

# INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS

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## Nicaragua

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Right: Manila student rally



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**'Bulgarian Connection'  
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# Protests can help block invasion of Nicaragua

By Cindy Jaquith  
and Doug Jenness

The "News Analysis" in the May 27 issue of *Intercontinental Press* presented an incorrect view of important aspects of Washington's war drive in Central America. The article, signed by ourselves, was headlined, "U.S. embargo: act of war against Nicaragua."

One error in the article was the assertion that "the U.S. ruling class is united behind the perspective of overthrowing Nicaragua's workers and peasants government through direct U.S. military intervention."

The capitalist rulers of the United States are not united in support of an invasion of Nicaragua by U.S. troops. In fact, not even top officials in President Reagan's administration and in the Pentagon agree with this as a specific course of action at this time.

What there is a broad consensus on within ruling circles is the view that an accommodation with the Sandinista government is not possible, and therefore, that the government has to be changed. This represents a shift to the right, and an important one, from the earlier period when many ruling-class political figures held out hope that the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) could be bribed or intimidated into a course of compromise that could satisfy Washington's demands.

The public stance of the Reagan administration and the Democrats alike has shifted from the former line — where Washington was demanding an end to supplies from Nicaragua being sent to the rebels in El Salvador — to the current argument, that the FSLN is "irreformable."

But the U.S. ruling families and their political servants do *not* have agreement on using massive U.S. military power to bring about this change in government in Nicaragua. There is no consensus, for example, to launch a military blockade of Nicaragua or a massive bombing operation, which could only be done by U.S. aircraft. And there is not agreement on the massive use of U.S. ground forces that would have to be mobilized for an invasion of Nicaragua.

This has become clearer than ever over the past few weeks, as the debate over whether or not to use U.S. combat troops surfaced in the public arena. The *New York Times*, particularly, has been waging a campaign to warn of the political and military consequences of invading Nicaragua with U.S. military forces. This leading ruling-class newspaper ran a two-part series in June on the discussion taking place within administration and military circles. More recently it highlighted the views of Gen. Wallace Nutting, retiring commander of army and air force combat forces in the United

States, who has publicly stated his opposition to a U.S. invasion. (See article on page 420.)

Today, there is a U.S.-backed and organized counterrevolutionary war against Nicaragua. It is a war carried out by mercenaries — the big majority veterans of Somoza's hated National Guard — who are financed, supplied, and trained by Washington. Without U.S. support, the *contra* army could not last. But it is not yet a war in which U.S. military forces are directly involved in combat.

By referring to "bipartisan unity on the war" in our May 27 News Analysis, we left unclear the decisive difference between the ruling class unity on the goal of getting rid of the Sandinistas and the tactical differences over how to bring about that goal, especially over the question of using U.S. combat forces inside Nicaragua.

These tactical differences over how to proceed have been reflected in the debates in Congress over, among other issues, the funding of the *contra* army.

In April, the vote in the House of Representatives against the funding of the *contras* was a setback for Reagan's tactical course and a demoralizing blow to the mercenaries themselves.

At the same time, the vote on appropriating funds for the *contras* was not a defeat for Washington's continuing course toward a deepening war against the Nicaraguan revolution. To the contrary, the debate — marked by public statements by liberals that the Sandinista government was intolerable — registered a further shift to the right on their part. It registered growing bipartisan unity around the conviction that the Sandinistas cannot be brought into a course of accommodation with the U.S. government.

After Reagan imposed a trade embargo against Nicaragua on May 1, declaring a "national emergency," many of the Congressional opponents of his earlier proposals agreed to put *contra* aid back on the agenda.

Some of them seized on Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega's trip to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe to obtain trade agreements as a pretext to make a turnabout and support aid for the *contras*. On June 12, the House of Representatives voted 248 to 184 to give \$27 million in aid to the mercenaries. A Senate vote earlier approved a \$38 million aid proposal. A joint committee is now drawing up a single bill.

The rightward shift was also shown on June 27 when the U.S. Congress authorized President Reagan to send U.S. troops to Nicaragua under certain conditions. The measure permits the President to use troops if Nicaragua acquires jet fighter planes, obtains nuclear

weapons, is involved in a hijacking to which Washington feels it must respond to protect U.S. citizens, or to counter what was termed "a clear and present danger of attack" against the United States or its allies in the region.

## Sandinista gains push back invasion

We also erred in stating that "what is driving the U.S. rulers and their Democratic and Republican mouthpieces further toward direct military intervention are the continued advances of the Nicaraguan workers and peasants and the success of the Sandinista leadership in consolidating the gains of the six-year-old revolution."

Actually, the opposite is true. Advances in the class struggle of the workers and peasants in Nicaragua, and throughout Latin America and the rest of the world, push back Washington's war plans, not the other way around. Each victory of the Sandinistas is a blow against the U.S. government's war drive.

The Nicaraguan government has announced that this past year its armed forces have inflicted heavy blows against the *contra* raiders, killing over 1,000 and driving thousands out of the country. These victories make the direct use of U.S. troops harder, not easier, because they raise the political price Washington will have to pay for invading.

It is important to distinguish between two features of the current war in Nicaragua that we mixed up.

One is that the war between Nicaragua's working people, who are defending their revolutionary gains, and the imperialist-spearheaded counterrevolution has a dynamic that heads toward an invasion with U.S. ground forces. This threat is very real and cannot be ignored. The Sandinista government keeps explaining this, both to the Nicaraguan people and others around the world, and is preparing for it. It is necessary for antiwar activists in other countries to recognize and explain this danger as well.

It has been clearly shown over the past six years that all other attempts by Washington to change the course of the Nicaraguan government have failed. The Sandinistas can neither be bought nor bossed, nor defeated by a proxy army. Moreover, the Pentagon will not be able to repeat the cheap victory it was handed in Grenada in October 1983 when the counterrevolutionary faction led by Bernard Coard overthrew the workers' and farmers' government headed by Maurice Bishop.

After Bishop and other revolutionary leaders were murdered, the island's working people were left leaderless. They were demobilized and politically disoriented. Reagan seized this opportunity to invade, which up to that point the U.S. rulers had considered too politically costly.

The Nicaraguan leadership, however, remains united in its revolutionary course in the face of Washington's attacks.

Thus, the stakes in the battle in Central America have been raised by the Sandinistas' success in blocking off ways for Washington to achieve its objectives short of a massive

U.S. invasion by hundreds of thousands of U.S. combat forces.

But in our News Analysis we created the incorrect impression that such an invasion is therefore inevitable. In doing so, we confused the trajectory of the confrontation as it has been unfolding, and the very real dangers that must be emphasized, with the concrete way that the contending class forces will resolve the situation.

Whether or not U.S. troops are used will be decided in struggle. It will depend on what is done by those — in Nicaragua, in the United States, and elsewhere — who are acting to prevent this. It depends on the continuing determination, combativity, and preparedness of the Nicaraguan people.

Nicaragua, through its defense efforts, including the creation of a popular militia and the continuing professionalization of its regular armed forces, is making the cost of an invasion as high as possible for Washington. The stronger its forces are, the more likely it will be able to stave off a U.S. invasion.

Big new advances or defeats in the class struggle in Latin America or in other regions can also play a major role in determining the outcome of the struggle in Central America. The Cuban leadership, for example, has often pointed to the struggle of the Vietnamese in the 1960s as an important factor in tying Washington's hands and preventing a major invasion of Cuba by U.S. armed forces.

Finally, whether or not there is an invasion will also be affected significantly by the capacity of all opponents of U.S. intervention in Nicaragua throughout the world to organize as large an antiwar movement as possible.

For the readers of *IP* in more than 70 countries this is perhaps the most important question at stake in this correction. A U.S. invasion is not inevitable. *What we do can and will make a difference.*

#### Social base for counterrevolution?

Another error in the News Analysis was the statement that the imperialists "will have to invade without a social base inside the country."

The contras have been unable to establish a base of operations in Nicaragua with support from a significant section of the peasantry to allow them to move at will through the countryside, let alone establish control over occupied territory. They have not been able to turn the contra war — a mercenary war kept alive by outside supplies of food, weapons, and logistical support — into a civil war inside Nicaragua.

But that is not the same as saying that there is no social base for the counterrevolution in Nicaragua, or that an invading army seeking to place in power a counterrevolutionary government would not find discontented social layers willing to collaborate.

The capitalists, wealthy property owners, and top layers of the Catholic Church hierarchy are a bastion of opposition to the revolution. They serve as a pole of attraction to those who are disgruntled by the revolution's course,

including middle-class layers and even some among the exploited producers.

The battle today on a world scale is to block the U.S. government from using its direct military might to smash the Sandinista revolution. This conflict has not unfolded and will not unfold in a straight line, and its results will be determined by struggle. Many more blows are yet to come and will be inflicted by both sides.

There will be moves and countermoves, setbacks and advances.

But the determination and capacities of Nicaragua's working people and their leadership show that this struggle can be won. And all those throughout the world who are fighting against U.S. intervention in Central America should understand that their actions can help determine the outcome. □

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# U.S. general opposes use of troops

*Press opens public debate on issue of invasion*

By Cindy Jaquith

In a major interview with the *New York Times*, the commander of U.S. Army and Air Force combat forces in the United States, Gen. Wallace Nutting, stated that he strongly opposes a U.S. invasion of Nicaragua. According to the *Times*, Nutting's opposition to an invasion "reflected a view widely held among senior military officers and echoed recommendations made by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the President and the Secretary of Defense."

The interview with Nutting, who commanded U.S. armed forces in Latin America from 1979 to 1983, shows the extent of the debate that is going on in ruling-class circles about invading Nicaragua, a discussion that until recently was conducted secretly. A significant section of the U.S. rulers, concerned by the possibility of an invasion and worried about its consequences, has decided to take the debate public.

On June 4 and 5, the *Times*, a prominent big-business daily, ran a two-part series quoting unnamed military and intelligence officials who argued in favor of a direct U.S. military assault on Nicaragua now. One official said such an attack would be "like falling off a log."

Another official claimed, "They'd never know what hit them."

Said a third: "The U.S. would come in heavily for a month or so, mostly with air strikes against major facilities. Then a new government would be put in place, and it would come with its own army."

In his interview with the *Times*, Nutting responded to these pro-invasion arguments one-by-one, in a manner suggesting that the June 4-5 *Times* articles were prepared for the purpose of answering them through the Nutting interview. The interview with Nutting, conducted on June 25, appeared June 30, the day he retired from the military.

"We have learned to live with Cuba for 25 years," Nutting told the *Times*. "I think we are going to have to learn to live with Nicaragua. . . . Frankly, all the talk about invading Nicaragua is counterproductive. . . ."

"If we invade Nicaragua, not only will we jeopardize working relationships within the hemisphere but we will with a bunch of our NATO allies as well," he said.

Nutting emphasized the massive scope a U.S. invasion of Nicaragua would entail. He said it would be "a major operation" requiring "multiple divisions and air support and sea support to go along with it."

"There would be a big fight to dislodge" the Sandinistas, he predicted.

The *Times* added, "A military rule of thumb



Sandinista soldiers are prepared for invasion. General Nutting admits it would be "a major operation" to try to overthrow Nicaraguan government.

holds that an offensive force must have three times the power of the defense to succeed. General Nutting said in a recent speech that the military force in Nicaragua totaled 119,000, including reserves and militia."

That would mean sending 357,000 U.S. troops to Nicaragua, if one accepts Nutting's estimate of Sandinista troop strength. (The Nicaraguans say they have a larger number in the army, reserves, and militias combined.)

During the U.S. war against Vietnam, a country whose population at the time was 13 times that of Nicaragua today, U.S. troop strength reached a peak of 550,000 soldiers. And they were defeated.

A glimpse of the political price Washington would pay if it invaded Nicaragua was offered by Humberto Ortega, Nicaragua's minister of defense, who was also interviewed by the *Times* on this question. The interview appeared June 7.

Ortega said "it will not be so easy" to overthrow Nicaragua's revolutionary government by invasion. "A direct American military intervention in Nicaragua would not be fought on the classic terms of one army against another," he explained. "An invading force will meet a

very mobile, very irregular form of resistance. We have distributed our men and supplies around the country. This will make it very difficult to deal decisive blows against us."

The Nicaraguan government has made great strides in professionalizing its regular army and has also trained hundreds of thousands of civilians in military defense. Were U.S. troops to invade, they would face what the Sandinistas have called a "people's war," a resistance involving the majority of the population.

Ortega also pointed out that a U.S. invasion could not be limited to Nicaragua.

"A direct intervention by the United States would be very difficult to confine only to our territory," he said. "It would logically have to extend itself to neighboring countries and the region."

"Popular forces throughout Latin America will unleash their violence," Ortega predicted. "There will be tens of thousands of people in different parts of Central America armed with rifles, antiaircraft guns and other weapons. . . ."

Nutting himself acknowledged the unstable situation for imperialism in the rest of Central America in his interview with the *Times*. He



pointed to the need to "restore public order and security" throughout Latin America, and said that Washington's big tasks in Central America are to "solidify democratic control in El Salvador, try to help the Hondurans maintain it, help the Guatemalans get their act together, which they are trying to do, and bolster Costa Rica and Panama."

Nutting said that in his opinion open use of U.S. military force in Latin America could have sharp repercussions: "the less visible we are militarily, the better it will be."

Referring to the deep hatred of the Latin American people for Washington's many invasions of their territory, he observed, "We are paying a high price now for what they call military intervention for the last 50 years, and I don't think we want to do that again. I don't."

Nutting's alternative to invasion is to try to isolate Nicaragua, and Cuba, in part by giving

the other governments in Central America a political and economic facelift. "Instead of worrying about invading Nicaragua and throwing out the Sandinistas," he said, "we ought to be concentrating on developing the hemispheric idea of coalition, building strength through political reform and economic development in the surrounding countries."

At the same time, he clearly favors maintaining the political, economic, and military pressure on Nicaragua through forcing this small country to allocate a large portion of its limited resources to defense and to be in a constant state of military preparedness. "I wouldn't want to give aid and comfort to the Sandinistas," Nutting said. "I think they ought to be alert to the possibility of an invasion."

Nutting's course has been tried before by the U.S. ruling class. For more than 25 years, Washington has been trying to politically iso-

late and economically strangle revolutionary Cuba. It has failed at this, just as it is failing today in its attempts to weaken and ultimately get rid of the Sandinista-led government in Nicaragua.

The significance of the Nutting interview is what it reveals about where the majority of the U.S. rulers stand today on invading Nicaragua. While the U.S. rulers as a whole are agreed that the Sandinistas cannot be bought off or intimidated into submission, and that therefore the government they lead must be changed, they are not united on direct U.S. military intervention to do so. Nutting's arguments about the enormous military scope of such an undertaking, the difficulties in winning a war against the Sandinistas, and the political price Washington would pay in Latin America and around the world are all factors in the U.S. rulers' thinking. □

## DOCUMENTS

# FMLN condemns attack on hospitals

*'Workers' struggles originate under conditions of misery'*

[On June 2, military police and National Guardsmen in El Salvador stormed five hospitals and 20 clinics across the country in an attempt to crush a strike by hospital workers and other public employees. The strike by some 6,000 members of the Social Security Workers Union (STISS) began on May 6. Striking hospital personnel occupied their work places. The strike ended June 6 with a victory for the union when the government was forced to free two jailed union leaders.

[During the police raid, doctors, nurses, technicians, and patients were ordered to lie on the floor with their hands behind them. Many were tied up. Eventually all but four were set free, with the two union leaders among those detained.

[One patient died in the operating room during the raid, and four undercover cops were shot to death in the emergency room by their cohorts, in what was apparently an accident.

[Military officials praised the hospital and clinic raids, boasting "we've tried to do everything with the professionalism that the armed forces now have achieved.

[According to the June 27 *New York Times*, the strike-breaking squad that invaded the hospitals and clinics was trained by U.S. military personnel.

[The following statement on the hospital attack was issued June 3 by the General Command of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN). The commanders are: Roberto Roca, Ferman Cienfuegos, Leonel González, Schafik Jorge Handal, and Joaquín Villalobos.

[The statement, addressed to "the working class, our people, our combatants, and the international community," was broadcast over Radio Venceremos, an FMLN radio station in

El Salvador. The translation from Spanish is by the Foreign Broadcast Information Service of the U.S. Department of Commerce.]

\* \* \*

In regard to the repressive actions carried out by Napoleón Duarte's genocidal government at the hospital, clinics, and administrative offices of the Salvadoran Institute of Social Security throughout the country today, the FMLN declares that:

1. The order to suspend the negotiations between the workers and management was given by Napoleón Duarte when he returned from the United States. This clearly proves that premeditated efforts were made to create conditions to carry out this criminal action aimed at catching the workers by surprise.

2. All the threats that preceded the action made by Napoleón Duarte, Adolfo Rey Prendes, Rodolfo Castillo Claramount, Fidel Chávez Mena, Julio Samayoa, Ricardo Perdomo, Antonio Guevara Lacayo, Benjamín Valdes, Jorge Bustamante, and other leaders of the Christian Democratic Party [PDC], clearly establish that it was a deliberate action totally devised by the PDC, thus proving that all the PDC leaders are criminals and sworn enemies of our people and the working class, and, consequently, of our combatants and forces.

3. In view of this, Napoleón Duarte and all PDC leaders are fully responsible for this fatal and criminal action against the working class.

4. We note that the current workers' struggles for their demands originate under conditions of misery and exploitation and they cannot and will not be silenced by repression. The FMLN, as the people's representative, fully identifies with these struggles because they are

part of the reasons we are up in arms. Therefore, we reject the accusations of links between the people's movement and our forces, and we interpret these accusations as a justification to repress the people, just as previous governments have done with similar accusations.

5. We report and repudiate the cowardly and criminal way in which the operation was carried out with the use of airborne troops, military equipment, and U.S. advice, clearly showing that one of the objectives of the inter-



NAPOLEÓN DUARTE



May Day demonstration in San Salvador drew thousands of workers.

vention and the strengthening of the puppet army is to repress the people and the workers.

The so-called professionalism of the puppet gorillas became criminally evident in the cruelty displayed by the troops when they beat pregnant women or women who had just given birth to babies, when they took babies out of cribs and put them on the floor, and pulled doctors out of operating rooms leaving patients undergoing surgery unattended. Aside from the dead and wounded, and the unbelievable act of carrying out a military attack on a hospital where there were patients and workers only, this action proved the criminal and genocidal nature of the counterinsurgency plan devised by the PDC, supported by the United States, and implemented by the gorillas of the top command.

The Geneva conventions stipulate that hospitals must be respected under war conditions. This is an unprecedented action because it was an attack on a civilian hospital.

If these criminals boast about being so professional, we challenge them to show this professionalism in battles with our military forces instead of using their forces and weapons to attack, kill, and beat up workers, patients, and defenseless children in a hospital. Such coward-

ice shows that they continue to be armed beasts who are the people's enemies.

6. We express our firm solidarity with the workers of Social Security and the other enterprises and our decision to increase our actions to respond to this criminal action. The heroic people's struggle, through the various unions, is being carried out within the framework of a stagnation in the new Yankee military plans.

Our forces inflicted more than 650 casualties on the puppet army in this past month alone. We have also caused large losses to the war economy during May, and this is just the beginning of the implementation of our plans for a war of attrition and destabilization.

The workers' struggle and the revolutionary-military activities have taken a vigorous and firm step forward. In view of this, the workers must increase their firmness and fighting ability in every aspect of the struggle.

7. We call on the soldiers, class brothers of workers and peasants, not to submit to the escalation of criminal, genocidal actions with which Duarte seeks to thwart the just demands of the workers. The soldiers' place is with the people and not against the people. The interests of the humble are at play in this struggle against the exploiters. The soldiers' duty is to

desert the enemy's ranks and to struggle alongside the people.

8. We call on the local and international press to denounce these actions worldwide and not to submit to gagging and misinformation measures announced by the press secretariat of the presidency through subservient lackeys, enemies of the people, such as lawyer (Echevalier), who intend to give false reports on events. As of this moment we denounce attempts to gag and persecute the local and international press by creating the new Ministry of Communications headed by criminal Luis Adolfo Rey Prendes.

9. We call on the international community and our solidarity organizations throughout the world to carry out a broad and intensive campaign to denounce these actions, mobilizing workers throughout the world to show solidarity against Napoleón Duarte's genocidal government and the escalation of Yankee intervention in our homeland.

10. We urge our fighters to keep watching the exemplary and heroic attitude of the workers who, with the weapons of dignity and revolutionary conscience, are demonstrating a strong sense of combativeness and morale worthy of the best sons of the people. The criminal action by Duarte's troops against our class brothers is one more reason to redouble our hatred for the enemy and to expand our combat activities under the slogan of advancing alongside the people and never separating from them. In particular, we urge them to be on the watch for missions that must be accomplished to respond to the criminal action of Duarte's government.

11. We call attention to the indifferent attitude displayed by Msgr. Rosas Chávez in face of these events by not condemning or denouncing them and limiting himself to calling for conciliation. This is not a problem of conciliation but of a clear lack of respect for elementary rights of the people. Msgr. Rosas Chávez' repeated indifference already borders on a cover-up, and we point it out as such.

12. We fully support all demands by all workers and endorse the demands for the immediate release of the arrested workers, the demilitarization of the installations, and indemnification for the victims of the repression.

13. Finally, we announce that our people, our forces, are going to intensify their military actions. We will increase sabotaging of electric energy in the next few days. A total and indefinite stoppage of transportation along all of the country's highways will be decreed. This stoppage must be strictly complied with as our units throughout the country will be in charge of guaranteeing compliance with this order.

Therefore, we warn all drivers to stop circulating on the highways starting on a date to be announced by Radio Farabundo Martí or Radio Venceremos.

Viva the heroic struggle of the workers! Death to the criminal Christian Democratic dictatorship. Revolution or death, we will win!



# New U.S. threats in wake of hijacking

'Antiterrorist' propaganda drive a cover for CIA, military moves

By Ernest Harsch

Despite the June 30 release in Beirut, Lebanon, of the 39 U.S. citizens seized during the hijacking of a TWA flight two weeks earlier, the capitalist rulers in Washington have continued to try to squeeze the incident for every possible ounce of reactionary propaganda.

Their aim is to whip up a chauvinistic fervor, as part of their broader campaign to create an atmosphere in the United States in which working people will be more ready to accept Washington's need to militarily intervene abroad.

This propaganda campaign has been led directly from the White House. While the U.S. captives were still being held, President Reagan several times sounded the racist theme that it was necessary to protect "Western civilization" from "uncivilized barbarians." On June 28 he proclaimed, "When terrorism strikes, civilization itself is under attack. . . . If we permit it to succeed anywhere it will spread like a cancer, eating away at civilized societies. . . . This barbarism is abhorrent."

Repeating this theme two days later, when the U.S. hostages had already been released, Reagan declared that "those responsible for terrorist actions throughout the world must be taken on by civilized nations."

In the language of the U.S. ruling class, "terrorist acts" applies to any liberation struggle.

The editorial staffs of the daily press and television networks took their cue from the White House. Night after night, "the plight of our hostages" was the focus of television news coverage, overwhelming all other world events. Radio stations played patriotic songs.

Following the captives' return to the United States, reporters spent hours interviewing them. From the hostages' own accounts, they were generally well treated in Beirut, and some expressed sympathy for the demands of their captors for the release of Lebanese and Palestinians held in Israel. But the big business media chose to minimize such statements and to play up the hostages' fears instead. "Captives Disclose Details of Terror," screamed a front-page headline in the July 7 *New York Times*, followed by several pages of the most lurid accounts of their ordeal.

## Israel's hostages

At the same time, Washington and the capitalist press have been virtually silent on the Israeli government's terrorism against the Lebanese and Palestinian people. They have scarcely mentioned that Israeli troops continue to occupy part of southern Lebanon. Nor have they protested Tel Aviv's continued detention

of several hundred Lebanese and Palestinians.

During the negotiations for the release of the U.S. hostages, the Israeli regime implicitly agreed to free the remaining 735 civilians it had seized in southern Lebanon, some nearly two years ago, on suspicions of opposing the Israeli occupation. They were subsequently moved to Atlit prison in Israel, in flagrant violation of the Geneva accords of 1949 governing the treatment of captured civilians.

The Lebanese hijackers agreed to release the 39 Americans on the understanding, conveyed to them through intermediaries, that Israel would soon free all 735 prisoners.

On July 3, only 300 of them were released, however. According to Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin, the other 435 would remain in the Atlit detention camp for the time being. They would only be freed, he said, "in accordance with the security developments in southern Lebanon." In other words, they are being held hostage pending an end to acts of resistance against the Israeli troops who still occupy part of Lebanon.

Of the 300 who were freed, some recounted the brutal treatment they faced at the hands of their Israeli jailers. This has not been deemed worthy of banner headlines in the U.S. capitalist press.

"The Israelis tortured us, beat us, and humiliated us," said Mousa Mohammed Mrouweh, who had been detained during an Israeli raid in Zrariye in March. One of those who turned out to greet the freed prisoners in Ras Bayyada was a 25-year-old resistance fighter, Hiyam Gharib, who had herself been detained by the Israelis seven months earlier. "They beat me, cursed me and tried to rape me just to intimidate me, but they didn't," she said.

Amid the celebrations welcoming the returnees, leaders of the local Shiite community demanded the release of the remaining prisoners and vowed to continue their resistance to the Israeli occupation.

## Boycotts and CIA moves

Using its "antiterrorist" campaign as a cover, Washington has also stepped up its threats and preparations for military intervention not only against the Lebanese people, but against all those in the Middle East and elsewhere fighting for freedom from imperialist domination.

During the hijacking itself, Washington sent the aircraft carrier *Nimitz* and several other warships to the eastern Mediterranean, just off the Lebanese coast.

After the hijacking had ended, one of Wash-

ington's first acts was to impose an embargo on the Beirut airport. All U.S. planes were barred from landing there, and Lebanon's airline was prohibited from flying to the United States. Washington, with the backing of the British government, has urged other countries to bar flights to Lebanon as well, threatening to curtail U.S. landing rights to any that fail to do so.

These moves have been protested by a wide array of political figures in Lebanon. Nabih Berri, the leader of the Amal militia, based on the Shiite Muslim population, called the airport embargo "an encroachment on Lebanon's sovereignty and security." Two former presidents, Camille Chamoun and Suleiman Franjeh, also denounced Washington's move.

The Reagan administration has likewise hinted that it may send assassination teams into Lebanon, under the guise of "bringing to justice" those who hijacked the TWA airliner. Secretary of State George Shultz said that Washington would first take legal means against them. "Then, we'll take other steps," he warned.

One unidentified "senior administration official" told the *Washington Post* that the White House would seek legislation and greater funds "to apprehend and to follow, track, identify and detain people."

According to Shultz, Washington will seek to improve its intelligence gathering, including closer collaboration between the CIA and intelligence agencies in other countries and more "penetration" of political organizations abroad. He also warned of preemptive strikes, which he termed "active defense," against such groups.

Robert McFarlane, Reagan's national security adviser, said that Washington had identified "two or three strategic locations in the Middle East in particular" for possible military strikes. Another White House official said those locations were in Libya, Iran, and Lebanon's Bekaa Valley.

The U.S. government's latest "antiterrorism" campaign is not limited to the Middle East. In the immediate wake of the shooting of four U.S. marines in El Salvador — coming in the midst of the TWA hijacking — it has rushed new military aid to the Salvadoran dictatorship.

The CIA obtained an additional \$50 million to strengthen U.S. "security measures" abroad. The Federal Bureau of Investigation, not to be left behind, is pressing for an \$11 million addition to its \$39.5 million budget for setting up "counterterrorism task forces" within the United States. □

# Three-year reign of terror

## U.S., Israeli attacks level villages, kill thousands

By Steve Craine

Washington's immediate response to the June 14 hijacking of a U.S. airliner by Lebanese Shiites was to threaten the entire Lebanese people with a massive show of military muscle. The aircraft carrier *Nimitz*, a destroyer, a helicopter carrier, and several other warships, along with 1,800 marines were quickly dispatched to the Lebanese coast.

U.S. Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger, referring to the deployment of this fleet, called it the "beginning of a war." In reality, the war of Washington and its Israeli allies against the people of Lebanon has been going on for many years.

When the Pentagon sends warships to the eastern Mediterranean, the Lebanese people remember the brutal shelling inflicted on them by the battleship *New Jersey* in 1983 and 1984.

And when the Israeli government backs up these U.S. war moves with its own bellicose statements, the Lebanese remember the tens of thousands of casualties they suffered in the invasion and three-year occupation of their country by Israeli troops. They also remember the massacre of Palestinian refugees in Beirut by right-wing militias under the protection of the Israeli military in September 1982.

Actually, U.S. and Israeli armed intervention into Lebanese affairs goes back even further. In 1958, Washington sent 14,000 marines to occupy the country to block a coalition of leftist political forces from coming to power. The U.S. invasion succeeded in saving the undemocratic system that reserves the most important political offices for members of the minority Maronite Christian religion. This setup was imposed in 1943 by the French government, Lebanon's former colonial ruler. The Maronite leadership has proved an important ally for imperialism against the aspirations of Lebanon's workers and peasants.

### Invasion force of 120,000

The current stage in the history of imperialist domination of Lebanon opened June 6, 1982, with the invasion by the Israeli Army. The three months of fierce fighting were the bloodiest of the several wars Tel Aviv has fought to defend the theft of Palestine from its Arab residents in 1948. Israeli troops continued to occupy about one-third of Lebanon until earlier this year.

The 1982 invasion was a terrible blow to the sovereignty of Lebanon and a challenge to the very existence of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). As PLO Chairman Yassir Arafat summarized its effects to a September 1982 Arab summit meeting in Fez, Morocco, "In this murderous war we have suffered

49,600 Lebanese and Palestinian civilians martyred or wounded, as well as 5,300 military personnel martyred or wounded. . . . We still have about 6,000 combatants missing."

Some 120,000 Israeli troops smashed their way through southern Lebanon, leaving cities like Sidon and Tyre and countless villages little more than rubble in their wake.

"Not a single building was untouched by the flying shrapnel," reported a *New York Times* dispatch from Tyre. "Some high-rise apartments collapsed like houses of cards, some villas were chewed into piles of dust and rubble."

The capital city of Beirut was besieged for 88 days. An Israeli force of 30,000 men, 300 tanks, and 500 to 600 armored personnel carriers faced 5,000 to 6,000 Palestinian fighters in the city.

Israeli artillery and air raids leveled whole sections of the city of 800,000 people. Even as early in the siege as June 24, eyewitnesses said the streets looked like they had been flattened by an earthquake.

On August 1 Tel Aviv's air force, armor, artillery, and navy bombarded West Beirut continuously for 14 hours. The day became known locally as "Black Sunday."

*New York Times* correspondent Thomas Friedman reported from Beirut, "So many buildings were set on fire in the southern suburbs of west Beirut that the entire area was engulfed in a huge black cloud of smoke through which not a single building could be made out. By late afternoon the sky, which had been perfectly clear, was full of black and white clouds. . . ."

In all, according to Palestinian sources, an estimated 185,000 projectiles were exploded that day — more than three every second.

Among the targets of this massive terror was the Islamic Home for Orphans, which housed 600 children, many of whom had lost their parents in earlier attacks.

### Campaign against the camps

Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, housing more than 200,000 United Nations-registered refugees, were a special target of the Israeli operation from the beginning. In the early days of the war at least six camps in southern Lebanon were bombed and then systematically dismantled with bulldozers. "We don't want Palestinian camps within the 45 kilometers range of our border," one Israeli official told U.S. reporters.

After forcing the withdrawal of most of the PLO's organized fighters from Beirut in August 1982, the Israeli military resorted to other means of terrorizing Palestinians in Lebanon.

The occupation troops cleared the way for

right-wing Lebanese militias to enter the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila in West Beirut on the night of September 16. That night and the following day the rightist thugs killed hundreds of Palestinians. A month later, official Lebanese government investigators reported a total of 328 bodies had been recovered and 991 other people were still missing in the debris.

Houses had been dynamited with their inhabitants still inside. Old people and infants were among those shot at close range by the right-wing Phalangist militia and troops of the Israeli-sponsored South Lebanon Army. Israeli soldiers let the murderers through checkpoints surrounding the camps and regularly fired illuminating flares to light their way through the camps.

The night the massacre began, the Israeli army radio station reported the decision to "purge the areas of Sabra and Shatila and the nearby refugee camps." It added that the Phalangists had been entrusted with the "mission to carry out these purging operations."

The Israeli rulers' aim in their invasion as well as in their support to the murderers of Sabra and Shatila was primarily to destroy the PLO and deprive it of a base of operations in Lebanon. They were also concerned to undercut the growing influence of the PLO and other leftist forces in Lebanese politics. They sought to install a government in Beirut that would be a faithful servant of Tel Aviv and Washington.

As soon as it had overrun southern Lebanon, the Israeli Army began making preparations for an extended occupation. Roads were paved for military vehicles, plumbing installed in army bases, and signs in Hebrew put up. To accomplish all the political goals of the invasion, a long-term occupation was expected.

### Support from Washington

The political objectives, as well as the military actions, of the Israeli government were wholeheartedly supported by the U.S. government. In mid-June President Reagan met with Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin in Washington. At the same time, a fleet of 50 U.S. warships was ordered to the eastern Mediterranean, off the Lebanese coast. Less than a month before, the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted an increase in the already gigantic package of military aid to Tel Aviv.

The most devastating weapons in the Israeli arsenal — antipersonnel weapons such as cluster bombs and white phosphorus bombs — were of U.S. manufacture.

In the United Nations, U.S. representatives did their best to defend Israeli aggression. On June 26 they vetoed a Security Council resolution calling for a limited withdrawal of Israeli and Palestinian forces from Beirut.

Washington's support for Israel's intervention in Lebanon became even more apparent (and necessary) when, after the initial successes of the invasion, the determined resistance of the Lebanese people began to reverse some of the gains of imperialism.

In September 1983 the government of Amin



Gemayel, which Tel Aviv hoped to make its puppet, was challenged by a revolt of Shiite and Druse militias in the Shuf Mountains east of Beirut. Washington responded with the largest U.S. naval shelling since the Vietnam War.

To support Gemayel's army in the mountains, the fleet pounded mountain villages with bombs and explosive shells. The majority of their victims were civilians.

Throughout the last months of 1983 and early 1984, the U.S. naval attacks continued, in coordination with bombing and strafing runs by U.S., Israeli, and French planes. On one day in February 1984, the U.S. forces bombarded Lebanese villages for a solid nine hours. The battleship *New Jersey* fired 250 one-ton shells, each of which packed enough explosive power to devastate an area the size of two football fields. Meanwhile other warships contributed many more smaller projectiles to the fusillade.

But as deadly as these attacks have been, the resistance in Lebanon has frustrated many of

Tel Aviv and Washington's plans for that country. President Gemayel has not proved the pliant tool of its policy that Tel Aviv had expected. The revolt in the Shuf and the disintegration of his army forced Gemayel to repudiate the peace treaty he had signed with Israel under U.S. sponsorship in May 1983.

Growing resistance, especially among the Shiite majority in southern Lebanon, finally forced an almost total withdrawal of the Israeli Army by the third anniversary of the invasion.

But even in their retreat, the occupation army stepped up its brutality against the Lebanese people. During the four-month phased withdrawal, Israeli Defense Minister Yitzak Rabin declared an "iron fist" policy. Curfews were imposed, dozens of villages raided, and residents rounded up for little or no reason.

Hundreds of those taken hostage by the Israeli Army early this year were illegally transferred to prisons in Israel and are still being held there. □

gist militia that is based among Maronite Christians.

Opposition to Berri led to the rise of other currents among the Shiite masses. In 1982 Hussein Musawi, formerly the chief military commander in Amal, split to form Islamic Amal. Later the Party of God emerged. Many of its supporters look to Sheikh Hussein Fadlallah — target of a recent U.S.-organized assassination attempt — as their spokesman. The Communist Party and other left groups also retain support.

When Israeli military forces invaded southern Lebanon in 1982 the Palestinians and Shiite Muslims were the targets of Israeli terror bombings, massacres, and kidnappings. Shiite organizations became centers of resistance to the Israeli occupation, and later to the occupation force set up by the United States, France, and other imperialist powers. The Shiite fighters made a big contribution to compelling the U.S.-led "peacekeeping" force to pull out in early 1984 and Israeli troops to begin withdrawing this year. They played a key role in blocking efforts by Tel Aviv and Washington to stabilize an ultrarightist Maronite government in Lebanon.

Berri and the Amal militia could count on massive support from impoverished Shiite Muslims when it fought against foreign occupation. But the response was different when Amal actions did the dirty work of Washington and Tel Aviv in Berri's decision in May to consolidate his power base by launching bloody attacks on three Palestinian refugee camps near Beirut.

Despite capitalist media attempts to present these battles as between "the Shiites" and the Palestinians, there was significant opposition among Shiites to Berri's murderous drive.

"As soon as the bloodshed began," reported the June 22 *Economist*, "there were fierce denunciations of Mr. Berri's policy by leading Shia [Shiite] clerics, who tend to support Islamic Amal. . . . Sheikh Fadlallah, spiritual head of the even more militant Hezbollah (the Party of God) said that 'nobody has the legal authority to prevent anybody fighting Israel' and blamed Amal for 'turning our arms against our brothers.'"

Hezbollah, although predominantly Shiite, has the support of some Sunni Muslims. It has also taken its distance from Amal's struggle with the Sunni-based Mourabitoun militia for control over West Beirut.

In the face of massive Palestinian resistance, growing opposition in Lebanon, and international condemnation, the Amal was forced to accept a cease-fire agreement June 17 that fell short of its goal of crushing the Palestinian movement in Lebanon.

Berri's decision to support the popular demand that Shiite and other Lebanese captives in Israel be freed in exchange for the U.S. hostages is an attempt in part by Amal to strengthen its support among Shiites as well as win back some credibility among anti-imperialist fighters in the Mideast — credibility that was undermined by Amal's reactionary war against the Palestinians. □

## Who are Lebanese Shiites?

### *History of oppression spurs struggles*

By Fred Feldman

[The following is based on an article that appeared in the July 7 issue of the *Militant*, a socialist weekly published in New York City.]

\* \* \*

"Shiite terrorists." "Shiite fanatics." Phrases like these are drummed into our heads daily by the major daily newspapers and radio and television networks. They use these racist denunciations to justify U.S. aggression against Lebanon and to hide the legitimacy of demands for the immediate release of the more than 700 mostly Shiite Muslims held prisoner by the government of Israel.

The 1.2 million Shiite Muslims are the largest religious group in Lebanon's population of some 2.6 million.

Yet the political structure imposed on Lebanon in 1943, when direct French colonial rule ended, left them with token representation and no political power. The French, U.S., and later Israeli governments sought to assure that the Lebanese masses would be under the thumb of the political leaders of the privileged Maronite Christians.

This undemocratic system helps the imperialists and the largely Maronite Christian capitalist class to exploit and oppress the Lebanese workers and peasants, the great majority of whom are Muslim (Shiite and Sunni) and Druse.

The Shiite Muslims are the poorest and most discriminated against Lebanese, aside from the Palestinians forced into Lebanon by the Israeli occupation of their land.

Of Lebanon's 17 recognized religious groups, the Shiites have the least education, smallest incomes, and lowest living standards.

For many generations, most Shiites have lived as peasants or agricultural laborers in isolated villages in the southern part of the country. An economic boom in the 1960s and 1970s attracted many to the cities, where they faced job discrimination and most lived as squatters.

As *Miami Herald* correspondent Dan Williams wrote in 1983, the Shiites had long been "taken for granted as the silent sufferers, the garbage collectors, the waiters, the mechanics, the maids, the poor farmers of Lebanon."

Inspired by the Palestinian resistance movement, the Shiite masses stepped up organizing to better their conditions in the late 1960s. The Palestinian liberation organizations found a base of support among them, and left-wing groups like the Lebanese Communist Party grew rapidly.

In the mid-1970s a Shiite cleric initiated the "movement of the outcast." Amal (Hope) was established as the armed wing of the movement. Under the leadership of Nabih Berri, a French-trained lawyer and capitalist politician who became head of Amal in 1980, Amal sought to modify the political setup to provide more representation for Shiites.

Under Berri's leadership, Amal took reactionary stands as well. It launched attacks on Palestinian groups and on the Communist Party. As a capitalist politician, Berri sought to alter but not overthrow the unjust system in Lebanon. Today he is a minister in the imperialist-imposed government of Amin Gemayel, the leader of the ultrarightist Phalan-

# Economic emergency imposed

Washington demands austerity as condition for aid

By Steve Craine

In late June, while the Israeli government was searching for a face-saving way to release the 735 Lebanese hostages it held at Atlit prison, it was also discussing some severe new economic proposals. After a 24-hour cabinet meeting June 30-July 1, Prime Minister Shimon Peres announced he had imposed a three-month economic emergency.

Citing the potential for a "total collapse" of the Israeli economy, Peres decreed a series of harsh measures to make Israeli and Palestinian working people pay for the years of rampant inflation fueled by huge military budgets and almost unlimited infusions of U.S. aid.

Peres' actions were based on emergency powers that allow the cabinet to circumvent formal parliamentary approval in situations declared to be "emergencies." It was the first time an Israeli government had made use of these powers to deal with economic problems.

## Wages frozen, shekel devalued

The package of some 200 specific measures proposed by Peres July 1 included the nullification of all previously negotiated wage agreements for at least the three-month life of the emergency, a freeze on wages and prices, devaluation of the Israeli shekel by nearly 20 percent, sharp reductions in subsidies for basic consumer goods, a 4.5 percent cut in the government's budget, and the dismissal of some 9,000 state employees.

With inflation currently estimated at an annual rate of 260 percent (down from nearly 1,000 percent last September), subsidies on food and other necessities and a system of frequent, automatic cost-of-living adjustments on wages were critical to Israeli workers. The devaluation of the shekel is expected to result in about 25 percent inflation in the month of July alone. At the same time, such items as bread, milk, poultry, and frozen meat will immediately become 45 to 75 percent more expensive. The price of gasoline will jump 27 percent to \$3.44 per gallon. Bus fares will double.

Over all, it is estimated that the three-month emergency period will produce a reduction in workers' real incomes by one-third.

Admitting that all of Israel's citizens "are about to go through a very difficult period," Prime Minister Peres claimed that without his emergency decrees "there would have been no chance . . . of getting out of the inflationary spiral." He added, "Insofar as I understand the situation in the economy, the decisions were made at the last possible minute."

Finance Minister Yitzhak Modai observed, "If you want to recover, sometimes you have to undergo surgery, and we have nobody to op-

erate on except the people of Israel."

Israeli radio reported that Peres and Modai threatened to bring down the coalition government that has been in office since September if their economic proposals were not approved by the cabinet. Peres stated that any minister publicly criticizing his program would be forced to resign. Nevertheless, seven cabinet members did vote against the economic package. All were members of the right-wing Likud bloc, the second-largest party in the "unity" government after Peres' Labor Party.

## 1.5 million workers protest

The Histadrut labor federation staged a one-day general strike July 2 to protest the emergency. Union officials estimated 1.5 million workers, or 90 cent of the Israeli work force, joined the strike, bringing the country to a virtual standstill.

The government anticipated the response of workers to the emergency decrees and quickly offered partial concessions. Some of the points in the economic program, including the wage freeze and the firing of government workers, were postponed for an unspecified period. But these retreats can only be temporary because of the pressures Tel Aviv faces both politically and economically.

Just four years ago, 10 Israeli shekels exchanged for one U.S. dollar. Since the July 1 devaluation it takes 1,500 shekels to equal a dollar.

The principal cause of this soaring inflation has been the huge budget deficits Israeli governments have run up year after year. With military spending already consuming a mammoth portion of the country's budget, the 1982 invasion of Lebanon pushed annual military spending to \$5.5 billion, or 20 percent of the country's gross national product. (By way of comparison, even the Pentagon's hundreds of billions represent only 6.8 percent of the U.S. GNP.) The policy of subsidizing Israeli settlements on the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip uses up another \$500 million each year.

Budget deficits, which are now running at 17 percent of GNP, are especially inflationary in Israel because of a law that requires the central bank to print extra currency to cover the government's debts.

Also aggravating inflation is a system supposedly designed to soften its impact on workers and capitalists alike. The system, known as "linkage," provides for frequent readjustments of wages and prices to compensate for the falling value of the shekel. Although workers need wage adjustments, the regular price rises that are tied to them have simply fed inflation to the point that wage-earners continue to slip further and further behind.

Hundreds of thousands of Palestinian workers who live in the West Bank and work for Israeli companies face a double bind. They are paid in Israeli currency, which is constantly shrinking in value. However, most of their bills, for rent and other expenses in the West Bank, have to be paid in Jordanian dinars, whose value has remained quite constant.

## Impact on Palestinians

A survey by the Progressive Workers Bloc revealed that real wages in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip had declined by 30 percent since October.

The issue of how to calculate exchange rates for Palestinian workers' pay has been the cause of several strikes recently. In May workers at the Jerusalem Arabic-language daily *Al Quds* struck for six days to win their demand for payment at the actual market rate of exchange rather than at the hypothetical official rate.

Massive U.S. economic and military aid also pours more money into the country's economy without adding significantly to the amount of goods and services produced. Thus it is another factor in causing inflation.

The Israeli government has become more and more dependent on these transfusions of cash into the economy. In the 1950s and 1960s annual aid averaged about \$60 million. The amount jumped dramatically after Israel's 1973 war. From 1974 to 1981 it averaged \$2.25 billion each year.

Shortly after Peres was elected prime minister in September he traveled to Washington to ask for an emergency allotment of \$1.5 billion in addition to the \$5.6 billion already appropriated for the next two years.

Washington has used its status as paymaster to bring pressure on Tel Aviv to carry out economic policies agreeable to the U.S. rulers.

Earlier this year, U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz, in an exchange of letters with Prime Minister Peres, demanded dramatic anti-inflationary action from the Israeli government as a precondition for further increases in U.S. aid. As recently as May, Tel Aviv was balking at Shultz's suggestion that the shekel would have to be devalued by 20 to 25 percent.

Finance Minister Modai, asked July 1 how he thought Washington would view his just-announced economic emergency, responded, "They'll love it." An aide to the U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee commented, "It sounds good if it's implemented. We've been disappointed up to now because the earlier measures were not biting. They tried the gradualist approach, and it doesn't seem to have worked."

The *New York Times*, a leading big-business daily, also endorsed more austerity for working people in Israel. It proposed further cuts in non-defense spending and privatization and deregulation of industry. "Is Israel ready for a heavy dose of free-market capitalism?" the *Times* editors asked. "If not, no conceivable help from its friends is likely to save it from stagnation." □



# 'Bulgarian connection' made in Italy

*Evidence shows secret service used gangsters to coach Agca*

By Will Reissner

Since the so-called "Bulgarian connection" trial began in Rome on May 27, not a single shred of evidence has linked the two Bulgarian diplomats and one Bulgarian airline clerk to the 1981 shooting of Pope John Paul II.

The case against the Bulgarians continues to rest, as it has from the start, solely on the unsubstantiated ravings of Mehmet Ali Agca, the Turkish ultrarightist and convicted murderer now serving a life sentence in an Italian jail for his attempt on the pope's life.

During the trial, Agca has repeatedly told the court that he is actually Jesus Christ reincarnated. He has offered to prove his claim by performing a public resurrection of a dead person.

The Turkish gunman has freely admitted that he made up large parts of his pretrial testimony as well as his statements on the witness stand. Other details came from Italian newspapers he read in jail.

Some days Agca claims that the Bulgarian secret service recruited him to kill the pope. Other days he links the shooting to papal refusal to reveal a secret the Virgin Mary told three Portuguese children in 1917.

## What trial has revealed

Although the trial has developed no evidence of a "Bulgarian connection" in the shooting of the pope, it has revealed an international, ultraright frame-up of the three Bulgarians and a campaign of lies against the Bulgarian government. A cabal of intelligence agents, so-called journalists, and Italian gangsters have used the Italian state and the big-business press to slander the Bulgarian and Soviet governments as terrorist.

The full story of this conspiracy, however, will not be revealed in this trial because Italian authorities have shown little interest in pursuing the leads that have developed.

The charge that the Soviet KGB was behind the plot on the pope's life was first made, not by Agca, but in an October 1981 *Wall Street Journal* article by Paul Henze, former CIA station chief in Turkey.

It then received international prominence when Rome-based U.S. "journalist" Claire Sterling outlined the "Bulgarian connection" in a September 1982 article in *Reader's Digest* magazine. Published more than a year after Agca was sentenced to life imprisonment, the article was largely based on information fed to Sterling by Henze.

Sterling, based in Rome for three decades, was a staff writer for the *Rome Daily American* when it was owned by the Central Intelligence Agency.

Henze also passed his "information" to Mar-

vin Kalb of NBC Television News, who used it as the basis for his September 1982 report entitled "The Hand Behind the Attempt on the Pope's Life: Moscow."

In October 1982, Arnaud de Borchgrave, another "journalist" with close connections to spy agencies, told Italian authorities that he had learned from his sources in the French intelligence agency that the French had prior knowledge of Bulgarian involvement in a plot to kill the pope.

In November 1982, Italian authorities charged the three Bulgarians with conspiring to assassinate the pope. Sergei Antonov, the only one still in Italy at the time, was taken into custody.

Agca himself began implicating the three Bulgarians in May 1982, following visits to his prison cell by agents of the Italian secret services, who offered to commute the Turk's sentence if he cooperated with them.

Since the trial began, new information has come out about how the Italian secret services coached Agca. Much of the information was revealed in a separate trial taking place in Naples. At that trial, Naples racketeer Giovanni Pandico revealed that the Italian secret services had used imprisoned gangsters to act as go-betweens to Agca.

According to Pandico, Agca was "induced by our supplications, in quotation marks, to talk."

In an interview with the Italian news-magazine *L'Espresso*, Pandico revealed that Gen. Pietro Musumeci, then deputy chief of Italian military intelligence, had met with convicted Naples gangster Raffaele Cutolo in Ascoli Piceno prison on March 1, 1982. Gen. Musumeci urged Cutolo, head of the Camorra crime syndicate, to induce Agca, being held in the same jail, to implicate the Soviet bloc in the papal shooting.

Pandico reports that Cutolo began visiting Agca's prison cell and secured the Turk's cooperation through promises of help in getting him released from prison. Agca was also promised a job as a Camorra gunman upon his release.

It has also been revealed that Agca was repeatedly visited in prison by a Catholic priest, Mariano Santini, who was later arrested on charges of serving as a prison courier for the Camorra gang.

During his trial, Agca himself inadvertently revealed another crucial element of the frame-up. At one point, when the judge called out for "patience" ("pazienza") in the court, Agca piped up:

"Yes, Dr. Francesco Pazienza. I did meet with Francesco Pazienza, who asked me to collaborate. . . . He promised me liberty and a

French passport."

These meetings, Agca revealed, took place in prison in March and April 1982. Agca first implicated Bulgarians in May 1982.

Although little known outside Italy, Francesco Pazienza is a key figure in yet another trial now taking place in Rome of members of a powerful, secret right-wing group that operated as Masonic Lodge P-2. The group's aim was to use the Italian secret services both to undercut the influence of the Italian Communist Party and to further their own illegal business dealings.

Pazienza, now being held in a New York jail, is accused along with Gen. Musumeci and Gen. Giuseppe Santovito, head of the Italian military intelligence service, of being leaders of Masonic Lodge P-2.

## Small circle of friends

Many of the key intelligence and journalistic figures who took the lead in pointing a finger at Bulgaria are connected by a web of associations.

Sterling's long-time collaborator, Michael Ledeen, is a friend and associate of Pazienza. Some reports in the Italian press indicate that Ledeen was assigned code name Z-3 by the Italian military intelligence. Ledeen has also worked with Arnaud de Borchgrave.

Paul Henze, de Borchgrave, and Marvin Kalb all were members of the "steering committee on terrorism" of the Center for Strategic and International Studies. That steering committee, chaired by Zbigniew Brzezinski, former national security adviser to President Carter, issued a December 1984 report on "The International Implications of the Papal Assassination Attempt: A Case of State-Sponsored Terrorism."

Many of the key figures in the frame-up have also been widely cited by the U.S. press as "experts on terrorism."

The *New York Times*, for example, has run extensive articles by Claire Sterling, bolstering her contentions about the "Bulgarian connection." She has also been featured as a commentator by network news programs.

Paul Henze, the former CIA station chief, was hired as a consultant on the case by the *New York Times*, NBC News, and *Newsweek* magazine. □

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# PQ leaders retreat on constitution

*Labor, farmers' organizations oppose party's proposals*

By Paul Kouri

[The following articles are reprinted from the July 1, 1985, issue of *Socialist Voice*, a fortnightly newspaper published in Montreal that reflects the views of the Revolutionary Workers League, Canadian section of the Fourth International. The first article has been slightly edited by *Intercontinental Press*.]

\* \* \*

MONTREAL — The new proposals made by the Parti Québécois (PQ) government of Quebec to the Canadian federal government regarding Canada's constitution have engendered significant opposition within Quebec.

The PQ government had refused to sign the 1981 constitution. But with the election of Prime Minister Brian Mulroney's [Conservative Party] Tory government, the PQ government has made an abrupt about-face and is now trying to negotiate the terms of its acceptance of the constitution.

To understand the PQ's proposal and its meaning for working people and their allies across Canada, a little background is necessary.

## Rise of the nationalist movement

A powerful movement began to develop in Quebec some 25 years ago. It mobilized the French-speaking Québécois against the national oppression they suffer at the hands of Canadian imperialism.

A growing force in this movement was the Quebec working class. It fought against the second-class status of Québécois in their own province, despite their being a majority there. English-Canadian and U.S. bosses enforced English, not French, as the language of work. They paid lower wages to French-speakers. Quebec's education and health systems were greatly inferior to those in English Canada.

This movement culminated in the 1976 election of the PQ, in the adoption of Law 101, and in the 1980 referendum on sovereignty-association. The PQ government declared its aim to be Quebec's independence, Law 101 brought protection to the French language, and the referendum demanded greater democratic and national rights for Québécois.

The Canadian rulers reacted to this movement with bitter opposition, ranging from the 1970 War Measures Act invasion of Quebec by the Canadian army, to vicious campaigns against Law 101, and a full campaign for the "No" vote in the referendum.

The rulers won their first victory by defeating the referendum. But they were after much more. Pierre Trudeau's Liberal Party government in Ottawa immediately undertook to im-

pose a new constitution on Quebec, despite massive opposition here.

The new constitution and Bill of Rights stripped away Quebec's historic veto power over constitutional change and its exclusive power over the language of education. (This latter power had been used to adopt Law 101.) The adoption of the constitution in November 1981 was a major defeat, not only for Quebec but for the entire working class in Canada.

A shameful role was played by the trade union and New Democratic Party (Canada's labor party) leaders in English Canada. By supporting the constitution they betrayed

workers' interests, giving invaluable aid to the rulers' offensive against the Québécois. The resulting defeat deepened national divisions within the working class throughout Canada and opened the door to new attacks by the bosses.

The big-business media claim that the new constitution and charter expand democratic rights. This is a fraud.

Democratic rights across Canada were seriously *weakened*. Union rights have been trampled on in the past four years. Stepped-up attacks have occurred against French-speakers outside Quebec, especially in Manitoba and New Brunswick. Last summer, an Ontario judge ruled that the new constitution does not recognize women's right to abortion, only their "right" to marry and have children. And Native and Inuit people continue to wait for justice.

## PQ proposes an unjustified retreat

For the past four years the PQ government has rightly refused to sign the constitutional accord. Now, however, caving in to imperialist pressure, it says Canadian federalism is worth trying. It offers Ottawa a deal: in exchange for restoration of its veto and exclusive jurisdiction over the language of teaching, it will further weaken Law 101 and sign the constitution.

It's an unjustified retreat.

These proposals have been widely opposed in Quebec. On June 10, the Quebec Federation of Labor, the Confederation of National Trade Unions, the Quebec Teachers Federation, the Quebec Farmers Survival Movement, and other groups signed a statement issued by the Coalition for Quebec Independence rejecting the PQ proposals.

These groups strongly object that the PQ government's negotiating position doesn't even include the "most fundamental" demand of all — Quebec's right to self-determination.

Another aspect of the proposals that also marks a significant retreat is the PQ's offer to weaken Law 101 by broadening access to English schools in Quebec, in exactly the same way the 1981 constitutional defeat did, provided the Quebec government regains exclusive jurisdiction over the language of teaching.

Such a measure would weaken the status of French as the language of public instruction in Quebec, weaken the Québécois vis-à-vis their English Canadian bosses, deepen divisions among workers along linguistic lines, and thereby help weaken the fight of the entire working class against the capitalist class.

The opposition by the Coalition for Quebec Independence and the Quebec unions to the

## Lévesque steps down

René Lévesque, premier of Quebec since 1976 and leader of the Parti Québécois (PQ) since its founding in 1968, resigned from his post as party leader June 20. He will stay on as premier until a new PQ leader is chosen, which must take place within 90 days.

The PQ first came into office in 1976, winning 69 of the 110 seats in the National Assembly, the Quebec provincial parliament. In 1981, the party increased its number of seats to 80 out of 122 total.

Since then, however, it has suffered a string of by-election losses, dropping the number of seats it holds to 61, a bare majority.

Among the major successes of Lévesque's early years in office was the passage of Law 101, which established the primacy of the French language in Quebec. Subsequently, however, many of its provisions requiring use of French in business, schools, advertising, and signs were struck down by Canadian courts.

A 1980 referendum initiated by the Lévesque government on whether Quebec should negotiate a new status of "sovereignty-association" with Canada was defeated by a 3-to-2 margin.

Last November a split took place in the PQ over Lévesque's proposal that the party fight the next election campaign on economic issues rather than on Quebec independence from Canada. Six cabinet ministers resigned from Lévesque's government in opposition to downplaying the independence goal.

New elections must be called in Quebec by early next year. Opinion polls show the PQ running behind the Liberal Party at the present time.





RENÉ LÉVESQUE

PQ-proposed framework for the constitutional negotiations is an extremely important initiative. It can lay the basis for a real campaign, not only in Quebec, but throughout Canada, in defense of Quebec's rights.

Even if they don't share the same language, the workers, family farmers, women, and youth of English Canada and Quebec have a common enemy — Canadian imperialism and its state. They have the same interests in ending capitalist political power.

All unions should come out in support of the coalition's statement. The Canadian Labor Congress should do the same. Every union affiliated to the NDP should work to change the NDP leadership's anti-Quebec stand and turn the NDP into a champion of Quebec's national rights. The June federal NDP convention should change the NDP's position on the constitution and give its support to the Quebec coalition's fight.

Such a position is essential to the unity of the pan-Canadian working class, French and English-speaking, in its common struggle to defend union, national, and democratic rights against the bosses and their governments.

Ultimately this fight must become a political struggle.

The support by Quebec unions to the coalition's call is a positive step on their part toward the Quebec labor movement taking conscious leadership of the national struggle. It's a step toward independent labor political action.

Carried through to the end, the struggle poses the need to drive the capitalist parties from government and replace them with an NDP-Quebec labor government at the federal level. Such a government would need to act both in the interests of all working people and in respect of the will of the Québécois, Acadiens [French-speaking residents of the Maritime provinces], and Native people, allowing them to decide their own destinies.

The call by the three Quebec labor bodies and the Coalition for Quebec Independence offers an important opportunity to labor throughout Canada to take a common step in the direction of such a government. □

## Shipyard strikers win big victory, 10-month strike fought concessions

By Paul Kouri

MONTREAL — After more than 10 months on strike, the 1,050 shipyard workers at Marine Industries in Sorel, Quebec, have won a signal victory.

Their struggle was an exemplary one for the entire labor movement. They fought the unemployment devastating their region by demanding a shorter workweek without a pay cut, they conducted their strike democratically, and they organized to obtain solidarity.

Some 96 percent of the strikers voted to accept the settlement.

As the strike neared its end, the central issue became the company's refusal to rehire seven workers it had fired. The strikers refused to sell out their workmates, and the firings were rolled back. The case of the seven will go to arbitration. If any disciplinary suspensions result, they will not be allowed to exceed two years. The strikers also asked their union executive to establish a support fund if any of the seven are suspended.

Marine management, supported by the Parti Québécois government and the employers' association, refused right up to the last moment to yield on this point. They hoped to use the firings to intimidate and discourage the workers.

The victory at Sorel is important. To grasp its significance, the enormous concessions demanded by the company at the beginning must be recalled. Its demands for compulsory overtime and speedup through rearranging job classifications were pushed back. The workers also won real gains including:

- A bonus of \$950 [US\$690] for this year plus an annual wage increase of four percent, with a cost-of-living-adjustment in the final year;
- A reduction in the workweek from 40 to 37.5 hours for the evening shift;
- An early retirement plan giving some 100 workers aged 60 to 64 the option of retiring, and opening up jobs for young workers;
- The right to store up time worked in overtime in order to lengthen holidays, and to minimize the usual losses of jobs due to overtime.

Union president François Lamoureux explains that the difference between the company's initial offer and the settlement provisions amounts to 400 jobs.

During the strike the union leadership kept members well informed through weekly local meetings, with the workers voting on steps taken to lead the strike. Hundreds were mobilized for the picket lines and a women's committee greatly contributed to expanding solidarity for the strikers and supporting the strikers' families.

The workers succeeded in getting their federation, the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CSN), to help organize several demonstrations that brought out up to 6,000 supporters. The Independent Youth Regroupment [RAJ], a Quebec youth organization, also helped.

Every union should celebrate this victory and draw lessons from the Marine Industries workers' example. □

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# Unrest grows against Marcos regime

*U.S., Australian governments uneasy, but continue aid*

By Deb Shnookal

[The following article appeared in the June 28 issue of *Socialist Action*, a fortnightly newspaper published in Auckland, New Zealand, that reflects the views of the Socialist Action League, New Zealand section of the Fourth International.]

\* \* \*

In spite of rumours of his serious illness, President Ferdinand Marcos announced on April 21 that he will seek another term of office in the 1987 elections. In the meantime he is acting to silence critics within his own New Society Movement (KBL) government such as Foreign Minister Arturo Tolentino, who was removed from the cabinet in March.

Washington, however, has indicated its unease with Marcos' intransigence. A senior United States government official was quoted in the *Melbourne Age* on April 23 as saying: "Forcing moderates out of Cabinet is not a step in the right direction."

Three leading Filipino businessmen recently wrote a letter to the *Asia Wall Street Journal* arguing that it was "a glaring reality that brutal repression, corruption and lack of principle . . . have been the principal reasons for the alarming growth of the (communist) New People's Army (NPA) in recent years."

## Martial law

Marcos was elected president in 1965. But in 1972 he declared martial law when it appeared as if opposition leader Benigno Aquino was going to win.

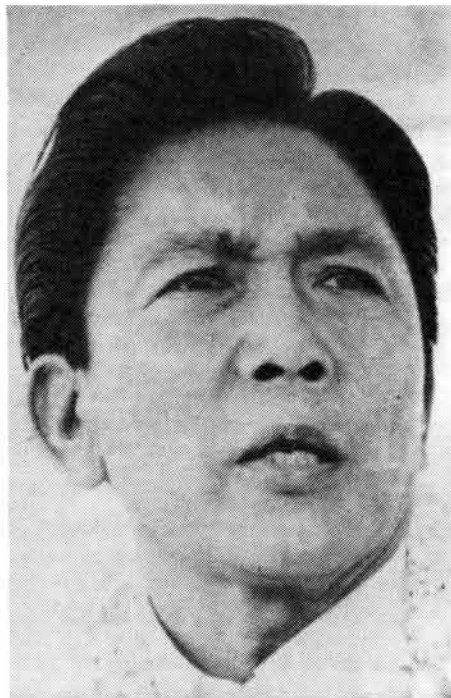
Under the old constitution Marcos, who was re-elected in 1969, would not have been eligible to stand for a third term. He solved this problem by altering the constitution in 1973 and ran for the presidency again in 1981 when the entire opposition boycotted the election.

Although martial law was officially ended in 1981, Marcos retains dictatorial powers. These powers include constitutional amendment No. 6 under which the president can override any parliamentary decision.

However, the Marcos regime today faces a very real crisis. From 1983, the year of the Aquino assassination, the Philippines has suffered its most severe economic crisis since World War Two. Last year saw a 5.5 percent decline in the real Gross National Product, while inflation ran at 50 percent.

## Economic crisis

The Philippines was the only South East Asian country in 1984 that failed to meet the service payment on its US\$27 billion foreign debt. The economy has not recovered from the



FERDINAND MARCOS

considerable flight of capital from the country, in face of the growing instability in the aftermath of the Aquino assassination.

In May a state-run Philippine bank, in which Marcos and other government leaders held prominent positions, collapsed, further weakening the already faltering credibility of the Marcos regime.

Moreover, Marcos' continued defense of his loyal ally, General Fabian Ver, currently on trial along with 24 other military officers and one civilian for the murder of Aquino, has worried Washington.

The May 11 *Australian* reported a U.S. congressional source indicating dissatisfaction with Marcos' statement that General Ver would be reinstated if he was acquitted of the charges. The White House has made obvious its preference for General Fidel Ramos, a West Point graduate and veteran of both the Korean and Vietnam wars, who has replaced General Ver as caretaker armed forces chief of staff.

## U.S. 'warning'

This dissatisfaction with Marcos was reflected in a vote in the U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee which lopped US\$15 million off a Senate proposal for a US\$195 million aid package to Marcos. The U.S. Senate on May 17 adopted a resolution to pressure Marcos into carrying out political reforms, including

organizing "free" elections.

However, according to the May 18 *Australian*, the resolution, moved by Democrat John Kerry, was intended simply as a "warning" and "will have no impact on military and economic aid."

This military and economic aid to the Philippines includes a massive US\$900 million in the next five years, as promised by the 1983 U.S.-Philippines bases agreement. This guarantees the U.S. free access to its Clark air force and Subic Bay naval bases in Central Luzon.

Furthermore, the *Melbourne Age* reported on May 21 that the U.S. has promised to bankroll Marcos out of his present economic difficulties to the tune of US\$10 billion. This agreement, recently signed in New York, includes US\$925 million in new credits, US\$3 billion for trade-credit lines, and US\$5.8 billion in the rescheduling of outstanding loans.

## U.S. bases

Washington's concern over the mounting turmoil under the Marcos dictatorship is linked to its determination to hold onto the strategically situated Philippine military bases. A U.S. diplomat was reported in the May 8 *Sydney Morning Herald* as saying: "Leaving Subic would be as deep a blow to our prestige as the fall of Saigon. . . ."

Washington's concern for its bases in the Philippines is being fed by the growing guerrilla movement there, led by the New People's Army, the armed wing of the Philippine Communist Party, and the Muslim Moro National Liberation Front based on the island of Mindanao.

On April 14 guerrilla leaders held an international press conference in the hills of Mindanao. There, Lucas Fernandez of the umbrella organization the National Democratic Front reported to those intrepid journalists who had made the rugged trip that the NPA now has an estimated fighting strength of up to 20,000 and is active in over 50 of the 73 provinces of the Philippines.

## Growing unrest

President Marcos, anxious to quash the impression that his government is losing ground to the guerrillas, sent letters to Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore and President Suharto of Indonesia. According to the May 11 *Australian*, he assured them their concern expressed at a meeting in Sulawesi, Indonesia, that the political unrest in the Philippines threatened the security of the Association of South East Asian Nations, was unfounded.

Unfortunately for Marcos, at the very same



time the news broke that the rebels had killed army commander Lieutenant Colonel Osito Bahian in an ambush near Butuan, Mindanao. Over 25,000 government troops are presently mobilised in Mindanao against the guerrilla movement.

The desperation of the Marcos regime has led to even more savage reprisals against all its opponents.

#### Political repression

The April 15 *Australian* reported the death toll for 1985 as already exceeding 900, and on May 18 reported that 22 people had been murdered in Manila alone over the previous two weeks by "quasi-government vigilantes" or death squads similar to those operating in El Salvador. The same issue reported the arrest of five human rights lawyers under the infamous Preventative Detention decrees, which empower the military to make arrests without application to any civil authority.

According to the April 30 issue of the Task Force Detainees of the Philippines (TFDP) *Update*, political assassinations are on the rise. The TFDP, a human rights organisation, reported the murders of a legal assistance lawyer, Romeralfo Taojo, and an Italian missionary, Father Tullio Favali, by military and paramilitary men in two separate incidents.

#### Australian troops

Despite his increasing international isolation, Washington is not alone in continuing to back Marcos. The May 6 *Sydney Morning Herald* reported Australian government Foreign Minister Bill Hayden as having announced that Australian troops would be "on

call" should they be needed in the Philippines. Australia, Hayden said, would be obliged under the ANZUS treaty to send military assistance to the Philippines in the event of an attack on the U.S. bases at Subic Bay or Clark air field.

The Labor Party government in Australia has been under some pressure from the Labor Party ranks to cut its aid to the Marcos regime. Australian Council of Trade Unions (the national union federation) president Cliff Dolan has urged the federal government to review its foreign aid policy because he is concerned that such aid is used to violently suppress and exploit Filipino workers.

#### Union tour

Dolan's appeal was based on a report from 13 delegates of nine Australian trade unions who returned on May 6 from a two-week fact-finding mission in the Philippines, hosted by the Kilusang Mayo Uno — the anti-Marcos

trade union movement.

Australia's largest foreign aid projects are located in the Philippines. One month before Foreign Minister Hayden openly made the commitment of Australian troops to the Philippines, three Australian "aid" workers and their Filipino assistants were captured and detained briefly by NPA guerrillas in Northern Samar on April 12. They had been working on a road-building project which is designed to facilitate the army's "counter-insurgency" efforts which spread the military's terror against workers and poor peasants.

Although Washington and Canberra may fear Marcos' intransigence will lead him to the same fate as the shah of Iran or Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza, for the present they find they have very little alternative but to back the Filipino president. As a recently leaked U.S. government report said, "at this stage, [Marcos] is part of the problem [but] he is necessarily part of the solution..." □

## Aquino murder case heard

### Missing witnesses and retractions plague trial

#### By Deb Shnookal

[The following article appeared in the June 14, 1985, issue of *Socialist Action*, a fortnightly newspaper published in Auckland, New Zealand, that reflects the views of the Socialist Action League, New Zealand section of the Fourth International.]

\* \* \*

Disappearing witnesses and retraction of testimony have been only some of the problems which have plagued the trial of Philippine armed forces chief General Fabian Ver and 25 others for their part in the assassination of opposition leader Benigno Aquino at Manila International Airport on August 21, 1983. So far, the conduct of the court hearing has only added to public scepticism that the assassins will be brought to justice.

Despite the military's attempt to place blame for the Aquino assassination on the Philippine Communist Party, an investigation commission under Justice Corazon Agrava found that a conspiracy to assassinate Aquino and a subsequent cover-up by the military had taken place. Charges were then laid against 25 military personnel and one civilian.

#### Testimony disallowed

The case is being heard in the Sandiganbayan — a special Marcos-appointed court set up in 1978 to hear charges of government graft and corruption. The court of three judges, under Judge Manuel Palmaran, has already disallowed all testimony presented to the Agrava board of inquiry, on which the charges were based, except that of witnesses who are prepared to reappear before the Sandiganbayan.

This automatically eliminates the evidence

obtained by the Agrava board on its trips to Japan and the United States from journalists who accompanied Aquino on his China Airlines flight to Manila, ballistic experts, voice analysts, and others.

According to the April 11 *Far Eastern Economic Review*, a number of Japanese witnesses agreed to come to the Philippines to testify if their security could be guaranteed and if they would not be open to legal action based on their testimony. Government lawyer Manuel Herrera replied that no such immunity from future prosecution could be guaranteed.

#### Witnesses disappear

Key to the prosecution's case against the military tops is the testimony of the private security guards from Manila airport. They told the Agrava board that they had seen Aquino shot while he was still on the aircraft service stairs, surrounded by military guards. This challenged the military's assertion that Aquino had been murdered by Rolando Galman on the runway. Galman was shot dead by military guards only moments after Aquino was killed.

However, four of these five witnesses have disappeared, and under Judge Palmaran's ruling their evidence will be struck from the record if they fail to appear. They had earlier expressed fear for their safety if they had to testify again. One of the airport security men, Ramon Layoso, did show up briefly on April 10 and reaffirmed statements he had made to the Agrava board.

#### 'Crying Lady'

In early May, another "disappearing witness," Rebecca Quijano, gave evidence before the court. She has become known as the "Crying Lady" because she was filmed by TV



Deb Shnookal/IP

Young protester in Manila.

July 22, 1985



Part of crowd at funeral procession in 1983 for Aquino.

cameras weeping at the scene of the assassination.

Quijano told the court she had been looking out the aircraft window and had seen a soldier from the Metropolitan Command shoot Aquino in the back of the head as he descended the aircraft stairs. She was initially not cross-examined, and the prosecution opposed her recall on the grounds that another court appearance might endanger her life.

The defence has tried to discredit her testimony by showing she had been charged with minor fraud for using a false name in applying for a passport and U.S. visa in 1981.

#### Intimidation

The Galman family, including Galman's 12-year-old son, also initially refused to appear for fear of their safety.

Other witnesses have now retracted the testimony given to the commission of inquiry. Rizbonric Sicat, a friend of Galman's, had previously said that Galman was picked up by four of the accused, including Arturo Custodio and businessman Hermillo Goscuico, four days before the assassination. However, on March 27 Sicat stated in the court that he had told the Agrava board "rumours and stories" and that he had been bribed into giving such evidence.

Others among the accused are Brigadier-General Luther Custodio, head of Aviation Security Command (AVSECOM); Major-General Prospero Olivas, commander of the Metro Manila police force; and Colonel Vicente Tigas, from Marcos' own Presidential Security Command.

On May 7 General Ver, a loyal political ally of Marcos and a distant relative, pleaded for a speedier trial, saying he had already suffered enough mental anguish and humiliation in the last six months since the Agrava commission's report. General Ver is charged, along with seven others, as accessories to the murder. He

is presently on leave from his position as Chief of Staff of the Philippine Armed Forces.

#### Marcos confident

Marcos, giving a clear indication of what he expects the outcome of the trial to be, has already promised his buddy, General Ver, his job back, if he is acquitted. This assurance has not pleased Washington, which would like Marcos to clean up his act a bit to allay the suspicions of widespread graft and corruption that surround his regime.

The conduct of the trial has achieved very little in this regard. Major-General Olivas moved on March 27 that the charges against him be dismissed on the grounds of the tes-

timony already given, and General Ver's lawyers have filed for the exclusion of his testimony to the Agrava board under constitutional provisions against self-indictment.

Meanwhile, those defendants not on bail are billeted comfortably in special barracks at the Philippine airforce base Camp Villamore, near Manila. Unlike the witnesses, they are not obliged to appear in court.

At this stage it does not seem likely that the trial, which began on February 22, will be brought to a rapid conclusion. But even before the Agrava commission report in October last year, there was no doubt in the minds of most Filipinos about the guilt of General Ver and his military cronies. □

## Laos calls for talks with Thai regime

In hopes of ending a year-long incursion by Thai troops on its territory, the government of Laos has asked for talks with the Thai government. Thai troops have been in Laos since June 6, 1984, when they occupied three Laotian villages and herded the inhabitants into Thailand.

Four months later, under international pressure, the Thai forces withdrew from the three villages. But they remain on Laotian territory along the Lao-Thai border. In addition, 900 villagers are still being held in camps on Thai territory.

In a statement issued on the first anniversary of the Thai incursion, the foreign ministry of the Lao People's Democratic Republic called for talks in either capital to insure "security along the border" and to turn "the Lao-Thai border into one of peace and friendship."

The Laotian government blames the tensions with Thailand on the "ultrarightist reactionary forces within the Thai ruling circles" who now control the government in Bangkok.

These forces, the Laotian government

charges, have also turned "Thai territory into a sanctuary for rallying, fostering, and training the Lao exiled reactionaries and sending them back to sow trouble and carry out sabotage activities against the peaceful construction work of the Lao people."

Unless Thai troops withdraw from Lao territory, the Laotian government will raise the issue at the next meeting of foreign ministers of the Movement of Nonaligned Countries, which will take place in Luanda, Angola, in September.

The Thai government also allows its territory to be used to launch attacks on another of its neighbors, Kampuchea. Thousands of Kampuchean rightists are based in camps along the Thai-Kampuchean border.

Thailand was a major base for the U.S. air war against Laos, Kampuchea, and Vietnam during the 1960s and early 1970s, and Thai troops fought alongside U.S. troops in Vietnam and on the side of the former rightist government in Laos. □



# Debt crisis takes heavy toll

*Workers, peasants forced to sacrifice for banks*

By Will Reissner

Traditionally, election results in Mexico have been easy to predict. The ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) always wins.

In the 56 years since the PRI was established in 1929, the party has won every single election for president, senator, and state governor.

The PRI owes its unbroken record of success to a finely-tuned combination of repression, patronage, graft, and use of the state apparatus to consolidate its control over all segments of the population.

The pattern of PRI victories remained unbroken in the July 7 state elections in Mexico.

But behind the seeming continuity in Mexican politics lies growing unrest sparked by the severe economic crisis of recent years. That crisis has been marked by galloping inflation, rising unemployment, sharply dropping living standards for the country's impoverished workers and peasants, and a skyrocketing foreign debt.

The magnitude of the economic crisis can be glimpsed from the following comparisons:

- In 1976, 12.5 Mexican pesos could be exchanged for one U.S. dollar. Less than a decade later, those 12.5 pesos now are worth only 3.5 cents in U.S. currency.

- In 1976, Mexico's foreign debt stood at \$24 billion. Today the foreign debt is over \$96 billion and rising fast. The collapse of the peso and the huge rise in the foreign debt would have been even worse had it not been for the sevenfold jump in Mexican oil exports during the same period.

Mexico's economic crisis is not unique. The same story is being repeated throughout Latin America and the rest of the semicolonial world.

The roots of the crisis lie in the unequal terms of trade and exorbitant interest rates imposed on the semicolonial countries by the ruling families in the advanced capitalist powers.

The prices that Mexico receives for its exports have been steadily dropping, while the prices it must pay for imports from the imperialist countries have risen steadily.

As export prices fell, Mexico, like other semicolonial countries, resorted to large-scale borrowing from banks in the imperialist countries in order to finance the imports of manufactured goods and technology needed for economic growth. These loans, it was hoped, would be repaid when export prices rose again.

But that has not happened. The prices that semicolonial countries receive for their exports have remained severely depressed, making it impossible for these countries to earn enough foreign currency to repay their foreign loans as they came due.



MIGUEL DE LA MADRID

New loans, at much higher interest rates, had to be contracted to pay off the maturing debts. The cycle has proven impossible to break while export prices remain depressed.

In a July 3 speech in Rome, A.W. Clausen, president of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (known as the World Bank), reported that "in the next five years, about 60 percent of the debt of the developing countries will need to be rolled over or amortized" because these countries are unable to repay the principal. The bank reported that between 1970 and 1984, the outstanding medium-term and long-term debt of semicolonial countries grew almost tenfold.

But the big bankers in North America and Western Europe, and their coordinating bodies like the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, refuse to issue new loans until and unless semicolonial governments agree to implement economic policies that place top priority on freeing up financial resources for debt repayment.

Mexico's foreign debt is the second highest in the semicolonial world, after Brazil's. In March, the big banks agreed to reschedule Mexico's repayment on \$49 billion in loans, putting off repayment of the principal for 14 years. But even with this rescheduling, payment of interest and service charges on the debt will eat up nearly half of Mexico's export earnings this year.

Before the banks agreed to the debt rescheduling, the Mexican government was forced to agree to make interest payments its top economic priority.

To that end, the government of President Miguel de la Madrid has implemented policies

that have led to sharp declines in real wages and living standards and huge cuts in government spending for social programs and economic development.

When real wages drop, consumption of domestically-produced and imported goods also drops. This means more goods are available for export while imports are curtailed. As a result more foreign currency becomes available to repay the loans from the imperialist banks.

The austerity program instituted by President de la Madrid has, in the words of *New York Times* reporter Richard J. Meislin, "garnered great praise from the international economic community, if not from the workers who have seen their standard of living decline."

Two years of austerity measures, Meislin notes, have hit especially hard at "the country's impoverished lower classes."

Yet despite these belt-tightening measures, the country's foreign debt has continued to mount because the prices paid for Mexico's exports continue to drop and the volume of exports remains depressed due to the international economic crisis.

In mid-June, for example, Mexico had to cut the price of its heavy-oil exports by \$1.50 per barrel, thereby cutting \$290 million from its budgeted income for 1985. But oil industry experts assert that Mexican oil prices will have to drop further, by \$2.50 to \$3 per barrel, in order to stay competitive in the European and Japanese markets.

Moreover, while the sales price of oil has dropped, so too has the volume exported. In June exports fell below 1 million barrels per day. By contrast, in the first half of 1984, Mexican oil exports had averaged 1.56 million barrels per day.

The volume of Mexican exports of manufactured goods also dropped by 10 percent in the first half of 1985 compared with the corresponding period in 1984.

As a result of the dropping export prices and volume, the Mexican government came under renewed pressure from its foreign creditors to impose further austerity measures in order to continue its schedule of repayment of debt interest and service charges.

On June 5, Finance Minister Jesús Silva-Herzog announced an additional 300 billion peso cut in government spending on economic development. These cuts, which come on top of 400 billion pesos in emergency budget cuts already made in 1985, will mean the loss of 300,000 public sector jobs.

As a result of the harsh austerity measures already implemented since 1982, vast sums of money have flowed from Mexico to U.S. and other imperialist banks, while Mexico's workers and peasants have seen their already meager living standards further eroded.

Between 1982 and 1984 more than \$30 billion has flowed from Mexico to foreign banks. In addition, some \$2 billion per year in private capital has been shipped out of the country and invested in the United States, Western Europe, and Japan. □

# Imperialism and Mexican government

*PRT election manifesto scores policies of ruling party*

[The following article is reprinted from the May 6-12, 1985, issue of *Bandera Socialista*, newspaper of the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT), Mexican section of the Fourth International.]

[In its introduction, *Bandera Socialista* describes this article as the first of a series constituting the platform of the PRT for the July 7 elections in Mexico. This article, the newspaper states, deals with "the anti-imperialist struggle and the defense of the nation."]

[The translation from Spanish and footnotes are by *Intercontinental Press*.]

\* \* \*

Historically, Yankee imperialism has plundered our country. Since the 19th century, it has stolen more than half of Mexico's territory, and it has invaded our territory several times. It has profited from our natural resources. It has taken advantage of the existence of a cheap labor market to superexploit Mexican workers. It has used our agricultural production and the best of our livestock. It has made incredible profits from small investments of capital. It has dollarized our economy. It has carried out offensives to change our national identity.

For its part, not only has the Mexican government been incapable of resisting, but it has been imperialism's main ally.

But in the past three years this has reached truly alarming proportions. The Mexican government has mortgaged national sovereignty to imperialism. And today there is no possibility, within the framework of the present relationship and the present system, to turn back and choose another road.

The exploited and oppressed cannot have confidence in anything but their own forces to defeat this policy of surrender to imperialism. It is necessary to create an alternative for the Mexican nation, as a nation oppressed by imperialism. But this alternative cannot be built by searching for "progressive" sectors of the government or "progressive" sectors among the small and medium-sized industrialists.

This alternative will be built only when the proletariat, acting as leader of the oppressed nation, acts socially and places itself at the head of all the exploited and oppressed sectors. But this does not mean returning to the old, shopworn nationalist speeches, which always put off the struggle against the government to some undetermined point in the future.

Today anti-imperialism means at one and the same time struggling against the presence of the Yankees in our affairs and in those of other peoples, and struggling against their partners in our country, meaning the Institu-



In spite of oil discoveries, Mexico has big economic problems.

tional Revolutionary Party (PRI) government and the National Action Party (PAN).<sup>1</sup>

## **Against the agreements between the International Monetary Fund and the Mexican government.**

### **No to paying the foreign debt!**

The government of [President] Miguel de la Madrid has presented the current renegotiation of a substantial portion of the foreign debt as a great victory.<sup>2</sup> Through this act, the PRI government has mortgaged Mexico for the next 14 years. Not only because in the end almost the same amount of money has to be paid out — less at the beginning, but more at the end — but also because now, as stressed in the agreement that was signed, the imperialist banks as well as the IMF have the right to "monitor the economic plans" of our country.

This raises three problems:

1. How is this total debt and interest to be paid? The PRI government gives a clear answer. All the money that will not be invested in schools, health care, transportation, jobs, food, and general services will instead be channelled into payments to imperialism.

This means that it is not some abstract

1. The Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) has been the dominant capitalist party in Mexico since its founding in 1929. Since that time, every president, senator, and state governor in Mexico has been a member of the PRI.

The National Action Party (PAN) has been the officially tolerated right-wing opposition party, calling for less government participation in the economy and closer ties with the U.S. government. Recently it has seen its influence rise considerably, particularly in northern Mexico, as a result of the country's economic and political crisis.

2. In March, the Mexican government and foreign banks agreed on a plan for a 14-year rescheduling of \$48 billion of Mexico's foreign debt.

"Mexico" that will pay the foreign debt. Rather the workers, the peasants, the wage earners, the housewives are going to pay it.

2. Who was consulted about signing this agreement? If Miguel de la Madrid and Finance Minister Jesús Silva Herzog were the ones who were going to pay, it would be well and good that they made the decisions.

But if we the exploited and oppressed of this country are the ones who will have to pay it, why do they make the decision for us? Especially since we know that the PRI party faithful were the main ones sending dollars out of the country.

Not even the Chamber of Deputies and Senate, which are a farce as now constituted, were consulted. This is the type of democracy that the PRI government implements.

3. The PRI gerontocracy shifts the burden of the crisis to the youth and the children, the children of peasants and workers. They are the ones who will face the heaviest burden of the debt. Although they had nothing to do with the debt, they are the ones who will have to work like crazy to keep imperialism satisfied. And this in the middle of the Year of the Youth.

The foreign debt, which was entered into and utilized by the PRI government, has risen to more than US\$95 billion. It is an open secret that Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Venezuela, and other countries will never be able to pay off their whole debt. Imperialism knows this, but it seeks to keep a noose around the necks of all the debtor countries.

The PRT is the only party that has put forward the idea that the foreign debt should not be paid. And now more than ever we say that the Mexican people *should not pay for something they got no benefit from*. And in fact there is an alternative, which is to call upon our Latin American brothers and sisters to do the same, to form a *club of debtors who will not pay the debt*.



### **Against Yankee investment, which takes out everything and pays in nothing**

The establishment of the Ford factory in the state of Sonora, the plans of IBM, the massive presence of the subassembly plants along our country's northern border, etc., have taken place as a result of a series of concessions provided by the Mexican government, allowing the transnational companies to keep 100 percent of the stock in their hands, allowing them to take 100 percent of the profits, providing them with extremely low tax rates, or allowing them to dismantle their companies and take away all their machinery when it suits them without any problem.

And they do all this while exploiting a major segment of the Mexican work force. The hourly wage of the Mexican worker is seven or eight times lower than in the United States, meaning the exploitation of labor is seven or eight times higher.

### **Against the intervention of Yankee police agents in Mexico!**

Recent events concerning the production and export of drugs in Mexico has revealed something we already knew: the corruption and venality of the Mexican police. But it has also exposed the existence of hundreds of Yankee agents in our country acting in a totally illegal manner. These CIA agents are not just concerned with the drug question, but also, and fundamentally, with the question of politics, as has been shown in the murder of journalist Manuel Buendía.<sup>3</sup> They have no business in our country. If the Mexican government does not have the moral authority to send them packing, we say Yankee agents out of Mexico!

### **In defense of the undocumented workers**

When a Yankee police official gets killed, the Reagan government raises a huge clamor.<sup>4</sup> Almost every day an undocumented Mexican or a Chicano dies [in the United States], and the Mexican government does nothing. The undocumented workers go without papers to do honest work, while the gringo police come with documents to work illegally. Every time a worker is killed in the United States by the racist gringo police, that is an offense against our homeland and we must show that we reject the genocidal policies of the world's public enemy

3. Manuel Buendía, whose column "Private Network" appeared in some 200 publications, was killed by a gunman in Mexico City on May 30, 1984. In addition to focusing on stories of official corruption, Buendía was the author of a 1984 book entitled *The CIA in Mexico*, which named officers of the U.S. embassy as CIA operatives.

4. The kidnapping of U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration agent Enrique Camarena Salazar on a Guadalajara street on February 7 led to a confrontation between the U.S. and Mexican governments. Beginning on February 15, U.S. customs agents began exhaustive searches of all Mexican cars at U.S. border crossing points to pressure the Mexican government.

Camarena Salazar's body was found at a ranch near Guadalajara on March 6.

number one, Ronald Reagan.

### **Down with the Reagan war policy! Long live the Salvadoran and Nicaraguan revolutions! Long live the Cuban workers' state!**

Defense of Mexico as a nation does not end at our borders. If we really want to defend Mexico, we must defend the revolutionary processes that are already taking place and those yet to come. We are defending our own right to make a revolution, without any imperial government stopping us.

Yankee imperialism has put pressure on the Mexican government to stop it from raising the possibility of a negotiated settlement [for Central America], which the Mexican government

has put forward in response to pressure from the exploited and oppressed in this country.

Today, for Reagan, even a policy as timid as the one put forward by the Contadora group<sup>5</sup> goes against his strategy for confronting the problem of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) [of Nicaragua] and the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) [of El Salvador], and in passing the case of Cuba.

We must state that an attack against these three countries will be viewed as an attack against Mexico. □

5. The Contadora Group is made up of the governments of Colombia, Mexico, Panama, and Venezuela.

## **Spain**

# **Protest rights abuses in Peru**

## *New committee launches defense campaign*

### **By Pepe Mejía**

[The following, slightly abridged, is a report that appeared in the May 24 issue of *Combate*, the weekly newspaper of the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), the section of the Fourth International in Spain. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

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The serious situation of human rights in Peru has led a group of Peruvians in Spain to form the Commission for Defense of Human Rights in Peru (CODDEH-PERU).

Violation of human rights takes place not only on the individual level, but on the group level as well. Peasant communities and communities of indigenous peoples in the jungles are assaulted in a systematic and massive way.

According to the *Bulletin of the National Coordinating Committee of Human Rights* in Peru, "Through the intervention of the armed forces a dirty war has developed, in which we can note the following practices:

- The leveling of communities, with the resulting death, destruction, robbery, rape, and plunder.

- Steady increase in extra-legal executions, ranging from individual cases to collective massacres.

- The detention-disappearing of individuals.

- Massive detentions and the institutionalization of increasingly cruel methods of torture.

- The use of compulsion by the armed forces and police to force participation in paramilitary-style armed patrols, civil defense committees, or peasant guard duty, which has added to the spiraling violence."

In this context, CODDEH-PERU has launched a campaign to collect signatures to *Demand that the president-elect of the Repub-*

*lic of Peru insure full respect for human rights.*

A similar campaign has been carried out in Peru. The petitioning was concluded on April 6 and was addressed to the presidential candidates of the different political tickets.

Among the signatures on the petition were: the National Coordinating Committees for Human Rights, which is made up of organizations such as the Association for Human Rights, the Clerical Commission for Social Action, the National Commission for Human Rights, CODDEH-Puno, CODDEH-Cusco, CODDEH-Ayacucho, CODDEH-Cajamarca [Peruvian cities], Committee of Families of the Martyrs of Uchuraccay, CODDEH-Union of the Daily *La República*, Federation of Peruvian Peasants, and support group of FEDEFAM.

Among our other activities has been the publication after great effort, of our *Information Bulletin* Number Zero.

In this bulletin, which we want to turn into an open channel of communication, we report on our tasks and participation in the Permanent Coordinating Council of the European Committees to Defend Human Rights in Peru.

Last month we attended a meeting of the council in Paris. At that meeting we decided to organize an International Investigative Commission that will travel to Peru.

One of the members of the commission is Nobel Peace Prize winner Adolfo Pérez Esquivel. Well-known figures from three continents will take part.

In Peru the First National Meeting on Human Rights — which gave rise to the National Coordinating Committee on Human Rights — has resolved "To support the initiative of the Permanent European Council in setting up an International Commission that will speak out against the serious violations that are taking place in the country." □

# Apartheid regime strikes outward

Attacks on neighbors expose U.S. policy

By Ernest Harsch

Since late May, the apartheid regime of South Africa has once again stepped up its regional terrorism. This has included attacks — either directly or through its surrogates — in Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, and Zambia, as well as an ongoing war against the Namibian independence struggle.

On top of all this, South African police continue to gun down Black protesters within South Africa virtually every day, claiming nearly 500 lives over the past year.

This escalation, coming at a time of mounting domestic and international protest against Washington's support for the racist South African regime, has embarrassed U.S. policy-makers.

For several years, Washington has pursued a policy it calls "constructive engagement," involving closer economic and political ties with Pretoria. U.S. officials argue that this will induce Pretoria to institute reforms in the apartheid system and restrain it from attacking neighboring countries.

But the most recent South African aggression shows up the true face of "constructive engagement."

To cover itself, the White House has called home its ambassador to South Africa, Herman Nickel, for "consultations." The tone of the official U.S. reactions to the South African raids has been sharper than in recent years.

But thus far there are no signs of any fundamental shifts in U.S. policy.

At a June 18 news conference, President Reagan, in response to a question about whether any modifications in the "constructive engagement" policy would be forthcoming, repeated the same justifications for it that he has used in the past. "We think we have been successful in getting some concessions there and some changes in their policy of apartheid," Reagan maintained. He also echoed Pretoria's claim that its attack into Botswana was in "retaliation" for the "violence" of the African National Congress (ANC), the South African liberation movement.

This reassured the South African authorities. Two days after Reagan's news conference, the government-run Johannesburg radio station declared that "the United States has not decided to drop or modify its constructive engagement policy." It said that Nickel's recall to Washington was for the purpose of "working on ways and means of putting constructive engagement back on the tracks, rather than seeking something to take its place."

## Targeting Gulf Oil

The first indication that Pretoria was about to embark on a new series of attacks came on



May 21, when Angolan troops in Cabinda, in northern Angola, came across a South African commando unit. Two South African troops were killed, one was captured, and six escaped.

Pretoria claimed that this unit was in Cabinda for intelligence purposes, to gather information on alleged training camps of the ANC and the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO), which is fighting for Namibia's independence. Even if that were true, it would have been a violation of Angolan sovereignty.

But there are no such guerrilla training camps in Cabinda, a tiny enclave that is some 1,300 kilometers from Namibia and is even cut off from the rest of Angola by the territory of Zaïre.

What is in Cabinda, however, is Angola's main oil field. Jointly owned by the Angolan government and Gulf Oil of the United States, the Cabinda facilities account for 90 percent of Angola's export earnings.

The captured South African officer, Capt. Wynand du Toit, explained at a May 28 news conference in the Angolan capital that the unit he commanded had been sent to Cabinda with the express purpose of "destroying the oil storage tanks in Cabinda Gulf."

Had this succeeded, the economic loss to Angola could have reached \$500 million. Many of the several hundred employees working there (among them 118 U.S. citizens) would have been killed by the explosions.

Washington felt obliged to criticize this raid, though it mainly stressed "the threat to American citizens and property."

This raid into Cabinda is just the latest in a long series of South African attacks against Angola, beginning with the massive U.S.-backed invasion of 1975, which was turned back the following year with the help of tens of

thousands of Cuban troops. The Cuban troops remain in Angola, at the request of the Angolan government, to help defend it against continuing South African aggression, which has included several subsequent invasions, economic sabotage, and backing to counterrevolutionary terrorists of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA).

In February 1984, U.S. officials helped mediate an agreement between the Angolan government and Pretoria in which all South African troops were to have been withdrawn from the areas they still occupied in southern Angola. Pretoria dragged its feet, and still has not pulled out all its troops.

In the wake of the latest raid, the Angolan government reiterated its four main demands: an immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all South African troops from Angola; immediate implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 435, leading to the independence of Namibia; an end to all South African aggression against Angola; and an end to all support to the UNITA bands.

## Massacre in Botswana

After Angola, it was Botswana's turn.

During the early morning hours of June 14, South African commando units crossed the undefended border and drove the short distance to Gaborone, Botswana's capital. They simultaneously attacked 10 buildings in the city with machine guns, grenades, and mortars, killing the sleeping occupants.

Pretoria claimed it was a retaliatory strike against ANC guerrilla facilities. But there are no ANC military bases in Botswana. Of the 12 people killed in the attack, nine were South African refugees, including three women and a child. Also killed were two young women from Botswana and a Somali national.

This attack, the first of its kind against Botswana, followed persistent attempts by Pretoria to impose a "nonaggression" pact obliging the Botswana government to expel all ANC members from the country. This the government refused to do.

The raid brought immediate international protests, including from the U.S. government. But Pretoria, confident of Washington's overall support, judged that it could get away with the attack. The international response had been "very carefully debated and thought out," said Gen. Constand Viljoen, the South African armed forces commander.

## 'We are living in a war situation'

Lesotho, which is totally surrounded by South African territory, has come under similar pressure. Like Botswana, it too has resisted signing a formal treaty with Pretoria and con-



tinues to give sanctuary to South African refugees.

In condemning the raid into Botswana, a Lesotho radio commentary noted the parallels with a similar South African raid into Lesotho in 1982. It also accused Pretoria of continuing "to provide a base for destabilizing Lesotho through the Lesotho Liberation Army," a reactionary group seeking to overthrow the Lesotho regime.

This, the commentary noted, was similar to South African backing for the terrorists of the Mozambique National Resistance (Renamo, or MNR), who continue to sabotage economic targets in Mozambique, destroy villages, and kill peasants and workers.

This destabilization was supposed to have ended in March 1984 with the signing of a treaty, called the Nkomati Accord, between Pretoria and the government of the Mozambique Liberation Front (Frelimo). Under that accord, Pretoria pledged to end its backing to Renamo, while Frelimo promised to expel several hundred ANC members from the country.

Frelimo kept its side of the bargain, but Pretoria did not. It encouraged Renamo to step up its destabilization efforts, with the aim of forcing even more concessions from Frelimo, or even of toppling it.

In late May, the Renamo forces struck just outside Maputo, the capital, for the first time. And on June 29, nearly 40 Mozambicans were killed north of Maputo when terrorists attacked a bus convoy.

This counterrevolutionary war has combined with a severe drought and serious economic crisis to cause widespread hunger. Some 2.5 million Mozambicans are now threatened by famine.

"We are living in a war situation," President Samora Machel told a rally of 100,000 in Maputo on June 25, the tenth anniversary of Mozambique's independence from Portugal. "We have yet to know the peace for which we always struggled."

On July 2, for the first time in several years, South African saboteurs also struck into Zambia, detonating a bomb that damaged the ANC's headquarters in Lusaka, Zambia's capital.

#### **Puppet show in Namibia**

In Namibia, a South African colony since World War I, Pretoria has taken new steps to safeguard its vast political and economic stake.

On June 17, just three days after the Botswana raid, Pretoria imposed a new administration over the 2 million people of Namibia, composed of six parties that oppose SWAPO. In an effort to give this puppet administration greater credibility than similar moves in the past, it has been accorded more powers. It also includes two prominent former Namibian nationalists: Andreas Shipanga, a founder of SWAPO who later split from the movement; and Moses Katjuongua, leader of one of the two wings of the South West African National Union (SWANU), which in the past fought against South African rule (the other wing is aligned with SWAPO).



SWAPO demonstration in Namibia.

The imposition of this new administration is aimed at building up a political counterweight to SWAPO, which enjoys widespread support among the Namibian people.

One indication of this support came on the very day of the administration's inauguration. In Katutura, a large Black township in Windhoek, the capital, hundreds of SWAPO supporters demonstrated throughout the day in protest. They were attacked by police wielding clubs and firing tear gas.

"We will mobilise to oppose and resist," declared SWAPO's information secretary, Hidipo Hamutenya, in London. "The only choice open to us is to fight."

Despite its new cover, the apartheid regime remains in effective control over Namibia. It still commands tens of thousands of troops there and the South African administrator-general retains veto power over any decisions made in Windhoek.

Meanwhile, the war continues. Since the beginning of this year alone, South African troops have killed nearly 350 Namibians within the country. On June 29-30, South African troops again struck across the border into southern Angola, killing more than 60 Namibians.

#### **'Cuba's consistent pledge'**

South African President Pieter Botha justified setting up the new administration in Namibia on the grounds that Cuban troops remain in neighboring Angola.

For several years now, both Pretoria and Washington have been insisting that the question of Namibia's independence be linked to a withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola. This "linkage," as it is known, is aimed at diverting attention from the real obstacles to Namibian independence — Pretoria and its U.S. backers.

Both Angola and Cuba have repeatedly rejected "linkage," declaring that Angola has the sovereign right to maintain Cuban troops there to help defend it against Pretoria. (For Fidel

Castro's comments on this, see following document.)

"Linkage" has also been widely rejected by African governments. And as the conflict in southern Africa sharpens, some are acknowledging to a greater extent than before Cuba's progressive role in the region. A June 1 official radio commentary in Nigeria, for example, blasted U.S. support for the apartheid regime and Washington's "diabolical role" in Namibia. It likewise hailed "Cuba's consistent pledge toward the realization of Namibia's independence."

The United Nations Security Council, on June 19, condemned the new administration in Namibia and called for "appropriate measures" against Pretoria, such as bans on new foreign investments in South Africa.

The U.S. and British representatives abstained on the vote, however, with U.S. delegate Warren Clark explaining that Washington opposed any call for sanctions. And he once again raised the "linkage" demand.

Just as revealing of U.S. aims is the White House's current efforts to get the U.S. Senate to repeal the so-called Clark Amendment, passed in 1976, which bars direct U.S. aid to the UNITA forces in Angola.

The Angolan Foreign Ministry, in a June 14 statement, condemned this "flagrant interference in [Angola's] domestic affairs." It went on, "The Government of the People's Republic of Angola is left with no alternative other than to denounce before international public opinion the dubious attitude of the American Government, as well as its tacit solidarity with the Pretoria regime and its puppet armed gangs who sow death and destruction in all countries in this subregion of our continent, thus becoming the main factor of insecurity and threats to peace."

Whatever criticisms Washington may make of the apartheid regime from time to time, it remains firmly on Pretoria's side, against the peoples of Africa. □

# Fidel Castro on Namibian freedom struggle

*'We will be in Angola as long as necessary'*

[The following is the text of a speech given by Cuban President Fidel Castro on May 29 at the Hendrich Witbooi School for Namibian students on the Isle of Youth, during a visit there by United Nations Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar. The English text has been taken from the June 9 issue of the English-language weekly edition of the Cuban Communist Party's *Granma*. The footnotes are by *Intercontinental Press*.]

\* \* \*

Dear Comrades:

How's your Spanish coming? (SHOUTS OF "GOOD!") Can you understand me? I think there are students from the two schools here, aren't there? (SHOUTS OF "YES!") Those from the first school, those who started here, raise your hands. Which of you are from this school? Oh! Nearly all the performers are from this school. (LAUGHTER)

Now those from the second school raise your hands. What's the name of the other school which is nearby? (SHOUTS OF "HOSE A. KUTAKO") Thank you very much. And the students from the second school understand Spanish well? (SHOUTS OF "YES!") Are you sure? When did you learn?

It's true time flies, doesn't it? Your comrade was recalling when this school was opened seven years ago. When is your seventh anniversary? In what month did this school open? (SHOUTS OF "IN OCTOBER") October of 1978, wasn't it? It was the same year as the Cassinga massacre.<sup>1</sup> (SHOUTS OF "YES!") Which ones of you were there at the time of the Cassinga massacre? Raise your hands if you were there. About 300 of you. It was that same year, wasn't it? (SHOUTS OF "YES!") In the month of May? (SHOUTS OF "YES!") May 4th? (SHOUTS OF "YES!") You don't forget it, nor do we forget, nor does humanity.

We were very pleased that you could reenact here that monstrous crime which does not spring from the imagination or fiction, but rather from reality. I don't remember exactly how many Namibians were murdered that morning; it was several hundred. But I want to tell you that on that day some Cubans in a unit which heroically advanced under fire from enemy planes to come to your aid were also killed. This forced the South Africans to make a hasty retreat from Cassinga and prevented them from murdering an even greater number of Namibian women and children.

I remember now: more than 900 people were killed in a few hours, as many people as

those gathered here now, on that morning of treachery and bloodshed. But we will not forget it, we will never forget it! Humanity will never forget it, the Namibian people will never forget it, nor will the peoples of Africa and the Third World. Nobody in the world with a bit of conscience will forget that crime. Why was it committed? To maintain colonialism and keep the people in bondage. Not just the Namibian people, the people of South Africa itself, to uphold apartheid and racism, to uphold fascism and the exploitation of the natural resources of those peoples, to exploit their sweat and blood.

The presence today of the delegation headed by the secretary-general of the United Nations is very symbolic; with them are many journalists from the United States, from U.S. television and the newspapers.

I remember very well that when that massacre took place, in which more than 900 Namibians were killed, old people, children, men, and women attacked by surprise by airborne forces preceded by a brutal bombing against a defenseless camp, the international press made no mention of it. Whites weren't being killed, they were Namibians, Africans, blacks.

Of course, the U.S. press didn't talk about it, U.S. television didn't talk about it, because logically things like that aren't talked about. In the imperialist concept of the world, Africans and blacks have no right to life, no right to denounce what is done to them, no right to protest in the "free press," in the "free world."

South Africa is an ally of the United States, what an ally and what a way of doing things! You must have read in the press a few days ago that on May 19, a South African commando squad which had landed in Cabinda [in northern Angola] clashed with a small patrol of the Angolan armed forces and was put out of action in a matter of minutes. Two South African soldiers were killed, and their commander, a captain of the racist South African army, was captured. Two other captains and five soldiers fled into the forest.

The leader immediately explained their mission. Nine knapsacks were found scattered in the forest. I don't know how they'll manage, the forests there are pretty big. (LAUGHTER) In addition to the knapsacks, 13 magnetic contact mines with five kilograms of TNT each, two larger guided mines, packages of high-powered plastic explosives, and all their equipment was captured, all of it.

They lost everything including sophisticated communications equipment, food, and other things. They were left with only what they had on and nothing else. They dashed through the forest and split up. They had everything, perfect equipment, they were commandos who

had been very well trained. They even had an extra pair of cloth shoes that wouldn't make any noise and they lost their cloth shoes, yes they did. (LAUGHTER) Of course, it isn't to their advantage to make a lot of noise as they flee through the forests of Cabinda. They surely headed for Zaire, where they had been seen the previous day.

And what were the allies or partners of the United States, Reagan's friends, the CIA's friends, going to do? They were going to destroy the oil installations in Cabinda, which are Angola's main source of income.

And the serious and amazing thing about all this, which shows how far the hypocrisy of South Africa and the U.S. government goes, is that these installations are owned by none other than a U.S. transnational, Gulf Oil.

Oh, what the U.S. government and the CIA do, what the South African racist regime does! In order to attack Angola and damage its economy, they planned to blow up important oil installations belonging to a U.S. company! It would be good for the journalists to comment on these things and explain them to the people of the United States.

What else did they have in addition to the sophisticated radios, communications equipment, plastics, mines, binoculars, night-sighting devices, signal equipment, and arms used by special troops? UNITA<sup>2</sup> propaganda. As always, they do the sabotage — like the CIA when it mined Nicaragua's ports — and then leave behind UNITA propaganda, which is, among other things, what UNITA is good for.

When this became known, as the captain was telling all, then the South African government said it wasn't true, that there was no plan to sabotage the Gulf installations, that there had in fact been a clash because there was a group exploring Angola trying to find ANC and SWAPO<sup>3</sup> camps.

Now, I ask myself if anybody from the ANC has ever been in Cabinda, (LAUGHTER) because Cassinga, the site of that massacre, the site of the refugee camp, is more than 1,000 kilometers from Cabinda, in the southern part of Angola. I've never heard of any Namibian being in Cabinda, not even to visit. (LAUGHTER) I've never heard of anybody from the ANC in Cabinda. What there is in Cabinda are the Gulf installations drilling for oil, which

2. National Union for the Total Independence of Angola, headed by Jonas Savimbi. The UNITA is armed, trained, and financed by the South African regime and carries out attacks against villagers in southern and central Angola.

3. The African National Congress of South Africa and the South West Africa People's Organisation of Namibia.

1. An air and ground attack by South African forces against a major Namibian refugee camp at Cassinga, in southern Angola.



provides Angola with its most important source of income.

Just see what hypocrisy and lies! Neither Reagan nor [South African Prime Minister Pieter] Botha ever tell the truth, not even by accident! I'm waiting for the day they make a mistake and tell the truth by accident. (LAUGHTER, APPLAUSE AND SHOUTS OF "KNOW THIS, YOU WHO HAVE BEEN BORN AND HAVE YET TO BE BORN: WE ARE BORN TO OVERCOME, NOT TO BE OVERRUN!")

Oh, and the government of the United States knows nothing; it learned of the incident by radio. It didn't know that its South African friends planned to blow up the installations of a major U.S. oil company.

The commando squad was intercepted a few meters from the gate that surrounds the installation. They even had uniforms of the kind used by Gulf workers and technicians. We know what can be expected from apartheid and its allies, a system completely lacking in moral standards or scruples.

While there is tragedy in Namibia, there is even greater tragedy in South Africa, where 24 million Africans are totally deprived of their rights by a small and arrogant white minority. This year in particular has been characterized by the apartheid regime's ferocious repression of the African population of South Africa; they have murdered hundreds of people in a few months and the killing continues.

As you know, the UN has been making a major effort to speed up the independence of Namibia. The secretary-general of the UN has expressed here the hope that you will constitute the 160th member state of the UN.

But what are they doing? While they confer with Angola and there are contacts and negotiations in which the United States claims to be an intermediary or mediator acting in good faith — in spite of the fact that it organized and supports Savimbi, in addition to the South Africans — in a treacherous attack they try to destroy in one blow the vital and fundamental economic resources of Angola. What can you expect from fascists? What can you expect from racists and oppressors?

With our support and cooperation, Angola has advocated the search for a peace formula, which should be preceded by implementation of UN Resolution No. 435<sup>4</sup> and the independence of Namibia. What are the South Africans doing now? Trying to organize Bantustans in Namibia.<sup>5</sup> I ask, is there any future for Bantustans in Namibia? (SHOUTS OF "NO!")

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

5. In South Africa, the apartheid regime has set up 10 impoverished rural reserves for Africans, called Bantustans, designed to divide Africans along language lines. It is attempting to follow a similar policy in Namibia.



Cuban soldiers in Angola.

Will the Namibian people permit the organization of Bantustans? (SHOUTS OF "NEVER!") They will not permit it, nor will the people of South Africa.

Angola proposed a formula, and with their characteristic insolence and arrogance the racists and their U.S. allies said "No" and posed the absurd demand for the withdrawal of the Cuban internationalist fighters in Angola in a few months. They turned down the Angolan formula contemptuously. The Angolans had proposed the withdrawal of Cuban forces from southern Angola over a 36-month period. The withdrawal of Cuban personnel in central and northern Angola or in Cabinda was not subject to negotiation.

Perhaps in their fantasy-ridden dreams the U.S. government and the South African racists thought we were eager to get out of Angola and leave it at the mercy of imperialist perfidy and treason. No, no, 200,000 Cubans have passed through Angola, but if another 200,000 must pass through Angola then they will, because we are not impatient or rushed in any way. (APPLAUSE)

And, of course, Angola is a sovereign and independent country which has firmly maintained its loyalty and solidarity with the liberation movement and people of Namibia, and as long as Angola says that Resolution No. 435 must be implemented and the independence of Namibia is necessary, we will be there alongside the Angolans, without discussion or doubt of any kind.

There have been negotiations, but we have a firm and unshakable position. If you don't have a firm position, you can't negotiate, much less with arrogant, cynical, and shameless governments that always take the wrong path. We Cubans will fulfill our internationalist duty there as long as necessary. (APPLAUSE)

I really don't think it will take too long because the fascist regime in South Africa won't hold out much longer, the hateful apartheid system won't last much longer. It is really in dire straits now because of the struggle of the Namibian people and the struggle of the South

African people, whose heroic resistance grows by the day.

South Africa is going through the worst crisis in its history, since the price of gold per ounce is no longer 700 dollars; it's just barely 300. It doesn't have the money to finance its adventures and is faced with economic, social, and political problems of all kinds, in spite of the U.S. investments and those of the Western countries in South Africa and Namibia. It is bogged down in the worst economic crisis and especially the worst political crisis in its history. (APPLAUSE AND SHOUTS) It can't ask for handouts at gunpoint.

I think this is an excellent opportunity, here in the presence of the UN delegation, to state our position. There will be no solution in southern Africa without Resolution No. 435 and the independence of Namibia! (APPLAUSE) And as long as Angola agrees — and we have no doubt that this is the Angolan position — as long as UN Resolution No. 435 is not implemented and as long as Namibia is not independent, or at least as long as there are no concrete and necessary steps taken to implement the Resolution and achieve real and meaningful independence, not a single Cuban soldier will leave Angola! (PROLONGED APPLAUSE)

And if more soldiers are needed, we will send more soldiers, (APPLAUSE) because in the face of every attack by imperialism and the racists, we have always reacted by reinforcing Angola and there are still a number of Cubans there, always prepared, alert, and ready to fight in the face of any enemy escalation. We have always been Angola's reinforcements.

You know very well what our people are like, you know that we are millions of men and women ready to struggle. Moreover, when we send our fighters to Angola we don't weaken ourselves, because we have many more fighters than weapons in Cuba. (APPLAUSE) So we could have 100,000 soldiers abroad if necessary and we wouldn't weaken ourselves in the least, because there are hundreds of thousands of young men and women here that are trained and for whom there are not enough weapons, and we have a lot of weapons. (APPLAUSE AND SHOUTS OF "VIVA CUBA! VIVA COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF FIDEL CASTRO RUZ! PATRIA O MUERTE! VENCEREMOS!")

When our men and women fulfill internationalist missions, be they civilian or military, they always return to our country with more revolutionary, patriotic, and internationalist spirit.

If one day the imperialists dare attack our country, they'll see what they will encounter in Cuba. (APPLAUSE) They'll see what it's like to fight against an entire people, men, women, young people, old people, and even children! They'll see that a country of ten million people ready to struggle can never be defeated.

We are ready for everything, our country is organized from one end to the other and prepared for all combat conditions, even for total occupation of the country. They would suffer more deaths in our country than they did in

World War II and in the end they would bite the dust of defeat, because we have created the conditions which enable us to feel that we are invincible. (APPLAUSE)

You know that even this little island which is separated from the bulk of our territory will be defended, and how! From the orange groves, forests, towns, homes, streams, fortifications, and stones. And in that case, the African youth would fight at our sides. (APPLAUSE) That is internationalism, that is reciprocity.

And I want you to tell me how they could manage to occupy even this little island, because even under a flower there may be a soldier and when they think there is just a garden nearby they encounter a platoon of soldiers with all their weapons. (LAUGHTER AND APPLAUSE)

We have studied all the techniques and experiences of all the countries that have struggled for liberation in the last few decades. We

have collected and developed the techniques and used them to instruct our people. Just as the Namibian people can be absolutely sure and confident that the UN, in the first place, will continue pushing for implementation of Resolution No. 435 and the independence of your country, you can be sure that we will be in Angola as long as necessary. (SHOUTS)

We will be there until Namibia is independent, and the friends of Africa and of Namibia will support you until you are free.

Nobody can give assurances if it will be the 160th member of the UN. I don't know if there is some small island held by the colonialists somewhere in the world that will become independent and be number 160. I wouldn't dare to say which one it will be, perhaps 162, 163, or 164. But I do say with complete assurance that you will be free!

Patria o Muerte!  
Venceremos!  
(OVATION)

## DOCUMENTS

### 'Hostage to a gigantic debt'

#### *Cuban unions call for regional conference on debt crisis*

[The following call was issued June 1 by the Cuban Workers Federation (CTC). More than 60 union federations, from 35 countries, have been invited to attend the Latin American and Caribbean Trade Union Conference in Cuba in July.

[The text of the CTC's call to trade unionists of the region is taken from the June 9 issue of *Granma Weekly Review*, an English-language newspaper published in Havana by the Cuban Communist Party.

\* \* \*

Latin American and Caribbean Trade Unionists:

We Latin American workers and peoples in general are now facing an unprecedented challenge. An increasingly unbearable economic and social crisis is threatening to lower an already precarious standard of living, do away with the political and labor movement victories scored by some countries after long years of struggle, bring on instability and ruin, and doom our peoples to a future of even greater stagnation, hunger, and poverty.

The Latin American and Caribbean countries have become hostage to a gigantic foreign debt, currently running to 360,000 million dollars.

The debt's exorbitant interest alone amounts to 40,000 million a year, a sum that often consumes 50 percent of what we garner from exports, sold at disadvantageous prices. This dominates resources to the point where all attempts at future development are prevented, and it even deprives us of the minimal funds required for education, health care, and other vital needs. As a result, we are condemned to a

future of much higher rates of unemployment, disease, social neglect, and illiteracy.

The big creditor banks are demanding payment of 400,000 million dollars in the next ten years for the servicing of the debt alone. How and from where could we possibly get such an amount and at what social price, when our people can no longer withstand further restrictions, our standard of living has dropped considerably in the last few years, inflation has become a scourge, and, in addition, a demographic explosion is causing problems of all kinds which we have been unable to solve?

What untold sacrifices would our workers and nations have to go through in order to meet the debt, only to find ourselves even more in debt than we are now?

In light of these realities, it is understandable why many politicians and economists have charged that the debt is, in fact, a new instrument for pillaging wielded by interests that have never ceased to plunder and bleed our countries' economies dry, and that therefore the debt has no legitimate, legal, or moral basis.

No one can be forced to do the impossible. We Latin American and Caribbean trade unionists must come to the conclusion that a realistic solution to the debt problem must be found. Complying with the creditors' egotistical, blind, and brutal criteria is tantamount to suicide. We have already seen the results of the asphyxiating conditions imposed by the International Monetary Fund on our peoples as a prerequisite for negotiations in various countries, conditions that lead directly to instability and social upheaval. We are standing on a volcano that is about to erupt.

We, the workers and the trade unions of Latin America and the Caribbean, having accumulated so much experience and waged so many struggles, must face this difficult situation with unity, intelligence, courage, a constructive spirit, and a great sense of responsibility.

As many of the region's trade union leaders have repeatedly said recently, we must draw up our own plan of action to defend the interests of the hemisphere's workers and countries.

This was the main topic of the Fourth Caribbean Workers' Conference of Unity and Solidarity, held in Guadeloupe in May. The Conference proposed holding a Trade Union Conference of Latin American and Caribbean Workers with the sole purpose of discussing the foreign debt problem and the position the Latin American and Caribbean trade union movement should take in that regard. The Conference proposed that the event be held in Havana and, following coordination with the Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions, it was resolved to hold the meeting July 15-17.

Complying with the Fourth Caribbean Trade Union Conference's mandate we are not calling for a conference limited to one sector or one current within the Latin American and Caribbean trade union movement. We are calling for a conference in which all the continent's workers and trade unions will be represented, regardless of their political, philosophical, religious, and other beliefs.

We are calling for a pro-unity conference characterized by respect for all trends, which, armed with powerful arguments and reasons, will be able to reassert the untenable nature of the debt and the need for it to be canceled.

Only through the broadest and most sincere unity can we face up to this challenge for the survival of our peoples and their right to a more dignified and just future.

Only by joining forces will we have the power to make our voices heard and demand that the solution to the debt problem pave the way for the establishment of a new international economic order, characterized by equitable financial and trade relations that will contribute to our people's progress and development.

We are absolutely convinced that we will achieve our objective and that this trade union conference will be a complete success. We are facing a problem that brings all of us together, because it hurts us all. There's broad consensus of opinion that can serve as the basis for the hemisphere's numerous trade union organizations to work together honorably and positively without detriment to their respective stands.

If we succeed, we will be setting a lasting example of historical responsibility and profound commitment to the Latin American ideas that inspire us. If the workers and their trade unions — the main victims of this asphyxiating crisis — can show the way toward concerted action by all our nations and governments in regard to the foreign debt, then Latin America and the Caribbean can be saved. □



# 'Internationalism is paramount'

*How party-building and forging an International are linked*

By James P. Cannon

[The following article is from a volume of documents scheduled to be published by Monad Press in New York in August. The book, *The Communist League of America, 1932-34*, includes articles, speeches, and other materials written by James P. Cannon in the period between January 1932 and December 1934. The article reprinted here appeared in the March 10, 1934, *Militant*, newspaper of the Communist League of America (CLA).

[This collection continues the story of the CLA — precursor of today's Socialist Workers Party — begun in *The Left Opposition in the U.S., 1928-31*. That volume included documents by Cannon on the CLA's formation and first three years.

[The CLA was formed in May 1929 by Cannon and other members of the Communist Party in the United States who were expelled in late 1928 for defending the political views of Soviet Communist leader Leon Trotsky and the political current led by him within the Soviet CP and the Communist International. These communists fought to defend the Marxist program and strategy that had been the Comintern's guide under the leadership of V.I. Lenin from its formation in 1919 through 1923.

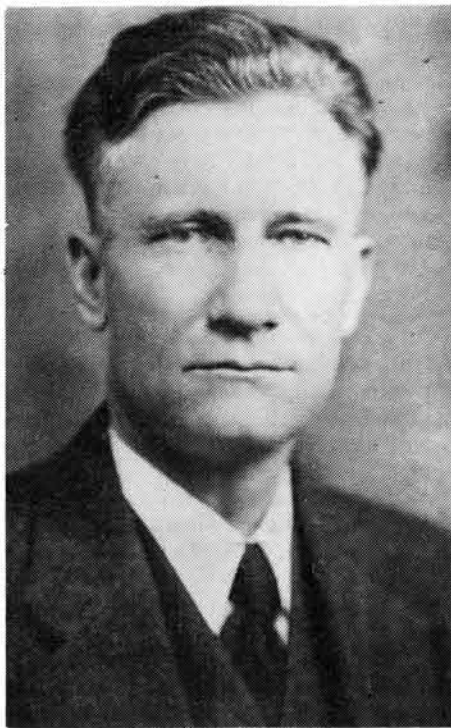
[This Leninist program was under attack by a majority in the Soviet leadership, headed by Joseph Stalin, that was abandoning revolutionary internationalism. It was increasingly shaping Comintern policy to serve the shifting diplomatic needs of the Soviet government bureaucracy, rather than the interests of the world revolution.

[In 1929 Trotsky was banished from the the Soviet Union and deported to Turkey. From there he helped organize the International Left Opposition (ILO) as an international movement fighting for the regeneration of the Comintern with a Marxist program and leadership.

[In 1933 the policies of the Stalinized Comintern and the German Communist Party contributed to the political disorientation of the German working class and hamstrung its fight to stop the Nazi victory. In August of that year the ILO issued a call for the construction of a new, Fourth International.

[This marked a shift for the CLA, which had primarily been oriented to convincing and winning members of the Communist Party to its perspectives. The CLA began to center more of its activities in the mass working-class organizations — the trade unions, union organizing committees, and organizations of the unemployed. It also began paying more attention to other political groupings in the U.S. labor movement.

[In January 1934, the CLA initiated discus-



JAMES P. CANNON

sions with the American Workers Party, led by A.J. Muste. The AWP had developed from the Conference for Progressive Labor Action, (CPLA), founded in 1929. Its politics had become more radical through participation in struggles of miners, textile workers, auto workers, and the unemployed, and it was attracting revolutionary workers. In late 1933 a CPLA conference established a provisional committee charged with the task of organizing the "American Workers Party." It was this development that the CLA responded to.

[As the discussions got under way in 1934, both the CLA and AWP were playing central roles in two major labor battles — both of which helped pave the way for the formation of the Congress of Industrial Organizations the following year.

[Leaders of the CLA in Minneapolis led three victorious Teamsters' strikes that helped open the door to organizing over-the-road drivers throughout the Midwest. The AWP, through its leadership in the unemployed movement, played a key part in winning a strike at the Toledo Electric Auto-Lite plant. This helped open the way for the organization of the auto industry.

[In December, the CLA and AWP fused, forming the Workers Party of the United States. The fusion conference is the last event dealt with in this volume of Cannon's writings.

[Following that, the Workers Party participated actively in the struggle to build the Fourth International. In July 1935, for example, "An Open Letter to all Revolutionary Proletarian Organizations and Groupings" urging support for the "preparation for and the building of the Fourth International" was signed by Trotsky and revolutionists from several countries, including Cannon and Muste on behalf of the Workers Party.

[In 1936, the members of the Workers Party entered the Socialist Party where they attempted to influence the growing left wing. In late 1937, the left wing was expelled and established the Socialist Workers Party at the beginning of 1938. The SWP played a major role in the founding conference of the Fourth International later that year.

[Cannon had been a founder of the Communist Party in 1919 and one of its key leaders in its first decade.

[In 1922-23 he served for six months on the presidium of the Communist International in Moscow and attended the Fourth Congress in December 1922.

[Following this visit, Cannon attended four more important meetings of the Comintern in Moscow as a leader of the U.S Communist movement.

[*The Communist League of America* is available for US\$9.95 (plus \$.75 for postage) from Pathfinder Press, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014 USA.

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\* \* \*

As has already been reported, the National Committee of the Communist League is conducting negotiations with the Provisional Organizational Committee of the American Workers Party. We hope for fruitful results from these negotiations and for the eventual fusion of the two organizations in the great task of launching the new party. Such an outcome of the negotiations would undoubtedly give a tremendous impetus to the reorganization of the proletarian vanguard in America and could not be without effect internationally.

And since, in our conviction, this can be realized only if there is firm agreement on the fundamental questions of principle — an agreement, moreover, which extends into the ranks of both organizations — we are bringing out, in a series of articles in the *Militant*, the point of view which we are advancing in the discussions within the joint committee of the two organizations. The more openly and clearly the points of disagreement are discussed, the firmer will be the foundation for

eventual fusion if agreement is arrived at.

For us, the question of internationalism is a paramount question, as it has always been for revolutionary Marxists. Marx and Engels began with an international program — the Communist Manifesto. After all that has happened since, after the collapse of the Second International along the line of social patriotism and the downfall of the Comintern along the line of "socialism in one country" (national reformism), there is less ground than ever to think the problems of the proletarian revolution can be approached from a national standpoint. It is from this point of view that we raise the question of the Fourth International as a fundamental consideration in the discussion of a new party in America. We take part in the discussion of a new party in America not merely as American revolutionists but as internationalists, as adherents of the Fourth International.

The programmatic statement of the American Workers Party ("Toward an American Revolutionary Movement") appears to us to be inadequate and decidedly incorrect in its treatment of the international question and to chart a course which would doom the new party from its inception. The collapse of the Stalinist and Socialist parties in this country, from which the imperative necessity for a new party arises, is not due simply to "national peculiarities" of these parties; it is the expression, rather, of the downfall of the Internationals which they represent. Stalinism and Social Democracy are bankrupt on a world scale. A new party which emerges to challenge them must begin with this principled condemnation and then translate it into criticism of the concrete activities of these parties here at home. An "American" party, hazy about its own international positions, would be obviously incapable of such a struggle.

Without exhausting the question in a single article, the mistakes of the international section of the statement of the AWP may be

## Plastic bullets video

Since 1970, plastic and rubber bullets used by British occupation forces in Northern Ireland have claimed the lives of 15 people, half of them children. Thousands of others have been seriously wounded by these "crowd control" weapons.

The United Campaign Against Plastic Bullets, a Belfast organization whose aim is to ban the use of plastic bullets in Ireland, has produced a videotape entitled *Plastic Bullets, the Deadly Truth!* The videotape tells the story of families that have lost relatives to this murderous weapon used by the Royal Ulster Constabulary and British troops in Northern Ireland.

The videotape, on VHS format, is 45 minutes long. It is available for purchase for £30 from the United Campaign Against Plastic Bullets, c/o Claire Reilly, 20 Monagh Crescent, Belfast 11, Northern Ireland.

## Help make 'IP' available to prisoners

[The following letters are from two prisoners who request subscriptions to *Intercontinental Press* in order to keep informed about important world events. Their letters explain why *IP* is important to them.

[We have a policy of making subscriptions available to prisoners on a complimentary basis. In order to keep this up we need support from our readers whose circumstances make it possible for them to make a contribution. If you would like to make a donation in order to help us send subscriptions to prisoners, send your payment to: *IP* Prisoners' Subscription Fund, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014 USA.]

I was receiving a copy of your newspaper from a friend of mine here in my prison surroundings. The paper brought both of us great and general delight, i.e. honesty in reporting of the world news.

My friend was transferred to another institution, leaving me without the source to review your paper, and I am without sufficient funds by which I could purchase the same. Therefore, I am making the following request.

Give me 90 days' credit at which time I should be in a better position to conduct business with you as I am aware that the making of a paper requires money. I really

don't want to review a day without your paper. I also can add that your paper (to me) is well worth a year's subscription, which as soon as I am on my feet, I can pay.

Help me resolve this minor problem without me spending another blank-time without your (my best tabloid) *Intercontinental Press*.

A prisoner,  
Huntingdon, Pennsylvania

My reason for writing to you is this. I am in the hole at this penitentiary. I have been in the hole (solitary confinement) continuously since 1981, and because of the continuous confinement in these holes, I have not been able to get my hands on the necessary political papers or political information I need to keep me up-to-date on what is going on around the world.

Therefore, I am beginning to lose my political sharpness in the field of politics and current events, so I am requesting that you send me one of your subscriptions to your paper or send me any political information you can on what is happening in the field of politics in this country or around the world. I need this information to keep informed on what is going on out there where you are.

A prisoner,  
Dallas, Pennsylvania

enumerated as follows:

1. The building of new parties and the new International, which are inseparably bound together in a single task, are *counterposed* as separate tasks, and the building of national parties is put in the first order. The statement speaks of "putting the cart before the horse," and adds: "The primary contribution revolutionary workers in any country can make towards building an effective International is by building an effective revolutionary movement in their own country." Also: "Our absorbing concern is with the colossal job on our own doorsteps, building a revolutionary party in the U.S., rooted in the American soil," etc.

All this has a certain "realistic" sound, but it does not fit the realities which every new party must confront — the realities of world economy and world politics and the world crisis of the labor movement. (American imperialism lives in the world, not in the forty-eight states.) It is impossible to build a revolutionary party or to draw up a revolutionary — that is, a Marxist — program in any single country today without taking the world realities as the point of departure. That means, the new parties must be internationalist from the moment of their inception, and even in the process of their formation, and have a definite international orientation. The international position of

any party is today the primary test of its revolutionary character.

To be sure, the new party must live in America, speak the language of the country, "feel" the moods, psychology, and tradition of the masses, etc. In this sense the new party must be "American." It must be a power in the country in order to be a real support of the new International. But that does not mean that it should adapt itself to the backwardness, prejudices, and narrow-mindedness of the masses of American workers. Marxism is not a foreign product; it is the theory of the class struggle in every country; it is "native" to every land of capitalist exploitation. The new party will have the task of making the theory of Marxism understandable to the awakening workers of America and of applying this theory in their struggle. Only on this foundation can a genuine revolutionary party be constructed. Such a party can only be a thoroughgoing party of internationalism.

2. The statement of the AWP tends to limit the concept of internationalism to joint actions of strong national parties. Action, of course, is the highest expression of the international organization of the vanguard, and everything leads to that end. But the role of internationalism is no less weighty in the preparation of the actions and in the development and



training of the national party. At the present moment, with the whole international organization of the vanguard in a state of crisis and demoralization, this side of the question acquires exceptional importance.

International cooperation in the work of charting the new parties and the new International, mutual exchange of experiences and ideas, putting the collective experience and theoretical knowledge of the Marxists of all countries at the disposal of each and every national party or group — it is precisely in these fields that the real spirit of internationalism manifests itself most prominently today in preparation for the actions of tomorrow. Herein lies the great historic significance of the work already in progress for the building of the Fourth International.

Can the new parties each develop independently, work out their own programs, acquire mass proportions and influence — and then come together to form the new International? This is the concept that appears to govern the AWP approach to questions. "The AWP stands for one compact revolutionary labor International by actually functioning revolutionary parties of various countries. . . ."

This idea, which is very similar to that expressed by Gitlow,\* takes active internationalism off the agenda for the present and gives no assurance for the formation of the new International in the future. Just the contrary. The new parties, left to themselves, without international cooperation and assistance, would develop along different lines, adopt contradictory programs on many questions, fall victim of national isolation, and experience repeated internal convulsions and splits.

The program of building the parties first, then the International, is utopian, not to say non-Marxist. The genuine revolutionary internationalists in the whole world today, as in the period of the World War, are not too numerous. It is a life-and-death matter for them to get together now on an international scale to prepare the program of the new International and to work for the formation of its national sections. The task of building the Fourth International goes hand in hand with the task of forming new national parties in the separate countries. Genuine internationalism today cannot allow separation of these two aspects of the same problem.

Is the Fourth International to imitate the methods of the Stalin Comintern, with everything decided in advance for the national parties, with uniform tactics imposed everywhere, with leaders imposed from above, etc.? This question is asked in some alarm from two dif-

ferent points of view. Some who have learned to despise the methods of degenerate Stalinism in struggle against it want to establish safeguards; others, it must be said, are inclined to raise the bugaboo of Stalinism as an excuse to avoid any kind of centralized organization, discipline, uniformity of principle, and control. We have definite opinions on the subject and will stand up for them in the Fourth International and in the conferences leading to its formation.

The International Left Opposition stands for a world program and for uniformity in fundamental principles. Its concept of the Fourth International is the concept of a world party. But, along with that, we stand for *internal democracy* in the parties and in the International. The parties affiliated to the Fourth International must be real parties, standing on their own feet, living their own life, and *selecting their own leaders*. If we consider it impossible to build revolutionary parties without international cooperation, then we assert no less emphatically that the International can become a power only if its component parts — the national parties — are really functioning organizations in the full sense of the word.

3. The programmatic statement of the AWP leaves its own international orientation unde-

ceded. Or, at any rate, its position is not clearly stated. Four currents are to be recognized in the international field: The Second, the Third, the Two-and-a-half (centrist), and the Fourth (revolutionary communist). The AWP is against the Second and the Third, but does not mention the other currents. It declares its readiness to "remain in sympathetic contact and engage in discussions with all who are interested in that problem, and especially with those parties which like ourselves cannot accept either the Second or Third International today."

In the course of discussion, both in the joint committee and in the press, we hope to convince the AWP that it is absolutely necessary to take a precise attitude on this question, to declare *what kind* of a new International is needed and to agree with us that the new party should place itself on the day of its birth under the banner of the Fourth International.

Such an agreement, which would imply a solidarity on other principled questions, could make the launching of the new party in America, by the joint efforts of the AWP and the Left Opposition, a realistic prospect for the not too distant future. There can be no doubt that such a party would be from the start a powerful magnet of attraction for the revolutionary workers in America. □

## 10 AND 20 YEARS AGO



July 21, 1975

The Argentine trade-union movement won a spectacular victory July 8 when the regime of Isabel Martínez de Perón backed down on its attempts to impose a wage ceiling and to cancel wage contracts that included raises of up to 130 percent. Three days later the regime gave in to labor's other central demand — the resignation of its astrologer and rightist strongman, José López Rega.

The government was forced to concede because of the massiveness and solidity of the trade-union movement's actions. During a period of two weeks, wildcat strikes and two general strikes paralyzed the country. The second general strike, which began July 7, was ended when the government yielded to the workers' demands.

The mobilizations were spearheaded by workers in the most important sectors of Argentine industry — metals, textiles, construction, and automobiles. But they also included the bulk of white-collar workers, sectors of the middle class, and students.

What ignited the nationwide confrontation was the regime's announcement June 26 that it would not ratify collective-bargaining agreements if they exceeded a 50 percent wage ceiling.

That announcement escalated the struggle to

a political level.

The Peronist trade unions — which Perón called the backbone of his movement — struck against the regime they had overwhelmingly elected two years ago.

## WORLD OUTLOOK

PERSPECTIVE MONDIALE

(Predecessor of *Intercontinental Press*)

July 9, 1965

On June 22 the Japanese and South Korean governments signed a treaty and twenty related documents establishing full diplomatic relations.

The action was taken in the face of widespread opposition in both countries among workers, students, and intellectuals. In Tokyo an estimated 10,000 unionists and students marched in protest. In Seoul policemen used clubs and tear gas to break up a sitdown protest demonstration involving some 5,000 students. The demonstration, which lasted more than seven hours, saw barricades erected in various parts of the city. Police arrested 872 participants.

Among the main objections to the treaty is the recognition of the South Korean government. This tends to further freeze the unnatural division of Korea into two countries.

The vanguard in both countries also fear that the treaty will facilitate the use of South Korean troops in Vietnam, making it easier for Washington to drag South Korea deeper into that conflict.

\*Benjamin Gitlow, a leading member of the Communist Party in the 1920s, was expelled in May 1929 as part of the faction led by Jay Lovestone. In late 1933 he and some followers split from the Lovestone-led Independent Labor League of America. They briefly hovered around the regroupment discussions taking place on the left at the time. Gitlow, for example, spoke at the *Militant* fifth anniversary banquet in New York in November 1933. He later became an anticommunist writer.

# Fourth year of revolutionary upsurge

*Anti-imperialist struggle marked by class polarization*

**By Ernest Harsch**

The revolutionary struggle in Ghana, now into its fourth year, continues to arouse high hopes among working people. It also confronts difficult challenges.

Internationally, it has come under concerted imperialist pressure and attack. And within the country it has been marked by a sharp class polarization, as the privileged and exploiting layers of society strive to hold back and reverse the massive mobilizations of workers and peasants that have been unfolding there ever

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This is the last of three articles on the anti-imperialist upsurge in Ghana, based in part on material collected during a visit to that country in early March. The first two articles covered the PNDC's seizure of power, its initial measures up to mid-1983, and the economic and political difficulties it faced in that period.

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since the seizure of power on Dec. 31, 1981, by a group of anti-imperialist and left-wing junior military officers and civilian activists.

Under these intense pressures, the governing Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC), headed by Flight Lt. Jerry Rawlings, has been reaching out for international support.

From the beginning, the PNDC has come into conflict with the imperialist governments, especially those of the United States and Britain, on many key foreign policy questions. This contrasts with the more servile positions of the previous regimes.

The PNDC has extended political support to the liberation movements of southern Africa. In recognition of this, Ghanaian Foreign Secretary Obed Asamoah was chosen chairman of the Liberation Committee of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which channels assistance to the South African and Namibian freedom fighters.

Recently, Ghana has offered to provide an office in Accra to the Palestine Liberation Organization.

## **Burkina: a revolutionary ally**

During the PNDC's first year and a half, Ghana was surrounded by hostile proimperialist regimes in neighboring countries. Then an important breakthrough came on Aug. 4, 1983, when a group of military officers and left-wing activists led by Capt. Thomas Sankara seized power in Burkina (then called Upper Volta), Ghana's immediate neighbor to the north. This marked the beginning of a popular, anti-imperialist upsurge in that impoverished former French colony.

Government leaders in Burkina readily admit Ghana's role in this. "Ghana's revolution inspired Burkina Faso to launch hers," declared Nanema Cyprien, the commissioner of Burkina's Boulougou Province, at a recent rally in northern Ghana.

The Rawlings government also provided direct material assistance. According to Sankara, he and Rawlings had frequent secret contacts in the months preceding the August 1983 insurrection. Rawlings "supported us with all his military, political, and diplomatic strength," Sankara said.

Since then, the ties between the two countries have expanded further. This has begun to overcome their past isolation from each other, stemming from the fact that they were ruled by different colonial powers, Britain and France.

Besides frequent contacts at the governmental level, political activists also get together, especially members of the mass-based Committees for the Defense of the Revolution (CDRs), as they are now called in both countries. Trade and cultural relations have also expanded.

Close military ties have been forged, with each government pledging to come to the defense of the other in the event of outside attack. They have held two joint military maneuvers thus far, in November 1983 and March 1985.

Burkina's minister of internal affairs and security, Ernest Ouédraogo, stated after the March 1985 maneuvers in Ghana that such mutual defense arrangements are aimed at "preventing any possible aggression that international imperialism will try to perpetrate against any one of our two peoples."

## **'On the side of a just cause'**

The Ghanaian government's search for allies has not been confined to its immediate region, or even just to Africa. It has also looked to and been inspired by the revolutions in Central America and the Caribbean.

The Grenada revolution struck an early interest in Ghana. Some Ghanaian leaders personally knew Maurice Bishop and other leaders of the Grenada revolution. When Bishop was murdered in an Oct. 19, 1983, coup that overthrew Grenada's workers' and peasants' government, Ghana declared three days of mourning. And when U.S. troops invaded Grenada a week later, Ghanaian workers turned out for protest demonstrations.

Ties with socialist Cuba were initially established in 1979, when Rawlings was first in power for several months and visited Havana for a summit conference of the Movement of Nonaligned Countries.

Cuba, which has sent scores of doctors and

technicians to Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique, and other African countries, has also provided Ghana with assistance. Just a few months after Rawlings' second seizure of power, the first of several dozen Cuban assistance personnel arrived in Ghana, including doctors, agricultural experts, sugar refinery technicians, and CDR leaders. Some 600 Ghanaians have gone to Cuba for study.

In July 1984, Rawlings was one of two heads of state who visited Nicaragua for the celebrations of the fifth anniversary of the Nicaraguan revolution. "We are not here only because we love Nicaragua so much," Rawlings said in one speech during his visit, "but because we genuinely feel ourselves to be on the side of a just cause, which is also our cause."

From Nicaragua, Rawlings went to Cuba, where he took part in the anniversary celebrations of the July 26, 1953, attack on the Moncada barracks.

Upon their return home, Rawlings and other Ghanaian leaders continued to speak about the inspiration of the Cuban revolution. A Ghana-Cuba Friendship Society, set up in early 1982, has organized solidarity activities.

Rawlings has also spoken out in defense of Nicaragua against U.S. aggression. For example, at a Feb. 1, 1985, meeting in Accra of the OAU's Liberation Committee, Rawlings raised the example of Nicaragua. The Nicaraguans, he said in his opening speech, "provide a demonstration of defiant and courageous struggle against the forces that hold back our freedom. Africa is not alone."

## **Aid from workers' states**

Ghana remains highly dependent on loans, investments, and trade with imperialist countries. But since the PNDC came to power, it has sought to lessen this dependence by establishing new economic ties with other oppressed capitalist nations, as well as with the Soviet Union, Cuba, and other countries where capitalism has been abolished.

Since Ghana must import the bulk of its oil, it has been vulnerable to oil embargoes such as the one imposed for a while by the Nigerian regime in early 1982. To compensate, Ghana has concluded oil agreements with Libya, Algeria, and Iran.

Speaking before the Ghana-East Germany joint economic commission in August 1982, Finance and Economic Planning Secretary Kwesi Botchwey attached "great importance" to bilateral economic relations with "fraternal socialist countries." This was crucial, he said, because Ghana's economy has been hit hard by high U.S. interest rates, the burden of debt-servicing, the low world market prices for raw



materials, and the impact of the recession in the imperialist countries on Ghana's own economy.

Of all the countries where capitalism has been abolished, Ghana's most extensive ties are with the Soviet Union. In many cases, these relations are not new, but revive old ones that were broken following the 1966 overthrow of the Kwame Nkrumah government in a CIA-backed coup.

The Soviet government has provided tens of millions of dollars to restart projects that were abandoned after the 1966 coup, such as the Tarkwa gold refinery and cement and concrete plants. Soviet aid has also been provided in communications, medical training, maritime skills, transportation, and education (about 1,000 Ghanaian students are studying in the Soviet Union).

In addition, Ghana has obtained loans and other aid from East Germany, Bulgaria, Rumania, China, North Korea, and Yugoslavia.

Much of this aid has been directed at boosting agricultural and industrial production. This has been crucial in certain key sectors that imperialist corporations and banks have refused to invest in, either because they are not profitable enough or because they would build up and diversify Ghana's industrial base — and thus strengthen its bargaining position.

The aluminum industry is one example. Ghana has extensive bauxite deposits and sources of electric power, making it possible to develop an integrated aluminum industry. The Nkrumah government pushed for this, and reached an agreement with Valco (a subsidiary of Kaiser Aluminum of the United States) to build an aluminum smelter. But Valco and other imperialist interests blocked the full development of the bauxite mines and the construction of an alumina plant (which refines the bauxite before it is smelted into aluminum). Valco feared that it would be more vulnerable to nationalization if those related industries were also developed. So today, Valco imports alumina, despite Ghana's own large bauxite deposits.

In seeking to overcome this weakness, the PNDC continued to meet imperialist resistance. But it has now obtained Soviet assistance for the development of the Kibi bauxite mines and has concluded agreements with Iran and Hungary to study plans for an alumina plant.

With this added leverage, Ghana was able to renegotiate its original agreement with Valco, which had been highly unfavorable to Ghana. The new agreement, signed in February 1985, provided that Valco pay higher taxes and electricity rates and that Valco no longer have preferential access to electricity when there are power shortages.

### Economic upturn

By the end of 1984 and beginning of 1985, Ghana began to register its first modest economic advances since the introduction of the three-year Economic Recovery Program in early 1983.



Ernest Harsch/IP

Market stall in Accra. Food production has increased since year of hunger in 1983.

Following a year of serious hunger, the 1984 harvest was good. Maize production more than doubled, creating surpluses on the market. It is expected to rise even further this year. Market stalls in Accra and other towns are piled high with yams, cassava, beans, mangos, bananas, and a multitude of other fruits and vegetables.

In part, this is because of the good rains last year. But it is also a result of increased government investment in agriculture and assistance to exploited farmers, who produce the vast bulk of the country's food.

Ninety percent of the government-owned Ghana Commercial Bank's loans to agriculture have gone to 250,000 small-scale producers of vegetables, fish, poultry, and livestock. In addition, the bank itself provided spraying machines, chemicals, and machetes. The government significantly raised the prices that it pays for food crops, to encourage peasants to plant more.

In rural areas, the establishment of the new People's Shops, run by the village CDRs, also made previously scarce and expensive farming and consumer goods available at controlled prices. Steps have been taken to set up adult literacy programs in rural areas, to provide cheaper materials and loans for housing construction, and to bring greater health care to the countryside.

While overall agricultural production increased by 10 percent, cocoa — Ghana's main export crop — rose only by a bare 3 percent. Because it takes several years for cocoa trees to mature, cocoa cultivation responds much more slowly than other crops to improved weather and prices.

Industrial production registered a 7 percent rise in 1984. This was a result of the PNDC's importation of more industrial raw materials and spare parts to revive production in plants that had closed down or were operating at only a small fraction of their capacity.

Gold and diamond exports rose slightly, but

manganese exports climbed by an impressive 64 percent and timber by 24 percent. Efforts are being made to rehabilitate the Ashanti gold mine in Obuasi, which is partially government-owned and is potentially one of the largest in Africa.

Overall, Ghana's gross domestic product rose by 7.6 percent, after five consecutive years of decline. The inflation rate in 1984 was brought down to some 40 percent, compared to 123 percent the previous year.

### The limits of 'recovery'

While this economic upturn has eased a few of the most immediate difficulties facing Ghana's working people, its impact remains relatively slight thus far. Because its economy is dependent on the world capitalist market, Ghana's economic performance is subject to fluctuations and pressures beyond its direct control.

The People's Shops have made the distribution of consumer goods somewhat more equitable, but they are still overshadowed by the private traders. In the Greater Accra area alone, there are 60,000 registered merchants, who handle the bulk of retail trade.

The PNDC's assistance to cocoa farming is aimed essentially at increasing Ghana's foreign earnings. But the across-the-board character of this aid tends to perpetuate the sharp class inequalities that characterize that sector. Those who benefit the most from new sources of credit and equipment are the large-scale capitalist cocoa farmers, rather than the exploited producers. The capitalist farmers also enjoy close contacts with corrupt officials of the government-run Cocoa Marketing Board and tend to dominate the various farmers' and cooperative associations.

This highlights the fact that no significant land reform measures have been initiated thus far. Only in a few cases have steps been taken to give tenant farmers title to the land they work. In those areas where land is still communally owned, traditional tribal chiefs continue to charge high fees for assigning land to peasants.

"In the heat of the rehabilitation programme agriculture has been tackled purely from technical considerations without sufficient reference to the socioeconomic ones," a 1984 Information Ministry report commented. "In the years to come the PNDC will have to address itself to . . . land tenure systems."

A good part of the PNDC's Economic Recovery Program is based on acquiring loans from the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and other imperialist financial institutions. These have been accompanied by severe austerity measures, such as price increases and sharp devaluations of the cedi. The servicing of these and past debts will eat up half of Ghana's export earnings this year.

And while Ghana has obtained several hundred million dollars over the past two years from such sources, it has not received as much as has been pledged and some disbursements have been quite slow.

Despite efforts to attract foreign private in-

vestment, there was only \$15 million in new investments in 1983, dropping to \$9 million the following year. In fact, about one-fifth of British-owned businesses in Ghana have pulled out in recent years. Two U.S. companies, Phillips Petroleum and Firestone Rubber, have also closed shop.

Corruption, known as *kalabule*, is constantly rearing its head, despite the jailing and fining of hundreds of businessmen and state officials by the public tribunals. This has infected many state institutions as well. Scores of employees who have been caught have been dismissed or brought to trial. Even leaders of some defense committees and public tribunals have been implicated.

The perpetuation of corruption and profiteering, alongside the continued economic hardships, has taken a political toll among supporters of the revolution and has encouraged the most reactionary and proimperialist layers.

Rawlings noted in a March 1984 speech, "There is evidence of mounting despair, deepening apathy and growing withdrawal and rejection of national responsibility on the part of the ordinary people." At the same time, he said, "the old centres of power and vested interests will continue at every point to infiltrate and place obstacles in our path."

#### Varying perspectives

All these difficulties, conflicts, and pressures are reflected within the government, CDR leaderships, and various state institutions themselves. This is inevitable given the breadth of these bodies, which include individuals of different political outlooks and class perspectives.

While there are revolutionaries in leadership positions, many others have been brought in on the basis of technical and organizational skills, regardless of whether or not they are politically committed to advancing the anti-imperialist struggle and the mobilization of the masses.

Former managers of U.S. and British firms have been appointed to head up state banks and enterprises. Retired military officers have been named to key positions. A few former leaders of banned bourgeois parties have come into the PNDC and the cabinet. The government's new National Economic Commission, headed by PNDC member D.F. Annan (a retired judge), includes an industrialist, a former insurance executive, and a trading official. Because of the weakness of the CDRs in many rural areas, the government has placed greater emphasis on using traditional tribal chiefs to implement policies and mobilize villagers.

These developments give those tied to the privileged and exploiting layers of society more room to defend and advance their own particular interests and underline the fact that the capitalist state apparatus remains intact.

The resulting conflicts within government bodies are not always clear-cut and apparent. They shift on different questions and are often obscured by the leadership's efforts to present a common front against imperialism. But sometimes there are public reflections of them.



Ernest Harsch/IP

Women's militia unit at March 6 Independence Day ceremonies.

In the negotiations with the IMF and other U.S. and West European banking and financial institutions differences have arisen within the Ghanaian delegations over how far to go in meeting their conditions.

Speaking before the United Nations in October 1984, PNDC member Annan praised Ghana's "courage and maturity" in fulfilling the IMF's conditions.

Other government officials have been less glowing in their assessment, stating that, while they considered the agreements necessary at this time, there were also some negative consequences.

In outlining the 1985 budget, Finance Secretary Botchwey looked forward to a reduced need for such foreign loans in the coming years, since "it has never been our intention to perpetuate a dependence on external assistance for our development, for even in the most favourable circumstances such dependence can never be entirely compatible with our sovereign national interests."

However, J.S. Addo, the governor of the state-owned Bank of Ghana, has pressed for even more concessions, particularly to the demands of the World Bank and Ghanaian businessmen for a sweeping denationalization of state enterprises, the lifting of all price controls, and massive layoffs. "Private entrepreneurship could create a new era of investment in Ghana," he proclaimed in September 1984, expressing the hope that the state enterprises "would be largely privatized." He lamented the government's "rigid price controls" and "labour regulations which discouraged or prohibited the laying off of workers."

To an extent, such differences have also been reflected on the ideological level. Government leaders generally present themselves as nationalists, aiming to advance Ghana's national struggle against imperialist oppression. Yet this general formula is often interpreted in different ways.

Some tend to stress the need to mobilize the working class and peasantry to spearhead the anti-imperialist struggle. Others reject this outright, seek to dampen the struggles of the most exploited, or deny the existence of distinct classes in Ghana.

In an interview in January 1985, Annan emphasized that at the beginning of the revolution, in 1982, there was a tendency "to give it a Marxist or socialist outlook," which, he said, "did us a certain amount of harm" and "has now been found to be inappropriate." Rather than following "any modern ideology," Annan put forward the utopian perspective of going "back to our roots" in the precolonial "communal way of life."

#### Political debate

The agreement with the IMF and the PNDC's austerity measures have continued to generate some criticism from unionists and left-wing political activists.

The Trades Union Congress (TUC) has several times opposed aspects of the government's economic program. In late 1984, the TUC leadership declared, "As a result of these IMF conditions, working people in Ghana now face unbearable living conditions which manifest themselves in poor nutrition, high prices of goods and services, inadequate housing and crime." Then in February 1985 it sent a position paper to Rawlings calling for an end to appointments of "conservative and discredited politicians to positions of high office and influence" and demanding a role for the trade unions in any future negotiations with the IMF and World Bank.

On Jan. 22, 1985, a number of prominent political activists issued a statement at a news conference in Accra. It was signed by two leaders of the New Democratic Movement (a left-wing group with some members in the cabinet), several Catholic priests and lay activists, and an aide to Rawlings. It hit the IMF's role and what it termed "a shift to more conservative economic policies and reliance on loans, aid, foreign investment, etc." It maintained that "the objective of economic transformation has been abandoned" in favor of "traditional neo-colonial solutions."

In the context of the broader class polarization in Ghana today, these statements have stirred a political debate. Many activists, particularly in the CDR leaderships, do not share the critical stance of the TUC leadership, though some may agree with certain points it



raised. At the same time, the government is holding ongoing discussions with the TUC and is considering some of its specific proposals for improving the conditions of working people.

A commentator in the government-owned *People's Daily Graphic*, discussing the January 22 statement, found "a number of points in this document with which I am in sympathy. But I do not agree that the answer to the kind of problems raised lies in issuing manifestoes." He then went on to discuss some of the specific questions raised, including ways to counter "the infiltration of rightist elements."

Speaking to a visiting group of North American activists (myself among them) in early March, Secretary of Culture and Tourism Ben Abdallah said that the signers of the January 22 statement had not broken with the PNDC, "but are publicly expressing their differences. This is a strength that we should cherish. This is not a repressive process."

### Defense committees

A similar discussion has been taking place over recent changes in the 20,000 defense committees. Although hampered by meager resources, a shortage of experienced cadres, and occasionally ultraleft and adventurist actions by their leaderships, these committees have been the main organizations that workers and peasants have tried to use to advance their interests.

In December 1984, they were renamed Committees for the Defence of the Revolution, from their old designations as People's Defence Committees (PDCs) and Workers Defence Committees (WDCs). According to Rawlings, this was to affirm "that their purpose is to embrace all those who are committed to defending the aims of the 31st December Revolution, and not to set certain categories of people against others."

This followed earlier moves, in 1983, to open up the committees to traditional chiefs and management personnel, who were initially excluded from the PDCs and WDCs.

Speaking to the North American delegation, one national CDR leader stressed that at the current stage of Ghana's struggle, "there is a need to bring in everybody who has something to contribute. We've got to work together." He added, however, that the CDRs still do not want as members "chiefs and others who use their positions to take their 10 percent [in kickbacks], those who abuse their powers, those with foreign bank accounts, the *kalabule* people."

Along with these changes, the National Defence Committee (NDC), which had coordinated the PDCs and WDCs nationally, was dissolved. The PNDC took over its functions directly. This came after several years of occasional friction between the NDC and governmental bodies. According to Rawlings, the NDC "had a tendency to be seen as a parallel power-structure," and was therefore scrapped.

Likewise, the former management committees in the factories — which included WDC

activists and unionists — have been transformed into consultative bodies, giving final decision-making powers to the appointed directors.

These changes caused anxiety among some activists in local defense committees, who saw them as a diminishing of their role. This was also a point of criticism in the January 22 statement. In fact, some management personnel, administrators, and reactionaries did interpret the NDC's dissolution in that way, and began to harass and intimidate CDR activists.

The PNDC has sought to counter such interpretations and allay the anxieties of activists. According to Rawlings, "We still look on the CDRs as the motive forces in the transformations we envisage. We want to consolidate their strengths and give them the means and the power to take more effective actions which will be better understood by the population as a whole."

In May, sections of the new CDR guidelines were issued. They noted that the revolution and the CDRs had brought "some positive gains for all citizens of Ghana who believed in social justice and the right of all Ghanaians, especially the workers, farmers, fishermen and other producers of the essential needs of the society and of the nation's wealth to actively participate in the processes of taking vital decisions at work places and communities affecting their lives, children and posterity and taking part in shaping the destiny of Ghana."

Many of the most conscious political activists remain leaders and members of the CDRs. The committees provide a framework for broad political discussions about the course of Ghana's anti-imperialist upsurge. Steps are being taken to once again organize political education classes for CDR cadres (previous ones, in 1983, included films and discussions on the struggles in Angola, South Africa, Cuba, Nicaragua, and El Salvador).

After more than two years of hesitation, the government has also taken the first steps to organize the military training of CDR members for the initial units of a popular militia. One such militia unit featured prominently at the March 9 ceremonies marking the opening of the CDRs' National Secretariat offices in the old Parliament Building. During the military maneuvers involving Ghanaian and Burkinabè troops later that same month, CDR activists participated in repelling a mock invasion by armed counterrevolutionaries.

### Resisting the counterrevolution

Over the past year or so, the PNDC has been appealing for "national reconciliation." This has succeeded in undercutting some of the active right-wing opposition, though far from all of it.

Businessmen, merchants, and capitalist cocoa farmers remain bitterly opposed to many of the PNDC's policies, as well as to the continuing popular mobilizations. The Ghana Manufacturers Association has denounced the defense committees. The lawyers association continues to oppose the public tribunals and calls for freeing "political prisoners" (meaning

convicted terrorists and corrupt businessmen). The latter demand was echoed in December 1984 by the National House of Chiefs. The right-wing leadership of the National Union of Ghana Students still demands that the PNDC give up power.

For their part, the imperialists have adopted a subtler approach than in 1982 and 1983, when they relied more directly on economic embargoes and coup attempts. Today they are seeking to take advantage of the increased influence of the IMF and World Bank over Ghana, the discontent fostered by the austerity policies, and the divisions within the government in order to press for further concessions. This, they hope, will aid in demobilizing the revolutionary struggle.

The fulsome praises of the PNDC's IMF agreement and its austerity measures by British and U.S. banking officials and the big-business media are not a mark of confidence in the Ghanaian government, but another form of pressure intended to push it further along that course.

This lack of confidence is shown by the imperialists' continued backing to rightist Ghanaian exile groups, operating largely from Britain, the United States, Ivory Coast, and Togo.

In March 1984, several groups of armed counterrevolutionaries infiltrated into Ghana simultaneously from Ivory Coast and Togo. They were soon detected, however, and most were killed or forced to flee.

In early February 1985, a plot to assassinate Rawlings was uncovered in Kumasi. This was followed a few days later by a five-hour demonstration of tens of thousands of workers and others through Kumasi in support of Rawlings, the largest demonstration yet held there.

Though 1983 and 1984 had witnessed a slight fall-off in the frequency and size of mass mobilizations, there have been a number of other notable ones so far this year. The Kumasi action was followed, on March 6, by a turnout of 100,000 in Accra for the anniversary of Ghana's independence. Then came a May Day rally in the capital. And on June 4 — the sixth anniversary of Rawlings' first seizure of power in 1979 — particularly sizeable and militant marches and rallies were held in Accra and the various regional capitals.

It is such mobilizations that continue to worry Washington and London, as well as the Ghanaian reactionaries.

Working people know that the gains they have made are the result of their own actions, and that the present government provides a better political framework for them to continue their struggle than one totally subservient to imperialism. That is why they turn out to defend it, in massive numbers, every time it has come under direct attack from imperialism.

The political stakes in this struggle are great, not only for working people in Ghana, but also for oppressed and exploited peoples elsewhere. Political developments in Ghana — once looked to throughout the continent as the "Black Star of Africa" — can still have a big impact far beyond its borders. □

# Coalition backs antiwar actions

Wide range of protests planned for 1985, 1986

By Steve Craine

The broadly based national coalition that sponsored significant demonstrations April 20 against the U.S. government's intervention in Central America, the Caribbean, and southern Africa has endorsed and is throwing its support behind a series of protest activities being planned for September 21 through November 25. It has also called for a national day of protest in April 1986.

The April Actions Coalition for Peace, Jobs and Justice brought together peace groups, civil rights organizations, labor unions, and individuals to build one of the largest antiwar demonstrations in recent years in North America. More than 125,000 people took part in marches in Washington and several other U.S. cities on April 20. A demonstration took place in Toronto on the same day.

In addition to demanding a halt to U.S. military intervention in Central America, these actions called for an end to U.S. government and corporate support for South African apartheid and racism at home, freezing and reversing the arms race, and creating jobs by cutting the military budget.

The projected actions for later this year, which were approved overwhelmingly by the coalition's steering committee meeting in New York City June 29, are:

- September 21-25 Pledge of Resistance activities;

- October 11 National Anti-apartheid Protest Day;

- October 19-25 Peace with Justice Week;

- November 23-25 Grassroots Action Days.

The coalition voted to initiate a national day of protest tentatively set for April 26, 1986. The political themes of this action would be similar to the four demands of last April's actions.

The steering committee agreed to produce educational materials explaining the links between the coalition's demands and to work to draw in new forces that had not participated in the coalition prior to last April.

Among the national organizations represented at the steering committee meeting were: Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Mobilization for Survival, U.S. Peace Council, American Committee on Africa, Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign, Committee in Solidarity With the People of El Salvador, National Network in Solidarity with the Nicaraguan People, Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala, Casa El Salvador, Union of Democratic Filipinos, Socialist Workers Party, Young Socialist Alliance, Peoples Anti-war Mobilization, and Emergency National Council Against U.S. Intervention in Central America/the Caribbean.

More than a dozen local coalitions sent representatives to the meeting. Several of those in

attendance were union members.

There was general agreement in the steering committee that the April 20 demonstrations and three days of related actions in Washington immediately before and after that date had laid a firm basis for the coalition to involve even more unionists, Blacks and Latinos, working farmers, soldiers, women, students, and others. The previous actions were endorsed by 10 national trade unions and many local union bodies.

The proposal for upcoming actions put forward by the coalition's administrative committee emphasized both the need for an immediate response to Washington's international and domestic policies and the importance of building an ongoing coalition for peace and justice. The proposal projected expanding the coalition by bringing more organizations into the planning for the April 1986 action from the outset.

A big majority of the steering committee concurred with the administrative committee's proposals. A counterproposal suggested that the coalition should call its own nationally coordinated local actions before the end of the year. This position, held by a small minority, was motivated on the basis that direct use of U.S. troops in Nicaragua is imminent, that none of the already scheduled actions are exactly what is needed, and that without fall actions called in its own name the coalition would dissolve.

Supporters of the administrative committee's proposal responded that even if it were possible to predict when and if the U.S. government will launch a direct invasion of Nicaragua, the series of activities already initiated for September through November provide the best way to build a movement against U.S. intervention.

## Numerous protest activities planned

The October 11 Anti-apartheid Protest Day was initiated by the American Committee on Africa and campus groups. October 11 is observed internationally as South Africa Political Prisoner Day.

The October 19-25 Peace with Justice Week is an annual event organized by the National Council of Churches and other religious groups.

The September 21-25 activities by the Pledge of Resistance will focus on activities opposing U.S. intervention in Central America.

The November 23-25 Grassroots Action Days were initiated by the African Peoples' Christian Organization and the Fellowship of Reconciliation, among other groups.

An action around the four demands of the coalition has been called for October 26 in San Francisco.

The steering committee also discussed how local coalitions can participate in fund-raising activities to help pay for last April's demonstrations and give the coalition a stronger financial base for the next set of actions. □



Antiwar marchers in Seattle, April 20.

Jim Levitt/IP