system has already been introduced on a voluntary basis in a series of plants.

The eight-hour workday, with Saturday and Sunday off, safety improvements, and other gains the workers movement has won through long years of struggle can quickly become things of the past if the unions do not put up a fight soon enough against the bosses' plans for flexible working time. □

DOCUMENTS

United left slate in Italy

Joint statement of LCR and DP for local elections

[The following is an electoral agreement signed by the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), Italian section of the Fourth International, and Proletarian Democracy (DP) in preparation for elections to municipal and regional councils, which were held May 12-13.

[In the balloting, the Italian Communist Party (PCI) suffered a decline relative to its showing in the last nationwide election. In the June 1984 elections to the European Parliament, the PCI received 34.5 percent of the votes, more than any other single party. In the May elections, however, its share dropped to 30.2 percent, while the Christian Democrats received 35 percent.

[The LCR-DP slates received a total of 1.5 percent of all votes cast.

[The text of the LCR-DP agreement is based on a translation that appeared in the May 6 issue of *International Viewpoint*, a fortnightly review published in Paris under the auspices of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.]

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In the run-up to the May 12 elections Proletarian Democracy (DP) and the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), while maintaining their own separate analysis and political projects, recognize that there exist between them important points of agreement which can be summarized as follows.

The attack launched on the left-wing town

councils constitutes an important aspect of the economic, political, and ideological offensive against the workers movement by the [Bettino] Craxi government.¹ This attack has recently been stepped up. The dismantling of the gains of the workers movement, the reintroduction of assassinations, and the extension of the state of emergency give some idea of the political problems that exist today; of the context in which the strategy of dismantling the left councils is taking place, and of the stakes involved in the next elections.

The responsibility for the crisis of the large left-dominated councils does not only rest with the parties that placed themselves in opposition. The responsibility lies equally with the town councils themselves, which have in practice accepted capitalist accounting, have failed to reject cuts in their spending imposed by financial laws, and have acquiesced in becoming instruments of a policy of austerity.

They have failed to base themselves on popular struggles and have, on the contrary, brought about the fragmentation and dispersion of those forces. They have not attempted to satisfy the needs and expectations of the masses who support them, but have submitted themselves to a short-sighted logic of constitu-

1. The governing coalition is made up of Craxi's Socialist Party, the Christian Democrats, and three smaller parties, the Republicans, Liberals, and Social Democrats.

tional games which they are bound to lose.

The defense and the boosting of the left town councils should absolutely not imply a rerun, at the local level, of the national unity policy that the PCI [Italian Communist Party] put forward following the crisis of the Turin town council. On the contrary it is more necessary than ever to take up the struggle against the Christian Democrat-dominated system and to give workers a perspective of real "red" administrations based on their demands and with their support. Such administrations should not be merely to administer the towns, but should also be instruments for mobilizing against the central government and for the construction of an alternative.

The development of an alternative perspective and the political defense of the workers movement necessarily implies the defense of living standards and of the organizational strength of the workers movement. That is why it is necessary to develop and organize in the unions all those opposition forces starting with the *Democrazia Consiliare*² inside the CGIL [Italian General Confederation of Labor — the PCI-led trade union federation].

Finally the struggle for jobs must be placed on the order of the day, centering on the demand for a 35-hour week with no loss of pay. At the same time it is vital to lead a struggle against ecological deterioration and against a plan for energy based on nuclear power and super coal-power stations, while experimenting, including at a local level, with alternative energy sources. Every social and political battle against the bosses' offensive and for a different society must be inspired by the same goals of independence and strengthening of the working class.

From now on it will be necessary to reply effectively and without delay to the reinstatement of the strategy of tension and the climate of the state of emergency by breaking the silence for which the left itself must take the responsibility. It is necessary to be courageous enough to speak the truth about the assassination attempts and the threats of a coup d'état; to lead a campaign against state secrecy; for the reopening of the trials of those responsible for these crimes and the punishment of them and their accomplices at all levels; and against all attempts to re-evaluate fascism. It is necessary to roll back the repressive development of the state of emergency and to refuse to make the tiniest concession as regards the freedoms and the democratic rights of the workers.

On the basis of these points of agreement the DP and the LCR recognize that they can and must lead a joint electoral campaign. The LCR will participate with its own candidates on the slates in the name of the DP. Within the framework of this agreement the two organizations will then have adequate representation on the slates and at the top of the lists as well as enjoy full participation in all aspects of the electoral campaign. □

2. A trade union group supported by members of the DP and LCR.

Women in Cuban revolution today

Part two of Fidel Castro's speech to Federation of Cuban Women

[The following is the second half of a speech by Cuban president Fidel Castro at the close of the Fourth Congress of the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC), March 8.

[In the first part, printed in the May 27 issue of *Intercontinental Press*, Castro focused on the increasing participation of women in the Cuban work force. He also discussed examples of lingering discrimination against women in promotions and selection to political leadership posts.

[The text of this speech is taken from the March 24 issue of the English-language *Granma Weekly Review*, published by the Cuban Communist Party.]

* * *

There is another field in which the work of the FMC is very important because of the contribution it makes. That is the educational field.

The report [to the FMC congress] mentioned what is done, through various initiatives such as the brigades of Mothers for Education which number more than 12,000 with a total of more than 1,700,000 mothers, their work in the schools, their work in the day care centers, their participation with the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution, in the schools for parents, their involvement in measures to improve the schools, started in the province of Pinar del Río; the effort of the FMC in the field of educational self-improvement, the battle for the sixth grade and the current drive to have everyone reach a 9th grade level, in the worker-farmer education program, where I understand the number of women students is greater than that of men.

Those are very important tasks, in addition to what the FMC does for the education and political development of its own members. In the educational field, political development is fundamental. The work of the Federation is very important and it continues to grow in quality.

Now there is the question of education and the role of women. On this subject we must say that it is not only the women's responsibility, for the parents, the home, also play a key role.

I have here some data on research by different agencies. It is interesting to see why we have children with antisocial behavior, why we have children with criminal tendencies and how the family has a bearing on the academic standing of the children.

But the family isn't the only factor. There are other elements of a material nature that affect the conduct and scholastic records of children and adolescents. It demonstrates what the revolution has so often said: that education is not just a task for schools and teachers because education greatly depends on the work of the home and the parents, (APPLAUSE) if the children are supervised or not, if they go to school or not. When you start by tolerating absences from school, then the school is less able to influence the child. The revolution realized the importance of this right from the start.

One often remembers the terrible thing from the early years of the revolution when CIA agents and counterrevolutionaries spread the rumor that parents would be deprived of custody over their children. They even went so far as to print up and distribute a forged decree-law which they said was being prepared. Many people believed them and this led many of those frightened parents to send their children to Miami, splitting up many families. You can just imagine the fate of many of those unfortunate children!

It was something absurd. And it wasn't new. It was one of the old and cynical lies used against socialism, they had already used it elsewhere. Lies of this kind were used at the time of the October Revolution. What the revolution has done is just the opposite: it has constantly called for and demanded the cooperation of the family, the family unit, in everything related to the upbringing of the new generations.

The purpose of the report I was telling you about was to give a brief summary of the causes and conditions within the family which affect conduct and personality problems in students.

In drawing up the report, 16 studies on the subject were examined. These studies had been carried out by specialists from the School of Psychology of the Universities of Havana and Villa Clara, the Ministries of Education and Public Health, the Centers for Guidance and Diagnosis of the Ministry of Education, the FMC National Leadership, the national office of the Young Communist League, and the Ministry of the Interior.

The report analyzes two situations. One examines the scholastic records of children who don't have problems and whose behavior is normal. The other deals with children with fairly serious behavioral prob-

In cases of divorce the parents must take a special interest in the upbringing of the children . . .

lems. The study on academic results covered 3,800 children all over the country of about the same age, seven, born in the same week. They studied the characteristics of seven-year-old Cuban children.

You see how important its conclusions are and how it obliges us to give thought to both the subjective and objective factors which have a bearing on the problem.

When some objective problems are not easy to overcome right away, such as that of overcrowded housing, we must give added importance to the parents' cooperation and interest in the education of their children. According to the report, the scholastic records of the children are clearly related to the educational level of the mother.

The report studied the relationship between the home environment of the child, the educational level of the parents — so you can see how important the drive for the sixth and ninth grade have proved to be — whether the mother works, which is interesting, and the academic standing of the students, the development of their scholastic maturity. The results show there is a close positive relationship between the above mentioned factors.

There are satisfactory scholastic records, for example, among 78.1 percent of the children from families with the best home environments, while only 38.9 percent of those children from families with the worst conditions had satisfactory records.

Of course, we have mentioned the two extremes on the scale: the first and the last, those with the best family and social conditions and those with the worst.

In the former, 78.1 percent have satisfactory records while in the latter only 38.9 percent have satisfactory records, a difference of nearly 40 percentage points. There is a lot in between, but the relationship between environment and scholastic records is the same.

When we review the results of tests in mathematics and reading and writing, the situation is similar. In the reading and writing, 89 percent of the children from the best environment had good results while only 37.8 percent of those from the least favorable conditions had good results.

The difference between the two groups is more than 50 percentage points. The picture is the same in mathematics.

Results in both of these subjects when related to the mother's educational level are very interesting as well — future studies should also include the father. Of the children with mothers that have had 13 years of schooling or more, 90.7 percent had good results in reading and writing tests, and 68.6 percent had good results in mathematics. Unfortunately,

despite its importance, mathematics always lags behind reading and writing.

But well, in cases where the mothers have 13 years or more, 68.6 percent have good results, while in cases where the mother's educational level ranges from 0 to 3 grades only 35 percent have good results on reading and writing tests and 31.4 for math. You can see what an important subjective factor the mother's education is.

Here is an interesting figure: when we studied the relationship between working mothers and test results for reading and writing, math, scholastic maturity, and work capacity we find that children of working mothers do better than those of non-working mothers. (APPLAUSE)

Perhaps this could be complemented with an analysis of the possible influence of the fact that women account for such a large percentage of the technicians. We would have to see what percentage of the working women are technicians and if this has some bearing on the statistics.

I think the difference in scholastic standing related to the greater or lesser educational level of the mother is so striking that the percentage of technicians among more than a million working women may have some bearing on this relationship between the working mother and the scholastic standing of the child. In any case it is a very encouraging sign.

In the case of children with problems and antisocial behavior 2,200 cases of minors with antisocial behavior were studied. The result of 15 research projects was as follows — you know, this explains why there are some vestiges against which we must still struggle and it isn't easy — about 80.7 percent are in the 10–16 age group. There is a high rate of absenteeism from school in the study, ranging from 40 to 70 percent in the various samples. That is, absenteeism from school starts out being one of the primary causes of the children's later behavioral problems and antisocial behavior.

The majority of those studied are males, 90–100 percent of the cases studied — unfortunately the boys, the males, are in the lead — in terms of cases studied, between 90 and 100 percent.

As you can see, the group of minors who were studied have negative development characteristics and show signs of a deficient upbringing. It is significant that the school's possibilities of exerting influence are limited, given the high rate of absenteeism.

Regarding the family of the children in question, the most notable things are: a high rate of divorce, ranging from 55 to 90 percent. In most

of these cases the father figure has little or no influence of an educational nature on the minor.

This is an interesting piece of information, and I think some day we will have to consider the factors which cause divorce, given the problems that sadly enough develop afterwards among the children. In my

At present 48 percent of the Territorial Troop Militia are women. But there's something more: 20,000 women have been trained as command cadres . . .

opinion in cases of divorce the parents must take a special interest in the upbringing of their children.

Another important point noted in the study was that a large percentage of the minors involved in antisocial behavior, 50–90 percent, had parents who made no effort to discipline their children and felt no responsibility for their antisocial behavior. They know nothing about what their children do outside the home, their friends, and in general they are not concerned about the fulfillment of scholastic and social duties.

Some of the research even shows that most of the children were in the habit of roaming the streets until late at night and the parents had no control over this.

Family relations and the general environment are very negative, including brawls, fights, drunken parents, etc., in nearly all cases. Disciplinary methods are based on threats and corporal punishment which are used in 60–100 percent of the cases studied.

In general the fundamental components of the family units of these children, parents, and brothers and sisters, are negative models in 50–100 percent of the cases. In a group of 872 minors who were studied by the Guidance and Diagnosis Centers, it was found that 100 percent had relatives who had been in prison or had histories of antisocial behavior — that shows how criminal conduct becomes a sort of legacy.

Other research revealed a lack of material and emotional care for the children on the part of parents and other relatives. This was shown in research on minors housed at the Habana del Este Reeducation Center and others at the Guidance and Diagnosis Centers, where 70 percent and 100 percent, respectively, told of a lack of affectionate relationships with



Cuban women soldiers. "The incorporation of women into defense was one of the factors which most contributed to the large increase of our forces."

their parents and a lack of trust and communication.

In most cases the parents have a very limited education, not greater than elementary school. This is seen in 80–100 percent of the cases.

Another notable feature was that of large families. It is significant that in the homes of 1,121 minors studied, the size of the family unit ranged from 8 to 12 persons, and this is related to overcrowding and promiscuity, since the homes generally have unfavorable material conditions.

Generally there is also poor revolutionary integration in these cases. Only rarely are there cases of a parent who is a member of the party or the Young Communist League. It should be pointed out that in some studies mention is made, in general terms and without specific figures,

The strength of our ideas is much more powerful than all the tanks, all the battleships, aircraft carriers, bombers, strategic missiles, and deadly weapons that the enemies of progress can create . . .

of the high proportion of fathers whose occupations are unknown or who are listed as not working.

The research shows notable differences between the families of adolescents who fall into negative behavior and those who behave properly.

As we can see, the nature of the family has a direct bearing on the moral upbringing of minors. In the cases of the children with negative behavior, relatives do not have a correct educational policy, which is manifested in the lack of positive role models, lack of supervision in the fulfillment of established norms and the use of disciplinary methods based on physical punishment.

There is a lack of affection in these relationships, leading to a break in adequate communication with adults or other members of the family. This in turn means that the minors do not develop positive personality traits since they lack adequate means to assimilate socially accepted norms and values.

I think these studies are very interesting and they should be continued and intensified if we want to discover the concrete and precise causes of these problems.

However, they clearly reveal the role of the family, the educational level of the family, and the moral and political conduct of the family to be very important, along with things of a material nature such as overcrowding.

I decided to use this data considering the great importance of the FMC's social work by 18,000 social workers, (APPLAUSE) the struggle against school absenteeism, the need to improve the work of the schools, to make a greater effort, especially when we encounter these kinds of problems, such as the relationship between absenteeism and antisocial behavior, the importance of cooperation among all mass organizations in this struggle.

You can have perfect schools and teachers, but if the child starts skipping school and then doesn't do his homework, nobody controls him and he roams the street until late at night, the schools are of little value. We can use scientific data to precisely determine the influence of these factors on the upbringing of children and youth.

Fortunately, this doesn't happen in the great majority of families and children, but as long as there are 10,000, 2,000, 1,000, 500, 100, or even one we must struggle against these problems and the causes which create them, as a basic duty of our revolution. In other words, the work of the revolution becomes increasingly complex or more sophisticated, you might say. We must strive for certain improvements and this can't be based on ignorance.

Yes, it's amazing to recall the early days when we didn't have the schools, teachers, or social researchers who could do these studies. Looking back, we see we have come a long way, but we still have these gaps which explain the problems we face. It isn't a matter of anecdotes, for we must struggle against the causes of those problems and in my opinion this gives added importance to the work of the FMC, the work of the Young Communist League, the work of the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution, and other mass organizations.

It would be worthwhile also to do a comparative study of the cities and the countryside. It is difficult in the countryside to roam around until late at night, in cooperatives or farm areas. What are the differences between Havana, the big capital, and cities such as Camagüey, Holguín, Bayamo, Las Tunas, and Santiago? Experience shows that problems are greater in big cities.

There is an area in which the Federation has played an extremely important and decisive role in these last five years and it is related to the defense of the country and the revolution. (APPLAUSE)

These five years have been the years of the greatest and, we could add, the most fruitful efforts of the country in the area of defense, efforts which began as a result of the imperialist threats against our homeland. These threats forced us to multiply our forces and we have done so many-fold, taking into account not only quantity, but also the quality of our efforts and the conceptual revolution when defense turned into a task of all the people with everyone organized and prepared.

We are incomparably stronger today and we'll continue to be so, because we will go on improving our ideas and our people's preparation for the defense of the country.

When the Territorial Troop Militia was founded, the majority of the males in the optimal age group for combat were already in military units and the reserves, whereas we had an enormous mass of young women in good health who were not organically incorporated in the defense of the country.

The incorporation of women into defense was one of the factors which most contributed to the development of our concepts and to the large increase of our forces. At present 48 percent of the forces of the Territorial Troop Militia are women. (APPLAUSE) But there's something more: 20,000 women have been trained as command cadres and, according to reports from different areas of the country and the evaluations of comrades in the Ministry of Defense, they have demonstrated notable quality and capability in the fulfillment of their assigned tasks. (APPLAUSE)

This is evidence of what the incorporation of women into the revolution in all fields signifies — not only incorporation into the economy, production, services, education, and the development of our people's awareness, but also in something as basic and decisive as the country's defense. I think this is conclusive proof.

And truly, if there's any reason for expectation, it's because this is not only a congress of women, but also a congress of the representatives of half of our Territorial Troop Militia, (PROLONGED APPLAUSE) a congress of the homeland's defenders, (APPLAUSE) a congress of the new combatants and soldiers of the revolution. (PROLONGED APPLAUSE) This constitutes one of the hugest advances of recent years and the reason why today our country feels stronger, more secure and more invincible.

Women have also fulfilled important internationalist missions with extraordinary dignity and courage. (APPLAUSE) I think that in the fulfillment of these missions, Cuban women have written unforgettable, honorable, and glorious pages of history in many parts of the world. (APPLAUSE)

We cannot forget, for example, the efforts made in Nicaragua by

We not only had 2,000 teachers in Nicaragua, but when they killed two or three teachers, 100,000 more volunteered . . .

Cuban women, who made up almost half of the teachers' contingent which for years taught Nicaraguan children in the most remote areas of Nicaragua's countryside until contingents of Nicaraguan teachers were established to carry out this work.

Tens and tens of thousands of children would have been without an education for years in that sister country if it weren't for the noble effort of our teachers. Our own workers involved in providing cooperation in all spheres in Nicaragua said that their greatest admiration was for the teachers because of the hard, difficult, and even risky conditions in which they worked.

There's been a great deal of talk, the imperialists talk a lot about the

Cuban cooperation workers in Nicaragua. Of course they have the habit of inflating the figures. We never gave out any figures. We don't have to account to the imperialists for the number of cooperation workers we have in any country, (APPLAUSE) nor do we ask them how many they have, how many soldiers, officers, military personnel, CIA agents, even the Peace Corps, as they call it.

But we have noticed their custom of interfering in the affairs of other countries and the habit, the method, of conjuring up, of falsifying with political motives, in order to justify you-know-what crimes.

On occasion, in talking with journalists, even with U.S. visitors, I've spoken to them more than once about our teachers and their merits. It's unbelievable that our teachers should arouse fear, but the fear is not totally unfounded. Is it the number of teachers and civilian cooperation workers or even the number of military cooperation personnel that incites fear? No, it's not the number, nor could it be, but rather the strength they reflect, the strength of our ideas that these teachers and cooperation workers can generate.

Yes, and this is much more powerful than all the tanks, all the battleships, aircraft carriers, bombers, strategic missiles, and deadly weapons that the enemies of human progress can create. Much more powerful! First of all, because the men and women who uphold these ideas do not experience any fear at all in the face of sophisticated technology, military might, battleships, aircraft carriers, and the threats of extermination and death. (APPLAUSE)

Who are more courageous? Those who manufacture these weapons with which they assume the privilege of threatening revolutionaries and all the world's progressive people, the peoples and the patriots, or those who feel absolutely no fear, but instead contempt for all that might, for all those weapons, and for all those threats? (APPLAUSE)

I think that it is this spirit that really frightens the reactionaries and the imperialists, because this spirit is simply invincible. (APPLAUSE) And

The peoples of Latin America have been bled dry, and no matter how much they're squeezed they just can't take much more . . .

it's not the spirit of a handful of men and women; it's the spirit of an entire people. (APPLAUSE)

And that's why we have asked, why didn't others send teachers to live in those conditions in the most remote places, together with the families, eating what the families ate, sleeping where the families slept, under circumstances such that in many cases the family, the entire family, the domesticated animals, and the teacher all lived in one hut?

There were even circumstances when the Ministry of Education, concerned for the health of these teachers, decided to send them some foodstuffs, powdered milk, chocolate, etc. But that didn't solve anything nor could it, because none of our teachers were capable of drinking a little milk in the morning when there were children with no milk at all. (APPLAUSE) Those items they were sent didn't last at all because they shared them immediately.

I've spoken about this to visitors and journalists as irrefutable proof of the strength of our ideas, of the triumphs of our revolution, not only material but also moral.

I've mentioned in passing some of the countries which the imperialists hold up as models in this hemisphere, some, even, with many resources which have been recklessly squandered, and I've asked, could 2,000 teachers leave from these model countries to go to Nicaragua and work under those conditions? No. Could they send 1,000 under those conditions? No. Could they send 500 under those conditions? No. Could they send 100? No.

But if they do not have enough to send a few kilometers away from the capital of the Republic, how are they going to send them thousands of kilometers away, far from their homeland, to work under those conditions!

I have asked other questions also. I've said, could all these model countries together in the hemisphere, these perfect models, incredibly democratic, incredibly respectful of human rights including the ex-



FIDEL CASTRO

tremely human right of free enterprise and capitalism, do it?

We know how long they can talk about human rights and democratic models over there, where the brightest students of the professors of the Pentagon and the CIA learn the techniques of death, murder, torture, missing persons, and all kinds of repression. That talk lasts until these bright students begin to solve the social conflicts, in their way, to impose order and protect the sacrosanct status quo and prevent that terrible, phantasmal, and ominous thing — communism — from propagating and advancing.

The people must be made to disappear so that they do not become communists; they must all be executed, exterminated if necessary, and called on to withstand hunger, poverty, disease, the deaths of millions of children due to disease and hunger, ignorance, unemployment, prostitution, drugs, all the vices and all the defects of this society in order to conserve that order without quarter. All to prevent that terrible thing which is socialism, communism, Marxism-Leninism!

And I have asked, could all those model countries together be capable of sending 2,000 teachers to Nicaragua to work under those conditions? No.

How hard, how terrible! What are human values? What do human values or human rights mean where people are forced to live under such conditions of inequality and social injustice and are educated in such forms of egotism and individualism that it would be hard to expect an act of solidarity or even the supreme act of solidarity which is to give one's life for another people, for another country, not just one's own country?

I don't mean that there's not a tremendous potential among the sister nations of Latin America. There is tremendous moral potential and solidarity like that which we have and, moreover, it is a potential which has not developed because the models block the morality and human values from developing. And of course I don't doubt that there are millions among our sister nations of Latin America capable of solidarity and sacrifice.

I'm not talking about the human potential of our sister nations; I'm talking about the potential of the imposed system. And I ask, can that system appeal to and call on the teachers to carry out this task under such difficult conditions? Two thousand teachers? No. One thousand teachers? No.

Nicaragua was criticized and Cuba was criticized for having teachers

in Nicaragua, but those teachers didn't go there to teach Marxism-Leninism. We met with them more than once and told them to be completely respectful of the feelings of each family, to limit themselves strictly and give classes using Nicaraguan programs and texts, not to interfere in the least in the people's political convictions and religious beliefs, to have complete respect, and to preach by their example. That's what they did and that's how they won the affection and respect of everyone.

Thus I've told people, we not only had 2,000 teachers in Nicaragua, but when we requested volunteers for that mission, 30,000 volunteered and when they killed two or three teachers, 100,000 more volunteered. (APPLAUSE)

So you can see the comparison and whether or not the values our revolution and our ideas represent are frightening. And when our party can speak about these values, and this strength, it is truly admirable to be able to state that half are women and in many cases, mothers who are capable of separating themselves from their children and families for a year or two years. (APPLAUSE) This is the work of the revolution.

I cited one example, although I can cite many others in many other places, but I wanted to cite this one alone in the framework of our solidarity with a sister people and in the framework of our hemisphere. The imperialists are right to harbor fears about our teachers, our cooperation workers, our men and our women, because of their example and banners, because of the invincible ideas they symbolize. (APPLAUSE)

There are around 150 delegations from other countries among us here for this Congress. I'm not going to call them foreign delegations, but rather sister delegations. (APPLAUSE) They express the struggle of all the peoples and of women, who throughout the world are fighting against the same injustices against which our women fought for years and are striving for the same goals for which we are striving and for which we will continue to strive.

Above all, they express the world's concern for peace, the people's concern about the madness of the arms race and the aggressive policies which threaten not only peace, but even humanity's survival. I am sure that as much as their presence encourages us, the work of our comrades and their successes have also encouraged them in their struggles. (PROLONGED APPLAUSE)

Among the guest delegations are those which represent women of the sister nations of Latin America. (APPLAUSE)

In the last few months we have had contact on several occasions with representatives of Latin America's women. The most recent was on the occasion of an event held in our country. Now we are again honored by their presence. We have also had contact with Latin American doctors, filmmakers, writers, and numerous delegations.

We are witness to something new that is growing in the spirit of Latin America's peoples, something felt deeply by those who represent women, men, workers, and the members of the most diverse social sectors. And that's an awareness of the crisis that afflicts our hemisphere.

Sure, they lend you a dollar, and when the value of the dollar increases you have to pay with a dollar that is worth more than the one you got on loan . . .

This was made evident by the more than 1,500 Latin American pediatricians who participated in the [Pediatrics] Congress here, because they know, better than anybody else, how many children in those countries die before they are a year old and why they die. And the number of deaths is not counted by hundreds or thousands, but rather by hundreds of thousands, that is, almost a million deaths a year at that early age.

And as UNICEF's director said here, if those countries had the rates Cuba has now, 750,000 of those children under one year old would be saved every year. (APPLAUSE) These doctors know how many children between one and four years old and between four and 16 years old die, what the life expectancy rate is and why, how many hospitals there are and how many others are needed, and how many children have medical care and how many don't and why.

They don't have to be Marxist-Leninists or socialists to realize these things. All they need is their eyes. In these congresses, attended by persons of diverse ideologies and creeds, it becomes evident that writers, filmmakers, women, and workers are becoming increasingly aware of the tragedy. Many delegations representing diverse parties speak about the terrible crisis they face, the worst in history.

People still talk about the crisis of the '30s, but the economic and social crisis that exists today is still worse. Many of the products exported by Latin America's countries are now worth less than in 1930, but those countries now have much larger populations than in the '30s — twice as large — and many more economic and social problems than they had then, and more political capacity.

At that time they were not burdened by a 360,000-million-dollar for-

We must go on building a better future that will enable us to overcome even the objective conditions that are now blocking our struggle for a society with an even greater sense of justice toward women . . .

eign debt. Now they are faced with a worse crisis, multiple problems, and an astronomical debt whose payment is being demanded. They are faced with the implacable demand for the payment of interest running to almost 40,000 million dollars, and there's nowhere to get the money to pay for it, because the people of Latin America have been bled dry, and no matter how much they're squeezed they just can't take much more.

Right now, they are being charged colossal interest running to 12, 13, 14 percent, according to the whims and the sovereign will of the colossus to the North, whose currency is overrated, whose interest on loans grows according to its fancy. Sure, they lend you a dollar, and when the value of the dollar increases you have to pay with a dollar that is worth much more than the one you got on loan.

You don't pay 8 percent for that dollar; you pay 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 percent. Moreover, the dollar that was lent to you circulated and returned to the United States, was spent in the United States, and not just the dollar. With it went the products, the raw materials, but sold at increasingly lower, withering prices, in line with the inexorable law of unequal trade.

This is why the peoples of Latin America are paying increasingly higher prices for what they buy and obtaining increasingly lower income for what they sell.

Those over there who make bolts, nuts, or equipment are paid 1,000 to 1,200 dollars a month or more, while those who produce sugar, cacao, coffee, cashew nuts, peanuts, iron ore, or copper in Latin America and the Caribbean are paid 60, 80, or perhaps 100 dollars a month. Over there they always need more coffee, cacao, sugar, beef, nuts, and minerals for the payment of industrial equipment, bulldozers, tractors, or medicines whose prices are constantly being raised.

This has been going on for 50 years. How long can anybody stand this?

On top of that, there are the protectionist laws enacted by the empire and the capitalist nations allied with the empire. You must pay, but you can't sell your industrial products there regardless of how cheap you want to sell them. The whole thing boils down to this: "I'll buy your coffee and cacao, but if you manufacture anything, even a single square meter of cloth, I won't let it in. But you must pay me and you must do it on the basis of my overrated dollar and also pay for the multiplied interests."

These are the real facts, these are the rules that the system of domination, now in crisis, has imposed. And as I stated recently, the situation is intolerable. And I've said publicly how we see the situation. If the imperialists insist on payment of that debt and those interests, the Latin American societies will explode. You don't have to be an expert or a specialist to realize this. Only a blind person could fail to see it.

This brings to mind, after some 20-odd years, the Alliance for Progress, when there was talk of some reforms — designed to prevent revo-

lutions — economic aid in the form of 20,000 million dollars within a period of 10 to 15 years. This emerged after the Cuban revolution. Nobody had thought about it before.

When a revolution took place here, there were some who immediately started thinking about what they were going to do: maybe loosen up a bit in order to prevent more revolutions, maybe some reforms and a little aid. More than 20 years have passed, and what do we have? A debt of 18 times that 20,000 million dollars and the industrialized countries, especially the United States, are demanding that they be paid 40,000 million dollars every year. How can anybody put up with that?

We've talked about this problem before and we have talked about it with all those from the industrialized countries we have met with. That is why when this Congress is being held and we are visited by representatives of Latin America it's a special moment, a different moment, as the crisis in the hemisphere continues to develop.

In times of crisis, problems that cannot be solved in 50 or even 100 years can be solved one way or another. In this case, either they forget all about the debt and its onerous interests and put an end to their extortionist practices — what they have taken away through the mechanism of unequal trade, interests and profits, the exploitation of natural resources, and the efforts of the peoples of Latin America amounts to much more than the debt — or there'll be revolutions!

Either they forget all about the debt and in addition put an end to injustice, exploitation, theft through trade, protectionism, and the brutal methods through which our peoples are exploited — because I don't believe that settling the debt problem is sufficient — or there'll be revolutions!

When crises arise, problems are solved one way or another!

I hope they don't start saying that we're preaching subversion. We're only predicting what is going to happen. Twenty-six years have not passed in vain, and we have seen many things, but never what we're seeing now, phenomena that are reflected in the delegations that visit Cuba. Not only is there an enormous, monstrous crisis, but also a growing awareness of the situation created by that crisis, and this awareness is reflected by all those who visit Cuba. That's why the coming years, the next five years of work for the Federation, will be very interesting years. For the peoples represented here by these Latin American delegates the coming years will be both interesting and decisive.

Our country has set its course and this is evident. We have come of age, for we are 26 years and two months old. (APPLAUSE) We have accumulated a great deal of experience, the revolution has matured and with it our cadres, organizations, and the party, and this enables them to conduct the process with much greater assurance and efficiency.

We have worked tirelessly in the past few months, working out new ideas and concepts on development and planning their implementation. In these difficult moments, in these times of crisis, we're moving forward full speed ahead, (APPLAUSE) supported by our sound, fraternal, and indestructible relations with the socialist countries. These countries neither rob us, nor exploit us, nor buy from us at increasingly cheaper prices, nor sell to us at increasingly higher prices, nor make us victims of financial extortion, nor charge us growing and arbitrary interests, but rather lower interests.

Moreover, when our debts pile up on account of expenditures typical of a developing country and investments in such major projects as the nuclear power plant, the refineries, the nickel processing plants in Moa, Punta Gorda, and Camarioca, and so forth, for which we were granted credits, instead of overcharging us they have made things easier. They've said, "We'll postpone payment for five, 10, and even 15 years — and without interest! (APPLAUSE)

We invite the developed capitalist countries, particularly the United States, to practice the same policy with their Latin American model countries. If not, they'll lose their model countries. (APPLAUSE)

Thanks to our revolution, to these fraternal and solidary relations, to our ideas, our policy, the seriousness of our revolution, and our firmness as well as our experience — something we neither had at the beginning nor could anybody have transmitted to us — our course is clear and sure.

All these things have been said and discussed, and you have expressed your approval in the struggle for efficiency, economizing, discipline, and a demand for good work and a sense of responsibility.

Rallying around our beautiful revolutionary banners we must go on building the future, a better future that will enable us to overcome even the objective conditions that are now blocking our struggle for a society with an even greater sense of justice toward women.

Shadows may appear, but we're not afraid of shadows. Dangers may appear, but we're not afraid of danger. Threats may be hurled at us, but we've never been afraid of threats.

We are moving forward, confident and assured, with our course well charted.

We will reach our goal. However, should insanity and stupidity prevail, should the warmongers set this planet afire, then we will fall. But we'll never falter! We will fall, but we'll never take one single step backwards! (APPLAUSE) We will fall, but we will fall with our banners and our ideas held high! (APPLAUSE)

Patria o Muerte!

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Police bombing kills 11 Blacks

Racist action destroys Philadelphia neighborhood

By Steve Craine

"It looks just like a war zone. The neighborhood was here and now it's gone."

That was the response of one resident of the Black working-class neighborhood in Philadelphia where a brutal police assault on MOVE, a local Black organization, killed 11 people and destroyed 61 homes on May 13.

The following week, 100 Philadelphians met to organize a May 30 protest march to city hall. The group accused the city manager, police commissioner, and fire commissioner of "criminal negligence" for their decision to drop a bomb on the roof of the MOVE house after a day-long armed assault had failed to evict MOVE members. The bomb led directly to a fire that leveled two city blocks and left about 250 people homeless.

The call for this demonstration condemned the city's action as a racist attack. It explained that the incident "threatens to set a dangerous precedent to give police and law-enforcement authorities nationwide a free hand to violate the civil and constitutional rights of the American people and particularly Black Americans, against whom excessive force is commonplace and has been the focus of years of struggle."

Previous police attack on MOVE

MOVE was the target of a similar attack in 1978 when Philadelphia police kept another house belonging to the group under siege for eight weeks in an attempt to starve them out. That siege culminated in a predawn military-style assault that left one cop dead and five other people wounded. Nine MOVE members were sentenced to 30 to 100 years in prison for the police death.

The pretext used for the eviction attempt this year was that the group had not paid utility bills and that some of the neighbors had complained that the house was filthy, a haven for stray animals, and a nuisance. Police also had arrest warrants for four occupants of the house charging them with illegal possession of firearms and other offenses.

Early Sunday, May 12, police ordered all 300 residents of a five-block area to evacuate their homes by the end of the day. Some who refused to leave were forcibly removed by the police. The city then cut off electricity to the whole area. More than 150 firefighters, 250 uniformed police, and countless plainclothes police were mobilized for the operation. Baricades were erected.

Before 6 a.m. Monday, Police Commissioner Gregore Sambor gave the MOVE group 15 minutes to surrender. When they did not respond, firefighters began spraying the house with water. A few minutes later, the police opened fire in a non-stop fusillade lasting

about 90 minutes. Altogether the police used at least 10,000 rounds of ammunition, and the fire department sprayed some 650,000 gallons of water on the house.

Democratic Mayor W. Wilson Goode told reporters Monday afternoon, as the assault was in progress, "We intend to take control of the house by any means necessary." Two hours later, with Goode's approval, a small bomb was dropped on the roof to dislodge a make-shift bunker and open a hole in the roof through which tear gas could be dropped.

Although the fire started by the bomb spread quickly to the adjoining rowhouses, the fire-fighting equipment on the scene was not used against the fire for about one and a half hours. Inside the MOVE house 11 people were burned to death, some beyond recognition. Four of the victims were children.

Ramona Africa, who fled from the flaming house, was kept under armed guard while being treated briefly for burns on 20 percent of her body. Her bail was set at \$3 million.

Other Blacks harassed

In the following days there was a step-up in police attacks on Blacks citywide. Blacks wearing their hair in dreadlocks, as many

MOVE members did, reported being harassed. In one case, 10 cops raided a house because its Black residents were building an addition on the roof that the police claimed might be a fortification similar to that on the MOVE house.

Later, Philadelphia police were forced to admit that their search of the rubble left by the May 13 fire had yielded no sign of the bombs, automatic weapons, or secret escape tunnels the city administration had earlier claimed as justification for its attack. Instead, the MOVE "arsenal" consisted only of two shotguns, one rifle, and three pistols, weapons MOVE members had always admitted to having for their self-defense.

Mayor Goode's assessment of the deadly police operation was: "perfect — except for the fire." U.S. Attorney General Edwin Meese called the city's action "a good example for us all."

But many residents of the Black community saw it differently.

A young resident commented to the U.S. socialist newsweekly, *Militant*, "That fire burned for an hour before they did anything. If this was a white neighborhood, do you think they would have let it go like that?"

Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of New York, Andrea González, explained at a protest meeting sponsored by the Philadelphia SWP that the police and city officials "were betting on the fact that since MOVE was different, no one would do anything. We have to prove them wrong. We have to organize protests, demonstrations, community inquiries." □



Rubble of Black neighborhood in Philadelphia after police bombing.