

INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS

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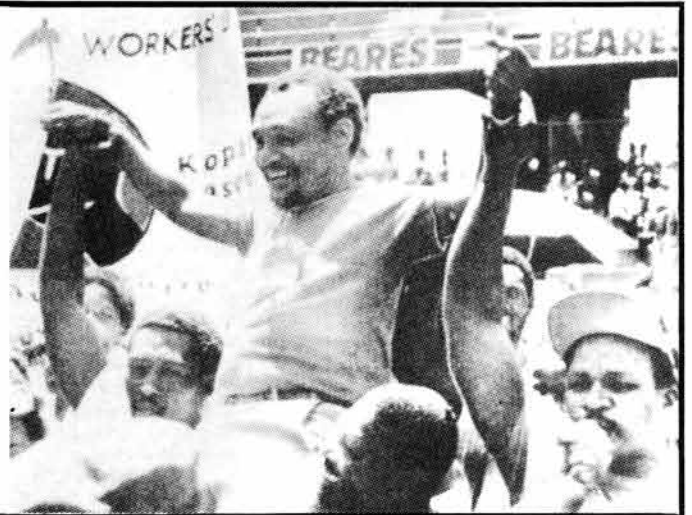
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December 30, 1985

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South African Workers Form Union Federation

National Union of Mineworkers leader Elijah Barayi heads Congress of South African Trade Unions.



Holbrook Mahn/IP

Washington Increases Military, Political Pressure on Nicaragua

Sandinista militia member in Estelí.
Reagan administration says Cubans control Nicaraguan military.

Ireland

**Bernadette Devlin McAliskey
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New escalation against Nicaragua's government

By Will Reissner

In recent weeks the Reagan administration has escalated its war against Nicaragua's Sandinista-led government on the military and propaganda fronts.

The military escalation was marked by the first use of surface-to-air missiles by the U.S.-organized and -financed counterrevolutionaries who are fighting the workers' and farmers' government in Nicaragua.

The political escalation came with Washington's trumpeting of the claim that Cuban soldiers "are now the backbone" of Nicaragua's armed forces.

Fourteen Nicaraguans died December 2 when *contras* shot down their helicopter, using a SAM-7 missile.

Daniel Ortega, president of the Central American country, compared this development to the CIA's mining of Nicaragua's ports two years ago. Now, said Ortega, "the United States is mining the airspace of Central America, and they are threatening to do so throughout the continent."

As befits the Reagan administration's cynical attitude toward this most overt of "covert" wars, Secretary of State George Shultz went through the motions of denying that Washington had anything to do with giving the SAM-7 missiles to the *contras*.

"Thank goodness that they did get hold of some weapons that can knock these choppers down," Shultz said. "If I were them I would certainly want" the missiles, he added. "They have gotten ahold of missiles and figured out how to use them . . . and I say, 'Fine, I'm all for it.'"

Propaganda barrage

Shultz and his chief hatchet man for Latin America, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Elliot Abrams, utilized the incident to unleash a barrage of propaganda claiming that the downed helicopter had been piloted by Cubans. In Abrams' words, "Cubans are now the backbone of the Sandinista Army."

One unnamed State Department source told Bernard Gwertzman of the *New York Times* that Washington knows Cubans had to be piloting the helicopters because they were being flown "too often and too well to be Nicaraguans."

The bogus charge that Cuban soldiers are "the backbone" of the Nicaraguan people's army marks the third major escalation in Washington's five-year propaganda campaign justifying its mercenary war against Nicaragua.

Initially, President Reagan argued that U.S. aid to the *contras* was needed to intercept sup-

posed Nicaraguan arms shipments to Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) guerrillas in El Salvador.

Later, the White House contended that the *contra* funding was needed to replace the Sandinista-led government in Managua.

Now, says Elliott Abrams, the U.S. government must "prevent Cuba from taking over a country [Nicaragua] in Central America." For good measure, Abrams added that Congress should renew open military funding for the *contras* — to supplement the \$27 million in "humanitarian" aid approved in June — "or we are going to be seeing a Soviet base in Nicaragua."

Meanwhile, the Pentagon announced that another round of U.S.-Honduran military maneuvers, which will include a five-and-a-half-month military road-building program, will begin in January. Through similar maneuvers in the past, the Pentagon has set up in Honduras a military infrastructure — airfields, surveillance posts, roads, etc. — capable of supporting a large-scale direct U.S. military invasion of Nicaragua.

Contempt for facts

In leveling the charge that Cuba is trying to take over Nicaragua, the Reagan administration again demonstrates its utter contempt for history and for facts.

As every Nicaraguan school child knows, for decades the U.S. *Marines* occupied Nicaragua and a U.S.-installed Somoza dynasty ruled the country. Augusto César Sandino, who led Nicaragua's resistance to the U.S. occupation, was murdered in 1934, when Fidel Castro was only seven years old.

It was the 1979 Sandinista revolution, which toppled Anastasio Somoza's brutal regime, that made it possible for the first time for Nicaraguans to enjoy a free and sovereign homeland, one in which the workers and farmers could rule.

The Cuban government and people, having earlier experienced firsthand the punishment that Washington inflicts for such behavior, have provided enormous help to Nicaragua in the form of teachers, technicians, doctors, and nurses, as well as military advisers.

The Sandinista People's Army and the armed workers and peasants of the people's militia are defending their homeland and their revolution with great determination and at an enormous cost.

In four years of fighting, the *contras* have been unable to hold a single town or strip of land in Nicaragua.

But with vast amounts of U.S. arms, supplies, and money, the mercenaries have

been able to inflict tremendous damage on Nicaragua.

From their bases in neighboring Honduras, the *contras* have launched countless hit-and-run attacks against small towns, isolated farming communities, and villages.

Given the vastly disproportionate size and wealth of the United States and Nicaragua, Washington has been able to finance the *contras* out of what amounts to a petty-cash fund while inflicting untold suffering on the Nicaraguan people.

Of a population of about 3.5 million, nearly 250,000 Nicaraguans have been left homeless by the mercenary war.

Nearly 4,000 Nicaraguans — more than 350 of them women and children — have been murdered by the U.S.-trained killers. More than 4,000 others have been wounded and an additional 5,000 kidnapped.

If the United States suffered a proportional number of deaths, the toll would be more than 260,000 killed.

Schools and health-care centers have been special targets of the mercenary army. While the Sandinista government has made special efforts to improve the educational level and health of Nicaragua's working people, the *contras* have destroyed 321 schools and 50 health-care facilities.

In addition, Washington has applied an economic embargo against Nicaragua, prohibiting all trade between the two countries, and has pressured other countries and international bodies to join in the economic blockade.

The Pentagon knows full well that the *contras* cannot overthrow the Nicaraguan workers' and farmers' government. But Washington hopes that the *contra* war will create and deepen divisions among Nicaragua's working people and erode confidence in the government as economic shortages multiply and the casualty toll mounts.

Sacrifices

The Reagan administration hopes that war weariness will create conditions that could lead to an internal revolt against the Sandinista government, opening the door to a possible direct U.S. invasion.

Defense of the revolution has, indeed, forced heavy sacrifices on the Nicaraguan people. Many social programs aimed at improving standards of education, health, and housing have been shelved or cut because of the cost of military defense. Economic development programs have been put on the back burner.

Shortages caused by the U.S.-imposed embargo and the general costs of the war have made day-to-day life very difficult for most of the population.

In all, the war has already cost the Nicaraguan people more than \$1.5 billion.

In addition to the material and physical sacrifices that the *contra* war has forced on Nicaraguan working people, the aggression has also forced Nicaraguans to make a political sacrifice. They have had to give up some of their hard-won rights and civil liberties under

the state of emergency that was invoked in October. This was done to further centralize the fight against the *contras*' attempts to develop an open internal political front in support of Washington's military aggression.

The fact that the majority of Nicaraguans agree with and accept the need for the state of emergency makes it no less of a sacrifice on their part.

In the struggle against aggression and internal sabotage, the organized working class is taking the lead. On December 6, some 30,000 angry Nicaraguans, led by the central trade union federation, demonstrated at the U.S. embassy in Managua to protest the downing of the army helicopter four days earlier.

Addressing the crowd, Lucío Jiménez, general secretary of the Sandinista Workers Federation, said, "the people here know how to fight. We have the guns, and we're organized. We have the unity, consciousness, and determination to win."

Working people throughout the world have a responsibility to protest the actions of the U.S. government and to show their solidarity with the right of the Nicaraguan people to determine their own affairs. □

Angola 'contras' make Reagan's gift list

By G.K. Newey

The Reagan administration will provide \$15 million in covert aid to Angolan counterrevolutionaries, the *New York Times* reported December 11.

The recipient of Reagan's generous support will be the *contra* force led by Jonas Savimbi, South Africa's man in Angola.

Earlier this year, Congress repealed a 1975 law barring U.S. aid to the Angolan counterrevolutionaries, whom Washington had backed financially until the law was passed.

The apartheid government in South Africa has been bankrolling and arming Savimbi's movement in order to weaken the Angolan government and prevent it from aiding South West Africa People's Organisation guerrillas in neighboring Namibia, who are fighting South African rule over their homeland.

Since the repeal of the ban on U.S. aid to Savimbi's *contras*, bills have been introduced in Congress to provide \$27 million in "humanitarian" aid and \$27 million in military aid to the South African-backed forces.

On November 22, Reagan openly stated that his government will be providing "covert aid" to Savimbi. His remarks came in response to a question asking why Secretary of State George Shultz is opposing aid to the Savimbi forces.

Reagan responded: "I'm glad you asked me that. He isn't." Reagan added, "We all believe that a covert operation would be more useful to us and have more chance of success right now than the overt proposal that has been made in the Congress."

According to the December 11 *Times*,

"senior members of the intelligence panels [of Congress] and the Senate Foreign Relations and House Foreign Affairs Committees have been briefed over the last weeks on the Administration's plans."

The so-called "covert" aid to Angola's *contras* comes on top of similar programs for counterrevolutionary forces who are attempting to overturn the governments in Nicaragua, Kampuchea, and Afghanistan.

Recently Shultz traveled to Western Europe to urge Washington's imperialist allies to contribute more to counterrevolutionary covert operations.

Speaking to the Pilgrims Society in London on December 10, he noted that "we and our European friends have occasionally had tactical differences" over "the relation between power and diplomacy."

Hailing those he described as "brave people who somehow never heard that Communism is

the wave of the future," Shultz argued that "sometimes help may be better given [to them] without open acknowledgement; covert action has been part of the arsenal of states since time immemorial, providing a means of influence short of outright confrontation."

In the decade since the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) government came to power after the 1975 fall of Portuguese colonialism, Angola has been repeatedly invaded by the powerful army of the South African apartheid regime, acting in close collusion with Savimbi's troops.

At Angola's request, the Cuban government sent troops to the country in 1975. The Cubans helped stop a South African invasion that threatened to capture the capital of the newly independent country.

Cuban troops remain in Angola to help repel any repetition of a full-scale South African invasion aimed at toppling the government. □

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Workers forge broad union federation

COSATU backs divestment, anti-apartheid actions

By Ernest Harsch

Coming from throughout South Africa, several hundred union delegates met in Durban over the weekend of November 29–December 1 to launch the largest union federation in the country's history. Called the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), it embraces more than 30 unions with a combined membership of some half a million. Although the vast bulk of its members are Black, it is a nonracial federation, open to workers of all colors.

COSATU's declared goal is to organize and unite the big majority of South Africa's working class, as summed up by a union banner that declared, in the Sotho language, "Kopanang basebetsi" (Workers unite).

From its first public statements, COSATU made it clear that it would fight for the interests of workers on the shop floor, as well as for the interests of all the oppressed and exploited against the racist system of apartheid.

This places COSATU in the front ranks of the struggle for a democratic, nonracial South Africa. Its formation will give a big boost to all those, from the Black urban townships to the impoverished rural Bantustans, who have been mobilizing on an unprecedented scale to rid the country of white minority rule.

"We . . . firmly commit ourselves," COSATU's constitution states, "to a united democratic South Africa, free of oppression and economic exploitation. We believe this can only be achieved under the leadership of a united working class."

The formation of this new federation marks a milestone in the recent history of the South African union movement. The last such nonracial federation, the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), was forced underground and into exile by massive state repression in the mid-1960s. It was only a decade ago, in the wake of a broad strike wave by Black workers in Durban in 1973, that independent, predominantly Black unions were again able to emerge. And it was only in 1979 that they were able to win legal recognition, opening the door wide to more massive unionization of Black workers.

COSATU's formation was hailed by a variety of organizations. The United Democratic Front (UDF), the 2-million-member anti-apartheid coalition that has been leading most of the mass protests over the past two years, had a banner at the union conference pledging its support to COSATU. The outlawed African National Congress (ANC), South Africa's vanguard liberation organization, sent a congratulatory message, as did SACTU.

A December 2 broadcast into South Africa

over the ANC's Radio Freedom declared, "The formation of this trade union federation was greeted with much jubilation by the entire struggling people of our country because it lays the main foundation stone for the unity of the working class in South Africa, the main force of our national liberation revolution. . . ."

"Fellow countrymen, COSATU has been born. The giant has arisen."

Struggle for 'one person, one vote'

COSATU's political stance was spelled out in forthright and militant terms during the course of its inaugural conference and at a December 1 wind-up rally, which drew a crowd of 10,000 singing and chanting unionists.

Speaking to the rally, Elijah Barayi, a mine worker for 25 years and now COSATU's president, called the apartheid regime a government of "criminals and drunkards." Barayi, who had been an ANC activist during the 1950s, called on President Pieter Botha to resign to "make way for the real leader of the people, Nelson Mandela," the ANC leader who has been imprisoned by the apartheid authorities since 1962.

Barayi also demanded that the state of emergency imposed in July be lifted and that all troops be withdrawn from the Black townships. The Congress of South African Students, a Black high-school students' association that had been outlawed for its role in leading anti-apartheid protests, should be unbanned, Barayi said.

The COSATU president affirmed the union's support for a universal franchise in a single, undivided state. He rejected President Botha's "reform" parliament, in which two segregated and powerless chambers were set up for collaborators from the Indian and Coloured sectors of the Black population.

The COSATU congress passed a resolution condemning Pretoria's system of Bantustans, the 10 rural reserves for Africans that are designed to keep Africans divided along language and tribal lines. These Bantustans, COSATU stated, are intended to thwart the "just struggle for one person, one vote in a unitary South Africa." The Bantustan leaders were accused of practicing "extreme forms of oppression."

At the December 1 rally, Barayi also demanded the abolition of Pretoria's notorious pass laws, which control where Africans may live and what jobs they may hold.

Speaking a week later at a mass funeral in Queenstown for 11 victims of the apartheid police, Barayi urged further anti-apartheid protests. "If the political order in this country does not change soon," he told the crowd of 20,000,

"we will refuse to pay taxes and rent."

It is illegal in South Africa to call for trade or investment sanctions against Pretoria. But COSATU, Barayi said on December 1, "is in full support of divestment." Referring to the U.S. and British governments, Barayi said, "They tell us they are against disinvestment because the black people would starve, but black people have been starving here since the first white settlers arrived in 1652."

A few days later, COSATU took this position to a conference of the World Council of Churches held in Harare, Zimbabwe. The conference adopted a resolution calling for mandatory economic sanctions against Pretoria after hearing appeals for such sanctions from a number of South Africans, including COSATU Secretary General Jay Naidoo and Cyril Ramaphosa, president of the National Union of Mineworkers, a key COSATU affiliate.

At the Harare conference, Naidoo also met with leaders of the ANC and SACTU. According to a COSATU statement, this was in order "to exchange views on the present crisis in South Africa."

Among the many questions taken up at the COSATU congress was that of women's oppression. COSATU adopted a resolution pledging to fight "against all unequal and discriminatory treatment of women at work, in society and in the federation." It called for equal pay for all work of equal value and "for restructuring of employment so as to allow women and men the opportunity of qualifying for jobs of equal value." It said that the union would combat "sexual harassment in whatever form it occurs" and would struggle for child care and family facilities and for full maternity rights, "including paid maternity and paternity leave and job security."

The resolution stated that "women workers experience exploitation as workers and oppression as women and that black women are further discriminated against on the basis of race."

Two other resolutions blasted the policies of foreign and South African corporations. One said that such corporations exploited workers in southern Africa "by reaping huge profits and exporting them to Europe and America." The other charged that companies operating in South Africa paid workers only "starvation wages." It said COSATU would demand a national minimum living wage, adjusted to compensate for inflation. It also said the federation would fight to have company books opened for inspection "so that workers could see exactly how the wealth they have produced is being wasted and misused by the employers' profit

system."

Barayi has stated further that COSATU favors the nationalization of the mines.

The radical stance adopted at COSATU's inauguration drew a sharp reaction from both Washington and Pretoria. A U.S. State Department spokesman emphasized that "we strongly disagree with the call for divestiture" by COSATU.

A December 4 broadcast over the South African government-run radio network falsely accused COSATU of being an ANC front and warned that it could be outlawed if it went too far. COSATU's Naidoo characterized as "rubbish" allegations that the federation was a front for the ANC.

Broad base

The new federation includes a majority of the most active nonracial and predominantly Black unions in the country. They represent workers in such key sectors as mining, auto, food, transport, chemicals, retail trade, and textiles, among others.

COSATU's largest single affiliate is the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), with a membership of some 250,000, more than 100,000 of them paid up. Before becoming COSATU's president, Elijah Barayi was the NUM's vice-president.

Also entering the federation are the eight member-unions of the now-dissolved Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU), with more than 120,000 paid-up members. Former FOSATU President Chris Dlamini has become COSATU's vice-president. COSATU's secretary general, Jay Naidoo, was a leader of a former FOSATU affiliate.

The main unions belonging to the UDF have likewise joined COSATU. These include the South African Allied Workers Union, the General and Allied Workers Union, and the National Federation of Workers.

In addition, several previously unaffiliated unions have joined, including the Food and Canning Workers Union, which had been a member of the ANC-allied SACTU before that federation was suppressed.

The unions coming together to form COSATU agreed that the new federation would adhere to five basic principles: worker control of the unions, representation of member unions on the basis of paid-up membership, national cooperation among the unions, one union per industry, and nonracialism. The principle of "one union per industry" means that in industries where there are now more than one union, those unions will amalgamate; general unions will be restructured, their members either forming new industrial unions or joining existing ones.

Political evolution

Some of the unions belonging to COSATU have gone through a political evolution over the past year.

While the unions affiliated to the UDF have long advocated direct union participation in the anti-apartheid struggle, others have not.

When it was first formed in 1979, FOSATU

sought to avoid participation in broader political protest movements against the policies of the apartheid regime, falsely counterposing the need to build up strong shop-floor organizations. Its leadership charged that the ANC was a "populist" movement engaged in "opportunistic political activity." It refused to join the UDF, as did the General Workers Union.

But under the impact of the massive mobilizations against the apartheid state, these unions have shifted somewhat. In November 1984, for example, FOSATU joined with other unions and with affiliates of the UDF to back a two-day general strike in the southern Transvaal to protest the regime's repressive policies. With some 1 million workers taking part, it was the largest political strike in South Africa's history. Subsequently, FOSATU called strike actions to protest the police killings of several of its members. Some FOSATU leaders have been detained. A July 1985 report by the federation noted, "Government actions and policies continue to draw FOSATU ever deeper into the political arena."

Nevertheless, precisely what role the unions are to play within the broader liberation struggle remains a question of much discussion and dispute. But now such matters can be discussed within the framework of a united union federation.

Continued divisions

There are some important Black unions that have not joined COSATU. They cite as the main reason their opposition to COSATU's nonracial character, favoring instead unions of Black workers only, excluding whites.

These unions are in two main groupings: the Council of Unions of South Africa (CUSA) and the Azanian Confederation of Trade Unions (Azactu). They have a combined membership estimated at between 100,000 and 150,000 workers.

These unions come out of or have been influenced by the Black Consciousness movement, a Black nationalist current that emerged in the early 1970s and played an important role not only in spurring a renewal of mass protest but also in the emergence of some of the first independent Black unions.

Since then, however, the Black Consciousness movement has lost much of its influence. Many of its former activists have evolved toward the perspective of a democratic, nonracial South Africa. Some are key figures in the UDF; others have joined the outlawed ANC. This evolution has been reflected within the union movement as well.

Some unionists, however, continue to adhere to many of the positions of the Black Consciousness movement. In 1980 they formed CUSA, an all-Black union federation. It subsequently decided to affiliate to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, the principal international union grouping marked by anticommunist positions.

In late 1984 another current came together to form Azactu. It, too, is an all-Black federation and rejects working with anti-apartheid whites. Some of its leaders belong to the Aza-

nian People's Organisation (Azapo), the main political group that continues to champion Black Consciousness and has a sectarian stance toward the UDF. Azactu is an affiliate of the Azapo-led National Forum Committee.

For several years, CUSA participated in the discussions and conferences aiming toward trade union unification. But the unions that made up Azactu did not.

Initially it appeared that CUSA as a whole would participate in COSATU's formation, but by early 1985 it began to pull back and to raise more forcefully its objections to the principle of nonracialism, which it characterized as a "white policy of divide and rule." This retreat brought a rift within CUSA itself. Its strongest and fastest-growing affiliate, the NUM, favored trade union unity on nonracial lines, and in August 1985 a mineworkers' congress voted to break with CUSA around this issue.

The remainder of CUSA has subsequently drawn closer to Azactu, and the two groupings are discussing joint activities. The fact that they have not joined COSATU remains a serious weakness in the union movement.

In addition, tens of thousands of Black workers are still within segregated branches of white-dominated unions belonging to the Trade Union Council of South Africa (TUCSA). The Boilermakers Society, a union of 50,000 white and Black workers, opposes aspects of the regime's policies, but has not joined COSATU. The whites-only South African Confederation of Labour remains wedded to apartheid.

Another big challenge facing the union movement is to use COSATU's formation to further advance the unionization of Black workers, most of whom have not yet been organized into unions.

In the ANC's radio commentary on COSATU, the liberation organization outlined its views on the immediate steps that lie ahead of the South African union movement.

Among them, the ANC said, is the need to win over the Black unions that have not yet joined COSATU. "It is important for us to continue discussing and thrashing out the differences that still lead to the abstention of these unions, because the members of these unions form part of the South African working class. It is therefore very vital that they too be drawn into this mainstream of the struggle for liberation."

The ANC's Radio Freedom broadcast hailed the decision of the COSATU delegates to "involve this giant in the political struggles of our people." At the same time, it argued against the idea, held by some unionists, "that national liberation in our country can be obtained through trade-union struggle only."

The ANC urged union members to join and help lead the many community organizations that exist and to participate in rent actions, bus boycotts, and other mass mobilizations. In addition, the broadcast stressed, it is "vital that unions should be deeply involved in the mass activities being launched by organizations like the United Democratic Front." □

A revolution for Black land rights

Decades of rural resistance to racist agrarian policies

By Ernest Harsch

To you, the sons and daughters of the soil, our case is clear.

The white oppressors have stolen our land. They have destroyed our families. They have taken for themselves the best that there is in our rich country and have left us the worst. They have the fruits and the riches. We have the back-breaking toil and the poverty. . . .

Over 300 years ago the white invaders began a ceaseless war of aggression against us, murdered our forefathers, stole our land and enslaved our people.

Today they still rule by force. They murder our people. They still enslave us. . . .

They have declared war on us. We have to fight back!

— ANC leaflet, 1968

From the time of the first colonial land wars, South African Blacks have fiercely resisted every move by the white authorities to take their land and cattle.

Though Blacks were militarily defeated and deprived of most of their land rights, their struggle for land has continued. It takes varying forms, from informal occupations of unsupervised white-owned lands through

This is the second of two articles on the land question in South Africa. The first one reviewed the white expropriation of the lands of South Africa's indigenous peoples, the apartheid regime's agrarian policies, and the class forces in the countryside.

sporadic peasant rebellions in the Bantustans — the 10 impoverished rural reserves, comprising 13.7 percent of the country, where Africans may still legally farm, but under conditions of extreme overcrowding.

The struggle for the land has not lost its force or importance over the decades. It remains a vital issue for all Blacks. The white monopoly over most land is one of the cornerstones on which the entire apartheid structure rests.

Despite South Africa's extensive industrialization and the growth in the number of Blacks living in the urban centers, land is still an immediate concern to a significant part of the Black population. Because of the regime's massive forced resettlements, some 11 million Africans — more than half the entire African population — live in the Bantustans. Several million more live and work on white-owned farms.

A considerable number of African wage workers still have one foot in the countryside.

They are not yet part of the hereditary proletariat, who view themselves as belonging to a distinct, permanent working class, with no further perspective of returning to the land.

There are some 2 million African migrant workers — nearly a third of all African workers — who labor for periods of time in the cities and must periodically return to the Bantustans, where their families live. Most migrant workers still have access to some land, even if it is only a minimal amount, and they have repeatedly shown their determination to hang on to it.

In addition, many nonmigrant workers in the cities are only recent arrivals and retain family and other social and cultural ties in the rural areas. Even working-class families that have lived in the cities for several generations are affected by the poverty, hunger, and disease of the Bantustans, which drive down the living standards of all Blacks.

Demands and struggles relating to the land have been part of every major period of mass opposition to white minority rule. The upsurge that has been rocking South Africa for the past year and a half has been no exception.

"The black rebellion, which began in the big city ghettos like Sharpeville, Crossroads and Soweto, then spread to small-town South Africa, has now reached the pastoral backwaters of what the South African government calls tribal 'homelands' [the Bantustans]," prominent South African journalist Allister Sparks noted in the Oct. 26, 1985, *Washington Post*.

The United Democratic Front (UDF), the 2-million-member anti-apartheid coalition that has led many of the protests, has called for the scrapping of the Bantustan system and of all laws restricting Black land rights. Other groups have raised similar demands. Supporters of the African National Congress (ANC), the vanguard liberation organization, have been popularizing the slogan, "The land shall be shared among those who work it!"

The fight of Blacks today to reconquer the land is a central aspect of South Africa's unfolding national, democratic revolution. The demand for land — for a sweeping and deep-going agrarian reform that will overturn the racist and unjust system of land ownership — is one that elicits an immediate response from millions of Blacks.

Peasant revolts

Many areas of the Bantustans have long traditions of rebellion and opposition to the regime's racist agrarian and land policies. Between 1940 and 1963, major peasant revolts swept a number of them.

These rebellions were provoked by the re-

gime's drive to push even more Blacks off the land, a drive that accelerated with the coming to power in 1948 of the National Party. The new government institutionalized apartheid as official state policy and drastically extended the repressive and discriminatory measures of earlier regimes.

In the countryside this involved kicking millions of Blacks out of the white-owned farming areas and forcing them to settle in the Bantustans, making the Bantustans even more overcrowded, reducing the size of farming plots, and increasing the number of landless.

The authorities embarked on a massive land "rehabilitation" program within the Bantustans themselves, taking land away from many of those who were farming at a subsistence or below-subsistence level. Cattle herds — a key source of livelihood for many rural Africans — were reduced, as were grazing fields. The notorious passes, which had previously been mandatory only for African males, were extended to women, adding a further source of discontent.

Rural residents especially resented the 1951 Bantu Authorities Act. It further subverted the traditional system of tribal chiefdoms by making the chiefs subject to government appointments and salaries and giving them wide powers to allocate land. Under this act, apartheid collaborators were favored, while those chiefs who resisted government policies were harassed or deposed.

While African peasants were provoked by these policies, they were also inspired by the rise in mass struggles in urban areas, including union drives and campaigns by the ANC and other groups. The close connections between rural and urban Blacks facilitated the spread of such political influences.

The main rebellions were in:

- Zoutpansberg, part of the Bantustan today known as Venda in the northern Transvaal, where peasants rose up in 1941 against land reduction programs. For several years there was "a state of armed warfare," as officials described it, which ended only under massive repression.

- Witzieshoek (today called QwaQwa), which was swept in 1950 by mass protests and armed resistance against the authorities' efforts to reduce the number of cattle in the reserve. Many protesters were killed or arrested.

- Marico, now part of BophuthaTswana, which erupted in 1957–58 against the extension of the pass laws to women. Thousands of women refused to carry passes. The regime cracked down hard, imposing heavy fines and arresting many, some of them on charges of being members of the ANC.

- Sekhukhuleni, today part of Lebowa in the Transvaal, where peasants rallied in mass meetings in 1958 to protest the Bantu Authorities Act and the racist education system.

- Tokazi, part of today's KwaZulu Bantustan, where peasants mobilized in 1959 to oppose government land "rehabilitation" schemes. After the rebellion was crushed, a number of participants were sentenced to death.

- Pondoland, part of the Transkei, where the most massive and organized of the peasant rebellions broke out in 1960. The main grievance was the imposition of the "Bantu authorities" system.

Pondo peasants held periodic mass meetings to discuss their demands and plan strategy. Their movement, known as Ikongo (Congress), formed a leadership called Intaba (Mountain). They set up people's courts, both to bring apartheid collaborators to justice and to take on tasks such as allocation of plowing lands. They initiated boycotts against rural traders who opposed the movement. In addition to rejecting the government-appointed chiefs, the peasants demanded abolition of the segregated school system, relaxation of the pass laws — and direct representation in parliament.

The regime's local administration collapsed for a time, while Intaba's authority covered some 4,000 square kilometers, embracing a population of 180,000. As the revolt progressed, closer ties were established with the ANC. Anderson Ganyile, a member of the ANC Youth League, served as Intaba's secretary. The Pondo movement adopted as its program the Freedom Charter, which is the ANC's program as well.

This revolt was crushed only with massive repression, involving massacres, widespread detentions, a state of emergency, and heavy police patrols.

- Tembuland, in the western Transkei, which flared up in sporadic popular actions in 1962. These protests, provoked by land "rehabilitation" schemes, lasted into the following year.

Impact on ANC

These rural revolts played a key role in shaping the political evolution of the main liberation organization, the ANC. Up through the end of the 1940s, the central ANC leadership generally avoided mass action and paid only sporadic attention to the problems and struggles of the countryside. The ANC's political influence in the reserves was thus very limited and in some cases was superseded by that of other political currents.

But under the impact of the growing opposition to the National Party's apartheid policies, the ANC was transformed. A new generation of younger leaders emerged, organized at first within the ANC Youth League. They pressed for the ANC to adopt a perspective based on mass mobilization and uncompromising opposition to all racist policies. Several of them, including Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, and Govan Mbeki, came from the



Peasant women in Marico demonstrate against pass laws in 1957.

Transkei and were thus more aware of and sensitive to the plight of the rural masses. A manifesto of the Youth League in 1948 called for "far-reaching agrarian reforms," including a "re-division of land among farmers and peasants of all nationalities in proportion to their numbers."

By the end of the 1940s, these younger activists had come into the national leadership of the ANC itself. They helped reorient it politically. The ANC's new course included: a much greater reliance on mass action, in place of the mild appeals and quiet discussions favored by earlier leaderships; recognition of the value to the African majority of forging alliances with the other sectors of the oppressed Black population (Indians and Coloureds), as well as with anti-apartheid whites; and an increased interest in and contact with the struggles of the countryside.

In 1952, the ANC launched a national campaign of mass demonstrations, strikes, and civil disobedience known as the Defiance Campaign, organized under Mandela's direction. Of the six laws specifically targeted by the campaign, two directly related to the grievances of the rural masses — the Bantu Authorities Act and the Stock Limitation Proclamation, which empowered the regime to forcibly reduce the number of cattle in the reserves.

Thousands of volunteers symbolically broke the six target laws and presented themselves for arrest. Some African farm workers took part in the campaign in the eastern Transvaal, but the greatest rural response was in the Peddie region of the Ciskei, which saw mass resistance to the regime's cattle control measures.

James Njongwe, an ANC leader in Port Elizabeth, told ANC supporters during the De-

fiance Campaign: "Your duty is now to go and spread the message of freedom to the people in the reserves. They know what oppression is, what it is to have their cattle killed. They know what has been done to their chiefs and they are ready. They have been ready for years waiting for you."

By the end of the campaign, the ANC's national membership had skyrocketed, from 7,000 to 100,000 dues-paying members. Many of the new ANC branches, particularly in the Cape, were in rural areas.

Freedom Charter

Over the next few years, the ANC helped lead political discussions on the program for South Africa's national, democratic revolution. In preparation for a Congress of the People, ANC and other political activists approached a wide variety of individuals and organizations, both urban and rural, for their demands, proposals, and suggestions.

"We call the farmers of the reserves and trust lands," declared a call for the congress. "Let us speak of the wide land, and the narrow strips on which we toil. Let us speak of brothers without land, and of children without schooling. Let us speak of taxes and of cattle, and of famine. Let us speak of freedom."

When the Congress of the People convened on June 25, 1955, in Kliptown, near Johannesburg, nearly 3,000 delegates attended from around the country. They adopted a program for a democratic South Africa, called the Freedom Charter. The section of the charter entitled, "The land shall be shared among those who work it!" declared:

Restrictions of land ownership on a racial basis shall be ended, and all the land redivided amongst

those who work it, to banish famine and land hunger;

The state shall help the peasants with implements, seed, tractors, and dams to save the soil and assist the tillers;

Freedom of movement shall be guaranteed to all who work on the land;

All shall have the right to occupy land wherever they choose;

People shall not be robbed of their cattle, and forced labour and farm prisons shall be abolished.¹

The Freedom Charter's land policy — that everyone who actually tills the soil is entitled to land — was consistent with its overall democratic stance, summed up by the slogan that "South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white."

Although the ANC as a whole adopted the Freedom Charter the following year, some within it, styling themselves "Africanists," rejected this perspective. They soon split from the ANC to form the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC). Potlako Leballo, a key PAC leader, stated in late 1957 that the Africanists favored "the restoration of the land to its rightful owners — the Africans." This excluded not only white working farmers, but also Coloureds and Indians.

The ANC's incorporation of the struggles of rural Blacks into its overall political perspective was soon reflected in increased ANC participation and influence in the countryside. Although little ANC involvement was apparent in the peasant revolts of the 1940s and early 1950s, by the end of the decade it was increasing. But this was a process, and the ANC's direct role was at times still limited.

According to Govan Mbeki, it was not until the 1960 Pondo revolt in the Transkei that the weight of the struggle in the countryside was fully appreciated by the ANC leadership as a whole. "The Pondo movement," Mbeki wrote, "succeeded by example in accomplishing what discussion had failed to do in a generation — convincing the leadership of the importance of the peasants in the reserves to the entire national struggle."²

Organizing farm workers

Along with this increased attention to rural struggles came the first serious effort to unionize African farm laborers.

The groundwork was laid during the 1950s by Gert Sibande, president of the Transvaal ANC. Banned by the government from living in urban areas, he turned toward building up the ANC in the Transvaal's countryside. Specific complaints by farm workers were passed on to the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), a nonracial but largely Black union federation that was part of the ANC-led Congress Alliance.

In 1960, SACTU formed an agricultural workers' organizing committee in the Transvaal. Besides Sibande, it included Elijah

Mampuru, a former leader of a peasants' organization called Sebatakgomo (a call to arms in the Sotho language).

The following year, in October, the Farm, Plantation, and Allied Workers Union (FPAWU) was launched. It later affiliated to SACTU. The delegates at the FPAWU's inaugural congress issued a demand for £1 a day for those agricultural workers who earned only cash wages. For workers who received both wages and land, the demand was for £5 a month, plus more than 10 acres of fertile land, with farming implements provided by the white farm owner.

Because of the difficulties of organizing farm laborers — who were scattered in isolated farms and regions throughout the countryside — recruitment to the FPAWU was slow, but steady. The Food and Canning Workers Union, another SACTU affiliate, also aided farm workers in the Western Cape.

Repression and resurgence

Confronted by this rural unrest — on top of the massive anti-apartheid mobilizations in the cities and towns — the regime clamped down even harder.

Following the Sharpeville massacre of March 1960, the apartheid authorities outlawed the ANC, PAC, and other political groups. The ANC launched an armed struggle, but its initial guerrilla operations were crushed. By 1963 top ANC leaders such as Mandela, Sisulu, and Mbeki had been arrested. They were later sentenced to life in prison, where they remain today. Others, such as Oliver Tambo, had already gone into exile to avoid arrest.

Although SACTU was not formally outlawed, it was crippled by the repression. Nothing more was heard of the FPAWU after 1964.

Stepped-up repression in the Bantustans took a heavy toll. Thousands were jailed and dozens executed. In the Transkei, the state of emergency first imposed in 1960 was extended through most of the next two decades. In 1963, candidates of the Eastern Pondoland People's Party, led by surviving activists from the Pondo revolt, were arrested and the party was crushed; the authorities accused it of being in contact with the exiled ANC leadership.

The apartheid regime succeeded by the mid-1960s in crushing almost all overt opposition in the country. That facilitated its efforts to build up the subservient Bantustan administrations and carry through yet more massive forced resettlements.

Compelled to function largely outside the country for the time being, the ANC concentrated on training the fighters of its military wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation), and on strengthening its international and diplomatic work.

It also further elaborated its program for the South African revolution, within the framework set by the Freedom Charter. At a conference held in 1969 in Morogoro, Tanzania, the ANC discussed and adopted a series of documents on program, strategy, and tactics. Among them was a more detailed expla-

nation of the various clauses of the Freedom Charter, including the charter's agrarian program (see box).

By the early 1970s, both urban and rural Blacks within South Africa were beginning to recover from the repression of the previous decade. Although the ANC remained banned, there arose new Black political groups that were able to function openly, primarily among students and urban township residents.

Some Bantustan officials hinted at the discontent that was also simmering just below the surface in the Bantustans. Kaiser Matanzima, appointed by Pretoria to head up the Transkei, warned in 1973, "Among the youths there is a movement towards Black Power. I advise the whites to reason with us. We will not grab the land we want — but our youths will take the land by force."

Throughout the last half of 1976, massive youth rebellions swept South Africa. The largest and most prominent actions took place in Soweto and other urban townships, where hundreds of thousands poured into the streets. But the unrest quickly spread to some of the Bantustans, such as BophuthaTswana, Venda, Lebowa, and QwaQwa, involving mainly students and other residents of townships located within their borders. In addition, several dozen white-owned farms in the Transvaal, Natal, Orange Free State, and Cape were set to the torch. Among them was the farm of Hendrik Schoeman, Pretoria's minister of agriculture, which suffered more than \$100,000 in damages.

Although the 1976 rebellions were eventually suppressed — at a cost of more than 600 lives — they opened a new period in South Africa, in which open, mass anti-apartheid activity has again become possible. New political and community groups have been formed, and the Black trade union movement has expanded rapidly. Blacks throughout the country, including in rural areas, have been inspired to advance their own particular struggles.

'Why should we move?'

One of the most prominent forms of rural resistance has been the opposition by Black farming communities to forcible resettlement. Throughout the "white" countryside there remain several hundred pockets of Black-owned land, officially called "Black spots." The regime's policy is to eliminate them.

Although little is known of most of these struggles — given their relative isolation from the main urban centers — some of the more tenacious ones have achieved prominence.

At Mgwali, in the Eastern Cape, 4,000 of the 5,000 residents actively oppose the regime's efforts to deport them to the nearby Ciskei — where they would lose most of their land rights. They have formed the Mgwali Residents Association to fight the eviction, and have held rallies and organized petition campaigns. They have had to confront not only Pretoria's police, but also those of the Ciskei administration.

In KwaNgewa, in the eastern Transvaal, another 5,000 people are fighting removal

1. For the full text of the Freedom Charter, see the Nov. 18, 1985, *Intercontinental Press*.

2. Govan Mbeki, *South Africa: The Peasants' Revolt* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1964), p. 130.

from land their community has occupied for more than 125 years. The regime claims they must leave to make way for a dam. The residents have elected a community council that is strongly opposed to the move.

Near Bergville, in Natal Province, the regime also used a dam construction project as a pretext for removing farming communities from three "Black spots" and part of KwaZulu. But their resistance forced the authorities to buy them new farms in the same area.

One of the most concerted struggles has taken place at Driefontein, in the southeastern Transvaal. It is home to more than 5,000 Africans living on land originally bought in 1912 by Pixley ka Isaka Seme, a founder of the ANC. Although many Driefontein residents must work outside the area as migrants, others are able to carry out some farming activities.

Among the reasons the government has given for trying to remove the Driefontein community are that it is "badly situated" and that nearby white farmers are angry that Driefontein competes with them for farm

labor.

The residents of Driefontein have resisted resettlement since mid-1981. In a petition to the government, they declared, "We, the undersigned landowners and tenants at Driefontein, protest most strongly against the Government attitudes. . . . We and our families have lived at Driefontein for over 70 years. We cannot accept that the Government can simply take our land without being prepared to discuss it with us."

Saul Mkhize, chairperson of the Driefontein residents' council, told a foreign journalist, "We paid for our land and we wish to keep it. We will not own the new land to which we are supposed to move. We will merely be squatters, and who knows when someone else will decide to move us again? Why should we move? Because the government wants our land for their own purposes? For the minerals beneath the ground? Would they move white people in this way — by buses to barren land with no roads, no water, no schools, no shops, nothing?"

In March and April 1983, large meetings were held to protest the resettlement moves. At the second of these, Mkhize was shot dead at point-blank range by a white policeman.

Rather than intimidating the Driefontein residents, Mkhize's murder heightened their resolve. It also brought them considerable solidarity. About 4,000 people turned out for Mkhize's funeral, including supporters of the Congress of South African Students, the Soweto Committee of Ten, and other groups. Bishop Desmond Tutu, a prominent opponent of the apartheid regime, conducted the ceremony.

General solidarity with communities fighting forced resettlement grew considerably in the wake of Mkhize's murder. The Black Sash, a white women's group opposed to apartheid policy, organized a protest vigil in Johannesburg to focus attention on forced resettlements. The Association for Rural Advancement has assisted communities fighting eviction in Natal Province. Alan Boesak, president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and a leader of the United Democratic Front, spoke at a November 1983 rally in Mogopa, another community fighting to keep its land. The Progressive Federal Party, the main white bourgeois opposition party, raised a motion in the Transvaal Provincial Council calling for a halt to all forced resettlements.

Even the generally pro-apartheid Natal Agricultural Union, a white farmers' group, has questioned the regime's drive against the "Black spots." Its president stated in September 1984, "To leave the areas alone and to invest money to improve them would benefit the local people who would not have to move and would help to ensure better job opportunities."

Under such national pressure, the apartheid regime backed down. In January 1985 Minister of Cooperation and Development Gerrit Viljoen promised that the resettlement program would be "suspended."

But those communities that had been threatened with resettlement have not let down their guard. In early February, just a week after Viljoen's announcement, representatives of 95 such communities in the Transvaal, northern Cape, and Orange Free State met near Johannesburg. "It is not enough that the government says it will reconsider some of the areas," the conference resolved. "Ourselves as well as other communities threatened have the right to stay where we are. We will fight for our future whatever reprieves and threats the government issues. We believe that it is our struggle which has shown the government that to continue with removals will cause bloodshed."

Protest Bantustan 'independence'

In the Bantustans themselves, political and social unrest has become much more frequent and widespread since the late 1970s.

In part, this has been spurred by the regime's drive to proclaim a number of the Bantustans "independent" states, as has happened to the Transkei, Ciskei, BophuthaTswana, and

ANC explains land policy

[At its May 1969 conference held in Morogoro, Tanzania, the African National Congress reaffirmed its commitment to the Freedom Charter. The following is an excerpt from a conference document entitled, "The Freedom Charter, the Revolutionary Programme of the African National Congress," which elaborated on and explained the significance of each of the charter's clauses.]

* * *

The land shall be shared among those who work it!

The indigenous people of South Africa, after a series of resistance wars lasting hundreds of years, were deprived of their land. Today in our country all the land is controlled and used as a monopoly by the White minority. It is often said that 87 per cent of the land is "owned" by the Whites and 13 per cent by the Africans. In fact the land occupied by Africans and referred to as "Reserves" is state land from which they can be removed at any time but which for the time being the fascist government allows them to live on.

The Africans have always maintained their right to the country and the land as a traditional birthright of which they have been robbed. The ANC slogan *Mayibuye i Africa* [Come back, Africa] was and is precisely a demand for the return of the land of Africa to its indigenous inhabitants. At the same time the liberation movement recognises that other oppressed people deprived of land live in South Africa. The White people who now monopolise the land have made South Africa their home and are his-

torically part of the South African population and as such entitled to land. This made it perfectly correct to demand that the land be shared among those who work it.

But who works the land? Who are the tillers?

The bulk of the land in our country is in the hands of land barons, absentee landlords, big companies, and state capitalist enterprises. The land must be taken away from exclusively European control and from these groupings and divided among the small farmers, peasants, and landless of all races who do not exploit the labour of others. Farmers will be prevented from holding land in excess of a given area, fixed in accordance with the concrete situation in each locality.

Lands held in communal ownership will be increased so that they can afford a decent livelihood to the people and their ownership shall be guaranteed. Land obtained from land barons and the monopolies shall be distributed to the landless and land-poor peasants. State land shall be used for the benefit of all the people.

Restrictions of land ownership on a racial basis shall be ended, and all land shall be open to ownership and use to all people, irrespective of race.

The state shall help farmers with implements, seeds, tractors, and dams to save soil and assist the tillers. Freedom of movement shall be guaranteed to all who work on the land. Instruments of control such as the "Trek Pass," private gaols [jails] on farms, forced labour shall be abolished. The policy of robbing people of their cattle in order to enforce them to seek work in order to pay taxes shall be stopped.

Venda. This "independence" is a fraud, since these fragmented areas are integral parts of South Africa and their administrations are politically subservient to Pretoria. Throughout the country, Blacks have opposed this "independence," viewing it as a smoke screen for denying them their full citizenship rights in South Africa as a whole and as a maneuver to keep Blacks divided among themselves along language and tribal lines. They have also seen it as a further step toward entrenching the unpopular Bantustan officials.

All the Bantustans, "independent" or not, have felt the impact of the massive anti-apartheid upsurge rocking the country. This has been especially true of those Bantustans that have large urban concentrations.

The Ciskei authorities have for several years been engaged in a bitter conflict with the rebellious residents of Mdantsane, a large Black township located within its borders, a few miles from the industrial city of East London. In late 1983, when Mdantsane residents launched a bus boycott to protest high fares, the administration of Lennox Sebe unleashed its police, who killed as many as 90 people. Independent Black trade unions have a significant base in Mdantsane, especially the South African Allied Workers Union (SAAWU). Sebe banned the SAAWU, accusing it of being a front for the ANC. Since then, scores of trade unionists have been arrested in the Ciskei.

Mass demonstrations, marches, student rallies, consumer boycotts, and workers' actions have also shaken Black townships in BophuthaTswana (near Pretoria) and in KwaZulu (near Durban).

Increasingly, however, such resistance has been spreading into the more rural parts of the Bantustans as well.

Transkei 'restive'

Although the Transkei has been the scene of some of the most brutal repression in the country, it continues to experience persistent political and social ferment.

In the late 1970s, Transkei officials were openly complaining about opposition among rural residents, including some chiefs, to plans to turn over more land to government-run tea plantations. New livestock levies, designed to force cattle herders to sell some of their cattle on the market, were widely resisted.

Opposition to Matanzima's Transkei administration among the Tembu people has been heightened by Matanzima's long-standing conflict with Tembu Paramount Chief Sabata Dalindyebo.

Since the early 1960s, Dalindyebo has sharply opposed aspects of Pretoria's apartheid policies in the Transkei, such as its land "rehabilitation" schemes. He has also condemned the regime's policy of bestowing chiefly titles on its collaborators (such as Matanzima), a policy, he maintained, that "perverted and prostituted chieftainship." When Matanzima decided to accept "independence" for the Transkei in 1976, Dalindyebo opposed that as well. In 1979 he united several opposition forces within the Transkei to form the Demo-

cratic Progressive Party (DPP).

That same year Dalindyebo was arrested and charged with slandering the Transkei administration. Demonstrations of up to 5,000 protested Dalindyebo's arrest, and leaflets were distributed in Umtata, the Transkei's capital, denouncing the sham of "independence." Under this pressure, Matanzima was forced to let Dalindyebo off with a fine. But he kept up the pressure, arresting many DPP activists. Dalindyebo himself was stripped of his position as the Tembu paramount chief. Again facing imminent arrest in late 1980, he chose to flee into exile instead.

On Dec. 3, 1980, Dalindyebo appeared at a news conference in Lusaka, Zambia, with ANC President Oliver Tambo at his side. He proclaimed his alignment with the ANC, noting that his grandfather had been a founder of the ANC and that Nelson Mandela was a cousin of his.

"Throughout the Transkei the people are restive," Dalindyebo said. "They want to do something to bring their suffering to an end." He urged the people of the Transkei to "continue the struggle, refuse to submit to the terrorism of the Matanzima brothers. The struggle has to be conducted in the Transkei, and knowing the people of this area, I am convinced that they will stand on their feet in their millions and, together with the rest of the people of [South Africa], sweep away the Matanzimas and their bosses in Pretoria."

Pondoland, the site of the massive peasant rebellion of 1960, has also remained a source of opposition to the Matanzima administration. Through the late 1970s, there were sporadic armed clashes and attacks on police. Hundreds were arrested. In March 1984, Transkeian police attacked a mass gathering in East Pondoland, killing three and arresting dozens on charges of holding an illegal meeting. This provoked fierce protests. In December of that year, the people of Tsolo district, also in Pondoland, rebelled. Six people were killed in the fighting, including a tribal chief, and more than 200 were later arrested. By early 1985 protesters were frequently erecting roadblocks on the main road through Umzimkulu, another part of the Transkei.

'They will be prepared to take up arms'

The social discontent in KwaZulu is also beginning to break out into occasional clashes in some rural areas.

This has been provoked to an extent by Pretoria's Bantustan "consolidation" program, in which hundreds of thousands of Africans are to be moved as KwaZulu's borders are redrawn to make it a more cohesive geographical entity. In 1981, Oscar Dlomo, a KwaZulu cabinet member, warned, "Already some people are saying they would go into the bush rather than move. That means they will be prepared to take up arms to protect their land."

Cattle thefts from nearby white farms have increased sharply, reflecting both the desperate poverty of the KwaZulu residents and their desire to recover herds that had been taken from them by the white conquerors. "We think that

the white government should know that these vast herds of cattle on the white farms adjoining us will be used to feed us pretty soon," one tribal *induna* (headman) from a drought-stricken area of KwaZulu openly declared at a news conference in 1981. "Nobody will be prepared to die while there is food next door."

White capitalist farmers bordering on KwaZulu have complained that they have lost a large portion of their income through livestock thefts. Compounds for farm laborers have also been burned down, and there have been growing reports of armed Africans sighted in white farming areas. A particularly racist white farmer was assassinated in 1983; he had previously killed a KwaZulu resident who strayed onto his land.

The KwaZulu administration, headed by Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, announced plans in 1983 to introduce new repressive measures against people who attended or promoted armed assemblies.

Although Buthelezi is bitterly opposed to the UDF and ANC, he has nevertheless come into conflict with Pretoria's policies from time to time. One such occasion came in 1982 when the regime announced plans to arbitrarily cede the Imgwavuma area of KwaZulu to Swaziland, an independent country between South Africa and Mozambique. This aroused considerable opposition among Blacks throughout South Africa, including in Imgwavuma and the rest of KwaZulu. When government minister Piet Koornhof arrived in Ulundi, the KwaZulu capital, to explain the move, he was met by thousands of angry protesters. The regime later backed down and decided to abandon its plan.

The Bantustan of Lebowa, in the northeastern Transvaal, has seen a revival of resistance by members of the Matlala tribe, who have been fighting against efforts to restrict their land and grazing rights for more than 30 years. They are commonly known as the "Congress people," and some are former members of the ANC.

Their revolt, which began in the early 1950s, was originally sparked by government attempts to impose an appointed chief, following the adoption of the 1951 Bantu Authorities Act. They also opposed land "planning" programs, which have been used as pretexts for decreasing the size of farming plots and cattle herds. They refused to pay taxes, bring their cattle in for inoculation, or move into the areas the government had demarcated for them. After three years of resistance, they won, and the authorities left them alone for the next 25 years.

But in 1978 the government began a new drive to try to bring the "Congress people" under its control and subject them to its agricultural "planning" regulations. Once again they resisted. The home of a chief whom they accused of "collaborating with the Lebowa government" was stoned and burned in late 1979. Early the next year the authorities responded with mass arrests, beatings, house burnings, and cattle confiscations.

Elsewhere in Lebowa, tens of thousands of members of the Batlokwa tribe have been

fighting ever since 1978 against government efforts to move them to another location.

Worker-peasant alliance

This ferment in the countryside is an integral part of the broader struggle of the oppressed Black majority against apartheid rule. As it has advanced, it has won greater solidarity in the urban centers and has encouraged various political and union groups to take up and champion the demands of the rural masses.

All Blacks have a stake in seeing that South Africa's vast lands are opened up to anyone who wants to farm. Even the National African Federated Chamber of Commerce, a politically conservative association of African businessmen, has criticized the laws that restrict African farming rights.

But this issue is of particular importance to Black workers. They were forcibly proletarianized through the theft of their land and the regime's denial to them of any other source of livelihood. In a democratic South Africa, some may wish to return to the land, to be free and independent commodity producers. A deep-going agrarian reform would thus immeasurably strengthen the worker-peasant alliance that is already being forged in struggle against the apartheid state.

South Africa's 2 million migrant workers form one of the most important direct links between the struggles in the countryside and in the cities. In the Bantustans they and their families are confronted with the same land shortages and poverty that affect all Bantustan residents. In the cities and mines they are subjected to the same unfree labor conditions and superexploitation that afflict all Black workers.

The employers have used the existence of the Bantustans to try to prevent or hinder unionization among migrant workers. Strikers and union organizers have often been fired and deported back to the Bantustans, while the bosses have also sought to recruit scab labor from among the millions of Bantustan unemployed.

Despite these difficulties, migrant workers have begun to organize unions. During a two-day general strike in the Transvaal in November 1984 to protest police repression, unionized migrant workers participated to as great an extent as nonmigrant workers did. The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) — which is composed mostly of migrant workers — is today one of the most powerful Black unions in the country. In addition to other issues, it has fought the efforts of the bosses to extend the institutions and divisions of the Bantustans into the mine compounds themselves.

Agricultural laborers are also a key link. Many are themselves part worker and part peasant, laboring for a white farm owner for part of the year in return for permission to farm a plot of white-owned land the rest of the time.

Since the suppression of the SACTU-affiliated Farm, Plantation, and Allied Workers Union in the 1960s, no new agricultural workers' unions have yet been able to emerge. But

some farm workers have been drawn into struggle recently, in part through the efforts of nonagricultural unions. In 1980, the Food and Canning Workers Union supported a strike by 1,000 workers at an apple cooperative in the Western Cape, and negotiated on their behalf. When the NUM launched a boycott of local mine concession stores in East Driefontein in February 1985, it won the support of local farm workers.

A number of the predominantly Black trade unions support the perspective of the Freedom Charter, including its program for the land.

At its founding conference in Durban in late 1985, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) discussed opposition to the Bantustan system.

The United Democratic Front has likewise come out strongly against the Bantustans. Speaking at a June 1984 rally in Johannesburg to protest forced population removals, Rev. Frank Chikane, the UDF vice-president, called the Bantustan policy "an evil, unjust, satanic policy." He declared that the "Bantustan leaders give credibility to a sin. They are party to the crime of dispossession. They are guilty of the pain suffered by millions of people who were removed. They are guilty of the division of people — urban against rural, Zulu against Sotho, black against white."

In April 1985, the UDF General Council issued a platform of demands, the first point of which was: "The immediate scrapping of the 1913 and 1936 Land Acts and all Group Areas laws, and an end to any form of forced removals."

Though most of the 600 groups affiliated to the UDF are based in the cities and towns, there are some rural affiliates as well. Regional UDF structures have been set up in the predominantly rural northern Cape and Orange Free State.

In late 1984, several thousand people attended a "Rural People's Rally" in the northern Transvaal, many of its participants traveling long distances from different Bantustans to attend. Another protest, organized by the UDF Northern Transvaal Area Committee, was held in April 1985 in Pietersburg, a town in the heart of a white farming region. Demonstrators carried placards denouncing the Bantustans, as well as a police massacre in Uitenhage a month earlier. In November, a mass boycott was launched against white-owned shops in Pietersburg to protest the lack of adequate irrigation and grazing fields in nearby Lebowa and to demand the lifting of the state of emergency and an end to the police repression.

ANC's growing rural support

The importance of the struggle in the countryside has been emphasized repeatedly by the African National Congress. A May 5, 1985, broadcast into South Africa over the ANC's Radio Freedom declared, "Many rural areas in the Transvaal, Orange Free State and the Cape have in recent days seen the populations there becoming more and more restive. . . . Frustrations are running high and the people are no longer prepared to be governed in the same old

way. . . . Violent confrontations which have been going on in the urban areas between residents and the regime's armed forces have come to the masses of our people in the rural areas."

The broadcast concluded, "The populations in the rural and urban areas are one. Let there be concrete and active solidarity among the oppressed."

Parallel to the ANC's reemergence as the most popular and influential organization among urban Blacks, there have also been signs of its growing presence in the Bantustans.

Officials of both the Ciskei and Transkei often charge that ANC "terrorists" are active in those Bantustans, and they have jailed political activists accused of being ANC members. In April 1983 Kaiser Matanzima's brother George, who is also a key figure in the Transkei administration, maintained that the opposition Democratic Progressive Party was an ANC "agent," and that the ANC had built up cells in many of the Transkei's villages and towns. Recent surveys at the University of the Transkei have found that a majority of the students openly support the ANC.

In Venda, guerrillas attacked a police station in Sibasa in November 1981, and Venda police clashed with suspected insurgents two years later. A number of local peasants were arrested on charges of assisting the guerrillas.

Several trials are now under way of people arrested in KwaZulu on charges of being ANC guerrillas or of providing them with assistance. One of the accused, Malinga Zondo, had been a high KwaZulu official. In another case, 12 men and a woman are charged with setting up bases in the Ingwavuma region of KwaZulu for the "recruitment and training of the local populace." Four of the accused admitted in court that they were members of Umkhonto we Sizwe, the ANC's armed wing.

As the countrywide popular mobilizations against the apartheid regime escalated during the course of 1984 and 1985, the ANC placed greater stress on the need to oppose the Bantustan system and make its administration unworkable.

The struggle against the Bantustans, ANC President Oliver Tambo said in a Jan. 8, 1985, speech, is inextricably tied to the "solution to the land question."

"The dispossession of our people of the land that is theirs remains one of the most burning national grievances," he said. "We repeat our call to our people to give serious attention to the organization and mobilisation of our rural masses. Basing ourselves on the needs of the people, and taking due account of the concrete conditions of their existence, we must devise suitable organisational structures and mechanisms to reach our rural masses and provide them with the organisational and political tools to defend themselves against exploitation and to assert their right to the land."

The perspective that must be placed before the people of the countryside, Tambo said, is that of "seizing the land from the dispossessor." □

Speech by British Black leader

Diane Abbott, Labour's first Black woman parliamentary candidate

[In early December the British Labour Party selected Diane Abbott to be the first Black woman parliamentary candidate in its history.

[A nationally known leader of the Labour Party's Black sections, and of its Women's Action Committee, and a strong supporter of the 1984-85 coal miners' strike, Abbott was selected against incumbent Labour Member of Parliament Ernie Roberts by a vote of 42 to 35.

[Abbott's selection was front-page news in the Black press in Britain, was featured on television news, and had an impact throughout the Labour Party.

[The event was even more striking as Ernie Roberts had been a notable left-wing MP — one of the 13 Labour MPs who voted against the recent Anglo-Irish accords. Marc Wadsworth, Black section vice-chair, hailed Abbott's selection as "a tremendous victory."

[Abbott spoke on November 17 in London at a conference, "An Alliance for Socialism," organized by the weekly *Socialist Action*, where she outlined her political views. Other speakers included Tony Benn, leading left-wing member of the Labour Party; Narendra Makanji, secretary of the Black sections; John Ross, a contributor to *Socialist Action*; and Ben Turok, African National Congress.

[We are reprinting Abbott's speech to that conference below. It is taken from the November 22 issue of *Socialist Action*.]

* * *

The title of this session is "Alliance for Socialism." I am going to address myself, relatively briefly, to two questions: what sort of socialism and what sort of alliance?

Let's start with what sort of socialism we are mobilising for. It seems to me the key question, and one which the labour movement in this country has lost sight of since the 1945 [Labour Party] administration, is that we must be organising for power, not just office. For years and years the Labour Party in this country has seemed to be simply about taking office: a bunch of white male MPs — barristers, retired trade union officials, that kind of person — taking office, endeavouring to manage British capitalism more humanely than it has been in the past.

What we must be organising for is to take power as a labour movement, to empower the working class. And when you address your mind to the issue of empowering the working class certain things become clear. It becomes crystal clear that you're not going to empower them via a Parliamentary Labour Party which is all white, all male, and middle class. And it becomes clear that certain issues have to come higher up the agenda than they have done in the past.

The other thing I want to say is about what



DIANE ABBOTT

kind of socialism we're mobilising and organising for. It seems to me black people and women can teach white men in the Labour Party about socialism. The main thing that black people have to teach white men in the Labour Party is not just about racism in the party — institutionalised racism, how it works, how it disables both black and white. What we have to teach you is about the state.

One thing that black people, both in this country now and of my parents' generation in the colonies for hundreds of years, know about is the nature of the British state. It's already been touched on in this session: people wringing their hands and saying "how un-British to see policemen clubbing down miners at Orgreave, how un-British to see policemen rushing into people's homes and shooting them down."

Black people know it's not un-British. We know it's *intrinsically* British. We know it's the way the British state has always operated. If there's one thing that black people can bring to your practice of socialism it is a clear and uncompromising analysis of the role of the state, the way that the institutions of the state — the police, the courts, the immigration service — are used, not in some objective manner, but as an arm of the state. That is something you can learn from us.

At the party conference debate this year about reimbursement of money to the miners, I was amazed to hear the top table going on about the "rule of law" and how it must be upheld. Black people know that the law in this country post-capitalism has always been an arm of the state and indirectly an arm of the ruling class.

What have women got to teach you? You've got to remember first and foremost that the miners' strike would never have lasted as long as it did without the support of women. That's something nobody could have foreseen at the beginning, because the miners are nothing if

not the Grenadier Guards of the labour movement. Who would have thought that women — unorganised, supposedly unpolitical women — would have been the main edge which kept that strike going to the bitter end. But it *was* women.

Women have something to teach you about your politics, both in terms of the issues to take seriously and in terms of how you practice your politics.

The classic preoccupation of the British Labour Party is the aristocracy of labour, the white male working class. Issues like low pay have until recently never been taken as seriously as they should have. But for working-class women low pay is a crucial issue. We are nearly half of the work force, but we are 80 percent of the low paid. Anyone who takes women's issues seriously will take the issue of low pay seriously.

Another thing that women have to teach you is about how you conduct your politics. Too much time and energy is wasted on pure posturing, oppositionism for the sake of oppositionism — machoism, the kind of stuff you associate with men. One of the things that I've gained from being involved in feminist politics over the years is learning to work collectively, getting away from hierarchy, trying to save the time you spend on just striking attitudes and use that time actually working with people.

Black people and women aren't coming in to the labour movement asking people to be nice to us, to do us a favour by putting us on your platform. We have things to teach you.

I want to go on to what sort of alliances. Let's be clear, when you talk about an alliance it's not just about some kind of conglomeration of people who can be brought together at a certain juncture in time on some loose, apolitical basis. You have to be terribly precise about the terms on which you ally.

For me the first condition for wanting to ally with people is they have to respect my right as a black person or my right as a woman to organise autonomously. Respect for the right of groups to organise autonomously is crucial for building a serious alliance for socialism.

I think white people really do find it hard to take on board the issue of black people organising autonomously. The reason you find it hard is that the whole heritage of colonialism tells you that really black people can't do anything unless white people are there first. That is why every time our young people are in insurrection we read that white outsiders were in the area and set them up to it. White people really can't believe that black people can even riot without white people telling them what to do.

As Narendra Makanji pointed out, having had Kinnock and Hattersley telling us that "their" black people don't want black sections — just us troublemakers — is really ironic that the minute that one of "their" black people wants black sections they expel him.

The other prerequisite for an alliance for socialism is that it should be an alliance drawn up within a class framework. Now class is an unfashionable word in Labour politics. But sometimes it is used in opposition to the notion of black people and women organizing autonomously — as if class is a higher good. I do think that the class framework is crucial, and I think that as much as anything because I am black.

You'll not empower the mass of black people, you'll not help them, unless you empower the working class. To put it another way: anti-working-class politics are politics against the interests of black people as a whole. It's one of the things which black people bring to labour movement politics, because we are forced, we have no option but to keep going back to a class context.

We know that there are opposed interests in this society, you can take the notion of broad popular fronts only so far. At the end of the day there are the interests of capital and the interests of labour — and we as black people know what side we're on.

There is no way you can disentangle issues of race from issues of class. Take education. My parents and that whole generation came to this country to work. For the most part they did pretty shitty jobs. But they believed, with a passion, that it would be better for their children. They believed that the instrument for making it better would be the education system.

There's a lot of tragedies about racialism in society, but one of them is the way the British education system has abused us, set up a whole generation of black children to fail. When you look at the institutional racism in the education system, when you look at what happened to our children within it, then you're back to the issue that the British education system was never meant for the working-class children as a whole to succeed anyway. It's just one of the many elaborate instruments of control that the British state has set up.

Take also the Silent Night dispute.¹ There's somebody here on the platform from the Silent Night strikers. It's important to note that 20 percent of those strikers are black. You cannot disentangle the issue of class from issues of race.

The other criterion for an effective alliance for socialism is that when people talk about allying with black people and allying with women, what matters are deeds not words. Let me tell you, words come cheap.

1. Silent Night is a furniture factory in northwest England where the workers have been on strike for six months. The employer has fired all the workers and is trying to impose a scab work force and a no-strike agreement. A national campaign of support is being conducted on behalf of the strikers.

I've been to so many meetings in the past 18 months and seen white men on the platform go on about black people and women. They agonise and tell you that they're on your side. But when push comes to shove white men in the party have shown they're extremely resistant to letting go of power.

It's easy for people to stand on platforms and talk about the plucky miners' wives, talk about the struggles in South Africa. (I have always noticed how white people love black people the most when we're far away.) Words are easy, it's deeds that matter. In the nitty-gritty interplay of the day-by-day labour movement, I have to say that the absence of deeds has been noticeable.

Look at the numbers of black people actually active in parties claiming to be left. Look at the number of black school governors those parties are putting on the schools on their area. Look at the number of black councillors. You have to look at what people are doing to actively involve black people.

It's not the most important thing, but let's take this round of reselections. Women, for one, have been really turned over. At the moment we have two women representing London in the House of Commons, Jo Richardson and Harriet Harman. At the present time we know that if we're lucky we may have four in the next parliament. That is a scandal. After all the cant from white men on the left about the importance of more women in parliament, what has been the result?

It's deeds not words that count. We don't want your gifts, we don't want your protestations of solidarity — we want practical actions that show white men are willing to actually give us power.

I've tried to talk about what sort of alliance and what sort of socialism, finally I'd just like to say a word about the Labour leadership. When Mr. [Neil] Kinnock became leader of the party, whatever else they might say, people thought, "at least under him we're going to win the next general election." I must say, as a leadership to win us the next election, Kinnock has disappointed even his worst enemies.

Kinnock made a point of coming out openly against black sections: two years ago, before conference had even debated it. He seems to have no idea how that looks to the wider black community.

Not everybody in the black community agrees with black sections as a tactic, but everybody knows that the struggle between Labour Party black sections and the leadership is a struggle between black people trying to make their presence felt and white people. Everybody knows what that struggle is about. The black community follows it very keenly. Kinnock's line on black sections, his opposition to black people, and now the expulsion of Amir Khan in Sparkbrook-Birmingham — just to put it in its crudest terms, this cannot help the party to win the support of black working people. It's actually standing in the way.

Let's take Neil Kinnock and the *Militant*.² Again he's gone out of his way to attack the *Militant* tendency. I'm not a supporter of *Mil-*

itant, I'm opposed to them on the issue of women's organisation and black organisation. But when I go canvassing as a Labour councillor in Paddington, people don't say: "We're not going to vote for you because you're run by the *Militant*." They say to us: "We're not voting for you because you are all the same."

When Kinnock attacks sections of the party who, at the end of the day, are fighting for socialist policies — when he attacks *Militant* and the Lambeth and Liverpool councils, when he puts himself in opposition to some of the most progressive currents in the party, above all when he makes a virtue of not being accountable to the party — he is pushing our chances of winning the next election further away. The only way we will convince working people that we're not all the same is if we actually implement the policies which we say we stand for. And the only way we'll implement them is if we make the leadership more accountable.

Finally, can we win? These are difficult times for the left in the Labour Party. After Kinnock's speech at party conference somebody said that this is the worst conference for the left that he could remember. We have seen leading members of the left, sometimes called the Bennite alliance, defect and go over to the Kinnock project.

Let's say what that is. It's to win the next election, and to win it at any price. If socialism is that price, he's prepared to pay it.

All I can say is this: as a black person, I don't have the luxury of asking that kind of question. Black people know that for us nothing will do except the transformation of this society. We don't want a racist society managed more humanely. That still locks us into our position as a substratum of the working class. We cannot stop short of anything other than a total transformation of this society. A transformation economically, a transformation socially, and a transformation of the Labour Party.

We know that not only are we going to win, but that we're going to keep on fighting until we win. Those who are prepared to ally with us on our terms — and our terms are respect for us to organise autonomously, our terms are class politics, and our terms most of all are deeds not words — those people are welcome to join in our fight.

It is a fight we cannot run away from. It is a fight we can not equivocate on. It is a fight that will continue because we know that we will see victory — and not just in electoral terms. We will see victory in terms of transforming this labour movement, because we can settle for nothing less. □

2. *Militant* defines itself as a Marxist newspaper for Labour, and its supporters are dominant in the youth section of the Labour Party — the Labour Party Young Socialists. *Militant* supporters have been subjected to a witch-hunt, which also threatens the whole left of the party. Currently the Labour Party leadership is attempting to expel *Militant* supporters on the Liverpool City Council where they play a dominant role.

Anti-Marcos politicians unite

Washington boosting Aquino-Laurel presidential ticket

By Will Reissner

The on-again, off-again alliance of bourgeois opponents of Philippine strongman Ferdinand Marcos is apparently on again.

One hour before the December 11 filing deadline for the February 7 presidential election, Corazon Aquino and Salvador Laurel announced that they will run as a joint ticket.

Under the compromise, Aquino will be the presidential candidate and Laurel will run for vice president. They will appear on the ticket of Laurel's United Nationalist Democratic Organization (UNIDO).

Aquino and Laurel came under intense pressure from the powerful Catholic church hierarchy and from Washington to prevent a split in the opposition to Marcos, who has governed over the 53 million people of the Philippines for 20 years, nine of them under martial law.

Marcos was last elected to a six-year term as president in 1981. But with mounting U.S. government pressure on him to carry out reforms in order to quell a growing Communist Party-led guerrilla insurgency, Marcos called a special snap election for February.

Embarrassment to Washington

Marcos has increasingly become an embarrassment to the Reagan administration since the August 1983 assassination of opposition leader Benigno Aquino. Aquino, returning from three years in exile in the United States, was murdered as he got off his plane in Manila.

On Dec. 2, 1985, a Manila court acquitted armed forces chief-of-staff Gen. Fabian Ver, 25 other military personnel, and one civilian of charges that they were accessories to the murder of Aquino. General Ver is a cousin of Marcos.

The acquittal of the 27 defendants had been a foregone conclusion after the Marcos-appointed Supreme Court ruled that the key evidence against them was inadmissible.

Three hours after Ver's acquittal, Marcos reinstated him as head of the armed forces. He had been "on leave" since October 1984 when he was found to be indictable in the Aquino case.

The wave of protests against the "U.S.-Marcos dictatorship" following Aquino's assassination — combined with the growing strength of the New People's Army guerrillas, revulsion over the fixing of the Ver trial, a catastrophic economic crisis, rampant corruption, and Marcos' own failing health — have led the Reagan administration to take its distance from the Philippine dictator.

Officials in Washington fear that the U.S. government is so closely associated with Mar-

cos' rule that his overthrow could imperil the strong U.S. influence in the former colony. They point to the 1979 revolutions in Iran and Nicaragua that toppled the shah and the dictator Anastasio Somoza.

The Reagan administration hopes that the Aquino-Laurel ticket can provide an orderly transition from Marcos' rule and protect the vast U.S. corporate investments in the Philippines and the gigantic U.S. military bases at Subic Bay naval station and Clark Air Base.

Corazon Aquino and Salvador Laurel are both members of the handful of wealthy landowning families that have ruled the Philippines since independence from the United States in 1946.

Cory Aquino, as she is widely known in the Philippines, is the widow of Benigno Aquino. Because of her personal loss, for many Filipinos she has become a symbol of their moral revulsion toward Marcos.

Born into the Cojuangco family, one of the wealthiest landowning families in the country, Corazon Aquino was educated in exclusive private schools in Manila and the United States. After graduating from a Catholic college in New York, she returned to the Philippines and married Aquino, who was also from the landowning oligarchy.

Salvador "Doy" Laurel, a U.S.-educated member of one of the most powerful landlord families, is the son of a former president of the Philippines, brother of a former Speaker of the Philippine House of Representatives, and grandson of a Supreme Court justice.

Until 1982, Laurel was a leading member of Marcos' New Society Movement (KBL), and he was a strong supporter of the president throughout the years of martial law.

The inbred character of traditional Philippine political life is seen in the fact that Laurel was not only a close associate of President Marcos, but was also described as the best friend of Benigno Aquino.

U.S. intervention

Washington is leaving no stone unturned in its push for an orderly transition from the Marcos regime.

The Reagan administration is waging a highly visible campaign to force Marcos to clean up his act. In mid-October, President Reagan sent Senator Paul Laxalt as a personal emissary to Manila to deliver a three-page handwritten warning to Marcos. Laxalt had been preceded to Manila by former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations Jeane Kirkpatrick, her successor Gen. Vernon Walters, and CIA director William Casey.

Days after Laxalt met with Marcos, the *New York Times* editors openly suggested what administration officials had been privately hinting: that unless Marcos steps aside, "an enlightened military may finally have to supervise the transition to democracy that Mr. Marcos refuses to arrange."

With the pressure from Washington mounting, Marcos announced on November 4 that a snap election would take place January 17. (After strenuous opposition complaints that this did not give them enough time to organize, Marcos moved the date of the vote back to February 7.)

Although the Philippine constitution requires that the president resign before a snap election can take place, Marcos agreed only to submit a resignation effective after the results of the election have been determined.

This ploy allows the president to continue to use the wide powers of incumbency during the campaign. In addition, it gives him the option of having his hand-picked Supreme Court rule the election unconstitutional if he is trailing the Aquino-Laurel ticket.

The Aquino-Laurel campaign is getting a big boost from proceedings taking place in the U.S. House of Representatives and a U.S. federal court in Washington.

The House of Representatives Foreign Affairs subcommittee on Asian and Pacific affairs began hearings on December 11 into charges that the Marcos family has invested vast sums of money in U.S. real estate, a key charge of the anti-Marcos forces.

Congressman Stephen Solarz, who heads the panel and is a vocal critic of the Marcos regime, admitted that he had recently invited Laurel to dinner to discuss the scope of the investigation his subcommittee would carry out.

While the House subcommittee investigates the hidden assets of the Marcos family, a federal grand jury in Washington is looking into charges that U.S. companies have paid vast sums to Marcos associates to get lucrative Philippine military contracts.

Jeff Gerth reported in the December 11 *New York Times* that the Reagan administration wants "to use the information in the case to convince President Ferdinand E. Marcos not to reinstate Gen. Fabian Ver as chief of the armed forces."

One U.S. official told the *Times*, "It could be a hot potato when it materializes. I have the sense that there are more names of Philippine officials involved in the case."

To make the point even clearer, administration officials have leaked word that Imelda Marcos, wife of the president, and a presidential aide may also be named in the case. □

Interview with Bernadette McAliskey

Criticizes accord between Irish and British governments

[In November Bernadette Devlin McAliskey toured Quebec at the invitation of the Quebec-Ireland Committee. During the trip she was able to speak to many trade unionists. She also addressed a public meeting of 400 in Toronto organized by the Irish Freedom Association. The following interview was conducted by Jim Upton in Toronto on November 21.]

* * *

Question. The November 15 agreement between the governments of Britain and the Irish Republic is being presented in North America as an attempt to find a political solution to the "troubles" in Northern Ireland. What is your view of this agreement?

A. The whole basis of the agreement has to be understood. The agreement is the end of a process, not the beginning. The process began with the Irish government establishing what they called the New Ireland Forum, which produced its report in May 1984. It was an attempt to find a consensus from the Irish viewpoint, and on the basis of that consensus, to initiate discussions with the British government for the resolution of the problem.

It sounded very worthwhile and excellent but there were a number of built-in problems.

First, the Irish republican movement, that is, Sinn Féin and the organizations associated with it, were explicitly prohibited and forbidden from attending the Forum. No submissions were accepted from them, the stated reason being that they had not renounced violence.

Submissions were invited from the northern Loyalists without the prerequisite that they renounce violence. But they refused to make any submissions to the Forum.

So the Forum report itself was a consensus of the constitutional political parties representing various elements of the national bourgeoisie. Even at that, the consensus turned out to be that the problems could only be solved in an all-Ireland context.

The first British-Irish summit was held after that [in November 1984], and it was the real historic accord. As usual, it was a secret meeting and nobody was told what happened. But when Irish Prime Minister Garret FitzGerald returned to Ireland, he said we have now initiated the procedure of discussion on the basis of the Forum report. Mrs. Thatcher then went on television with her famous "out! out! out!" speech¹ and said she would not accept the



Barbara Stewart/Socialist Voice

BERNADETTE DEVLIN McALISKEY

Forum report as a basis of discussion.

Despite the fact that there could be no discussion on the basis of the report — the whole thing had been rejected out of hand by Mrs. Thatcher — FitzGerald continued to negotiate on a basis unknown to anybody because the discussions became secret.

The discussions lasted for 16 months, with various press leaks along the way. At each stage, having agreed on a position, Mrs. Thatcher then moved from it until the framework of the discussion was that the Irish government was discussing nothing more and nothing less than how to help the British government prevent the rise of Sinn Féin's popularity in Ireland, how to help the British government implement British security policy in the North of Ireland, and how to stabilize the situation by implementing a similar form of legislation in southern Ireland. That became the basis of the discussions.

I find it difficult to believe that even Garret FitzGerald takes the accord seriously. Because what actually has happened is that he has moved and moved and moved until he has reached a position where he now totally accepts the position of the British government. That position is that the Loyalist minority in Northern Ireland have a political veto on the

future of Ireland and the future of Britain.

In return for that major shift of position, which actually contravenes the constitution of his own country, Garret FitzGerald has literally been offered a chair in a British office in Belfast. It would seem from the accord that FitzGerald's government will be allowed to watch the British at work but will not be allowed in any way to intervene in the decisions. The British have therefore very successfully drawn FitzGerald into their security policy, basically, their war machine.

The ultimate stupidity and mentality of that position, which FitzGerald has now accepted, is that he recommends as a first course of peace a willingness on the part of the nationalist community to join the security forces. That, in fact, is like saying peace in South Africa is most readily achieved by masses of Black Africans joining the Botha [apartheid government] forces so that then when they hit themselves on the head they'll be less upset than when they're hit on the head by white racists. That's the position that's being put forward to us.

The only benefits that can be accrued from it are benefits to the British government in that it has successfully tied the Irish government in behind British security policy. That inevitably means that it ties them in behind the Prevention of Terrorism Act, the implementation of law and order on the streets by the use of plastic bullets, shooting people on sight, and the whole repressive paraphernalia of the legal system.

Q. What role has the U.S. government played in working out this agreement?

A. The U.S. government has at all times been willing to support and assist in the implementation of British policy. They have very successfully mounted a media campaign that creates the impression within the United States that anybody who is prepared to consider, listen to, or be involved in the problems of Ireland bears some kind of individual moral responsibility for everybody who dies there.

They have quite deliberately created the impression that Ireland is too difficult and too violent for anybody outside Ireland to understand, which is ridiculous if you consider the Middle East and all the other world problems in which America is quite openly involved.

Moreover, they have made it increasingly difficult for political activists in Ireland to enter the United States, to the extent that every time a case has been won in the courts, the State Department has appealed it. And when they have failed, they have used the immigra-

1. In a press conference following the Nov. 18-19, 1984, Thatcher-FitzGerald talks, Thatcher stated: "I have made it quite clear that a unified Ireland was one solution that is out. A second solution was a con-

ederation of two states. That is out. A third solution was joint authority. That is out — that is a derogation of sovereignty."

tion laws simply to deport people back to Ireland.

It is claimed that privately Congress has indicated it is prepared to spend a billion dollars in helping this accord go through. If you understand the nature of the accord, that can only mean that the American government is prepared to spend a billion dollars in helping the British security machine, the British war machine.

Alternatively, we're always told that if we would behave ourselves like civilized human beings and not fight and not create public disorder and also preferably work for very low wages, accept a sort of nonunion labor, Americans would very benevolently invest large sums of money and give us the privilege of working for them.

They've done that for a considerable period. They come, they make massive profits, taking advantage of tax and export concessions, and once the profit margin drops below a level that could be achieved in some other underdeveloped country, they ship off there. And that basically sums up the interests of the U.S. government.

People in Ireland are very politically aware, because of our own conflict, of problems in many parts of the world. And the one thing that at least the Irish are very conscious of is that where American money and the American government goes the American army invariably follows. And we could very well do without them. We have problems enough as it is.

Q. In your opinion, what are the major political changes in Ireland since the hunger strike by republican prisoners in 1981?

A. I think the political change of major importance in Ireland since then has been the change within Sinn Féin itself as an organization.

The experience of Sinn Féin through the

hunger strike, the whole question of the mass movement and the drawing in of different people created an opportunity for many people to learn a lot of basic organizing skills that were not readily available to a lot of people. This includes relating the organization to many individual issues and building within the organization a social and political policy.

There has also been a major rise in the public support for Sinn Féin. Again, it was through the hunger strike that the question of fighting elections as a valid tactic became crucially important. And that argument was basically won on the ground during the hunger strike. So after the hunger strike, Sinn Féin became involved in elections and was able to demonstrate quite clearly the extent of its support.

What is beyond question is that the leadership of the anti-imperialist movement lies firmly in the hands of Sinn Féin. That leadership lies in the hands of Sinn Féin because successively over the past 15 to 20 years they have won that position. It is a position that is held by them because the people support them.

There are a lot of people who argue that things might be better if the leadership was this way or that way or if the revolutionary Marxist left headed up the struggle. The fact remains, Sinn Féin leads the struggle and the revolutionary Marxist left has trouble sometimes keeping up with it. That's the way the real world is. You either deal in that world or you simply comment on history as it goes by you.

There are three other major differences since 1981. The experience of who our friends were and who our friends weren't at that time was important in widening the international outlook of people in Ireland and making them much more aware of the similarities and affinities with other people in struggle.

Through the hunger strike, people also became very aware of the limitation of what we had done. We had assembled masses and

masses of people. We had demonstrations and bigger demonstrations and then even bigger demonstrations. But we couldn't break Maggie Thatcher because we had no teeth.

And we had many painful discussions about calling the general strike. We couldn't call a general strike. We had no credibility, we had no roots through which to ensure a general strike. And again, from that experience, came a determination to begin to work with and educate and build links through the trade union movement, which has been vitally important in Ireland, in Britain, and internationally.

The other major difference, and it's a personal opinion, is that I don't think the Catholic church will ever recover from the position it took during the hunger strike. It made people draw a very clear distinction as to where in the body politic the church stood. And it certainly didn't stand on the side of dying prisoners. The church is very powerful, but 800 years of repression did not weaken the authority of the hierarchy over the people like the hunger strike did.

People outside Ireland often don't see that the division between the hierarchy and the people, while not as dramatic, is becoming as wide as it is in many of the developing countries. A lot of the young clergy admit that there is rapidly developing in Ireland two Catholic churches — the radical church of the poor, which is still very weak, and the organized church of the wealthy.

Q. What is the level of identification among the Irish people with the struggle against apartheid in South Africa?

A. The level of identification amongst Irish people with struggle in most parts of the world is very strong, and there are a great number of contradictions in it.

When Ronald Reagan came to Ireland, we were able to put massive numbers of people on the street against him. We were able to do so principally because of Reagan's attitude to Nicaragua. We were delighted to be able to do that in the south of Ireland around Nicaragua, but it was slightly disheartening that we could not raise the same level of support in southern Ireland to stop Maggie Thatcher from coming as a protest against her policy in Northern Ireland.

What I'm trying to point out is that there is very broad support for Central America and certainly for the struggle in South Africa. There's been the Dunnes strike in Dublin,² which has been a very courageous strike by those young women who have stuck it out, and has had immeasurable public support.

But because of the relationship of southern Ireland with Britain, the level of demonstrable public support against apartheid in South Af-

'No united Ireland,' says British official

There were red faces in Dublin following the December 3 comment by British Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Thomas King that "in Northern Ireland now we have signed an agreement in which the prime minister of Ireland has in fact accepted that, for all practical purposes and into perpetuity, there will never be a united Ireland."

King was referring to the agreement signed November 15 between the prime ministers of Ireland and Britain, Garret FitzGerald and Margaret Thatcher.

Under the pact, FitzGerald got agreement that the Dublin government can "put forward views and proposals on matters relating to Northern Ireland." The British government, however, is under no obligation to accept such proposals.

Although King's interpretation of the

agreement was accurate, and flowed from the very wording of the pact, FitzGerald had attempted to portray the accord as a step toward Irish reunification.

Ireland has been divided since the British-imposed partition in 1921. Six counties of Northern Ireland remain under British rule.

The real aim of the British-Irish agreement was not to move toward Irish reunification, but to undercut the growing support within Northern Ireland's nationalist community for Sinn Féin and the Irish Republican Army, which support armed struggle to end British rule and reunify the country.

FitzGerald himself admitted that "the agreement's purpose is to withdraw from them [the IRA] in Northern Ireland whatever vestige of tolerance or support there may be for them amongst the minority [nationalist] community." □

2. Eleven workers have been on strike against a Dublin branch of the Dunnes chain stores since July 19, 1984, when one of them was fired for refusing to handle South African grapefruit. The strike has been described as the longest protest against apartheid anywhere outside South Africa.



Members of Loyalist paramilitary group.

rica or against Reagan's policies in Nicaragua is often higher in southern Ireland than demonstrable support for British withdrawal from the North.

I think the reason is that it is easier for liberals to be radical the further the problem is from home. But that identification with other struggles is certainly there and of course much stronger and much more principled among those who are involved in the struggle in Ireland.

That is seen, particularly in relation to Britain, in terms of our ability to build a number of links with the Black community in Britain on a political basis. That has grown stronger and stronger. We've been able to hold a number of joint ventures within the labor movement, which has very much strengthened both our cases.

There is a very strong affinity between the Black and Asian communities in Britain and the anti-imperialist movement in Ireland. This unity reaches out to other countries to jointly take on the education of the unfortunate British working class on the question of imperialism, which they have a great difficulty in understanding.

I think it's very much like the Americans. Imperialism is an easier problem to understand if you have suffered from it. But it's very difficult to understand if you are part of the oppressing country. □

Britain

Meetings on Healy split

Slaughter-Banda wing calls for broad discussion

By Alan Harris

LONDON — Both groupings that emerged from the recent split in the Workers Revolutionary Party, one of the larger groups in Britain claiming adherence to Trotskyism, have been organizing meetings throughout the country.

These forums are aimed at explaining, from the standpoint of each side, the circumstances around the October 19 expulsion of Gerry Healy from the WRP and the subsequent split of about one-third of the organization's membership. For many years Healy was the cult figure at the head of the WRP and its predecessor, the Socialist Labour League.*

Both the group led by Michael Banda and Cliff Slaughter and that supporting Healy claim to represent the continuity of the WRP, and both are publishing twice-weekly newspapers called *News Line*. Both put out youth papers called *Young Socialist*.

The largest meeting of the Banda-Slaughter forces was held in London November 26. About 400 people attended, roughly 250 of them WRP members. Ninety to 100 were former WRP members, and the rest were from other left-wing groups.

Long-time WRP leader Slaughter gave the main presentation. He stated that the expulsion of Healy for sexual abuse of women members of the organization was the most positive thing the WRP could have done. "Many here will say we should have done it a long time ago," he declared.

Slaughter added, "Healy and his clique were expelled because the WRP and its paper were brought to the brink of ruin. I don't exaggerate." The WRP had degenerated and had been turned into a sect, an "opportunist sect," he said. Politics got played down as branches were turned into debt-collection agencies for the daily newspaper. "No one should underestimate the damage that has been done," he said. "And no one should underestimate the moral side of it. It is political."

Slaughter continued, "But it was entirely positive that this party did find the reserves to make a turn. We made that turn — Healy is not coming back.

"We are at the beginning of an objective analysis," Slaughter added, "and all those who wish to really learn the lessons can certainly participate. We will examine all questions, as Trotskyists," leading up to the WRP's February 9 congress. He stated that this discussion would take place with forces outside the WRP, as well as internally.

*See "The shattering of a British sect," by Doug Jennings in the Dec. 2, 1985, issue of *Intercontinental Press*.

Richard Goldstein, a member of the WRP's London district committee, said that it was the recent miners' strike and the way it ended that created the political crisis in the WRP.

Other speakers included John Simmance, the secretary of the party's Paddington branch, and Julie Hyland, Young Socialists national secretary.

During the 30-minute discussion period, one person from each of the left-wing groups present was permitted to make brief remarks.

Connie Harris, who became a revolutionary communist 44 years ago and is currently an active supporter of *Socialist Action*, explained that the roots of the WRP's political degeneration go back to the late 1950s and early 1960s. (She was expelled from the Healy-led Socialist Labour League in 1960.)

She pointed out that it was the SLL's sectarian refusal to recognize that a socialist revolution had occurred in Cuba in the early 1960s that led it to abandon revolutionary Marxism and the Fourth International.

In making this break from working-class internationalism, she said, Healy took the SLL and the WRP on a course that led to its "escalating degeneration — politically, theoretically, organizationally, and morally."

Harris drew attention to the continuing slander campaign orchestrated by the WRP against the Socialist Workers Party in the United States and the Fourth International. The WRP is backing a lawsuit filed by Los Angeles attorney Alan Gelfand against the U.S. SWP, which maliciously charges that government agents have taken over the SWP. It demands that the U.S. courts remove the SWP leadership.

Harris pointed out that not one shred of evidence has been proved to back up this allegation. She challenged Slaughter to tell the meeting that the WRP "would immediately discuss this matter and condemn and break from this antiproletarian method."

She stated that, while she was prepared "to take at face value the pledges of the WRP leaders to examine, learn from, and reject the gross violations of proletarian morality with which Healyism is identified, Slaughter et al. will be judged by their actions."

Harris said that the WRP's leaders have a responsibility to the workers' movement in Britain and internationally to critically examine everything Healy had anything to do with, "if they are serious about clearing their past from the vile, anti-working-class crimes of Healyism."

She received applause from a substantial

part of the audience.

Other speakers from the audience were Alan Thornett, who was expelled from the WRP in 1974; Harry Vince, Socialist Labour Group; Stuart King, *Workers Power*; Bob Pennington, formerly of the International Marxist Group; and Monty Johnstone, Communist Party of Great Britain.

Supporters of *Socialist Action*, in addition to selling their paper, sold nearly 40 copies of *Healy's Big Lie: The Slander Campaign Against Joseph Hansen, George Novack, and the Fourth International*, an Education for Socialists publication distributed by Pathfinder Press, and 25 copies of *Intercontinental Press*. They also got into numerous informal discussions with WRP members and sympathizers.

The supporters of Healy held a meeting of between 200 and 250 people in London on November 28. Many known political opponents of the WRP were barred from the meeting, including this reporter.

The main talk was given by Alex Mitchell, who served as editor of *News Line* for many years. He emphasized, as did others, his group's campaign to relaunch a daily newspaper by February 1. A collection raised £572 [US\$812] for this project.

There was no discussion period. □

DOCUMENTS

Lessons of Healy's degeneration

Record of break with Marxism available for study

By Connie Harris

[The following article appeared in the Nov. 15, 1985, issue of *Socialist Action*, a socialist weekly published in London. Subheads and bracketed inserts are by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

As ever, more interested in sex than politics, the media is trying to use the WRP [Workers Revolutionary Party] split to discredit the Marxist movement as a whole. However, we need to study the WRP's history, and that of its forerunner, the Socialist Labour League (SLL), in a more serious way to learn the lessons of their degeneration.

The press portrays Healy as the "patron saint" of British Trotskyism. But the record of his break with Trotskyism has been well documented in many publications, including *Marxism Versus Ultraleftism*, *How Healy and Pablo Blocked Reunification*, and *Healy's Big Lie*.

These publications are an invaluable source of Marxist education, showing how a once-promising Marxist nucleus could degenerate into a barren sect unable to relate to the real world of the class struggle and unable to tolerate any criticism of its sectarian course.

Many readers will know from their own experience that it is impossible to draw the WRP into united action or engage their members in genuine discussion. Thousands of young militants have passed through this movement, wrongly believing they were joining a revolutionary organisation and preparing a future socialist society, only to be disillusioned by its method of driving out independent-minded individuals, its use of bureaucratic methods, physical violence, frame-ups, slanders, and lies of the vilest kind as a substitute for political debate and united action.

These methods, which are nothing to do with Marxism or revolutionary politics, have been responsible, along with Healy's ultraleft politics, for the decline and isolation of the WRP.

Joseph Hansen, in his introduction to *Marxism Versus Ultraleftism*, points out that the roots of the differences recorded in the SLL can be traced back to divisions that appeared in

'I will always be a faithful reader'

Twenty-two new subscribers and readers renewing their subscriptions recently took advantage of our special book offer. The two-month offer, which expired November 15, gave subscribers an opportunity to receive either of two recently published books, *Fidel Castro Speeches 1984-85* or *Nicaragua: The Sandinista People's Revolution*, at a substantially reduced price.

The 22 subscriptions are in addition to others purchased during the same period by readers who didn't ask for books. Many of these subscribers undoubtedly had already purchased the books.

A reader in Salem, Oregon, recently wrote praising our "great coverage of the Latin American debt crisis. Fidel's speeches on this," he wrote, "are indispensable, very valuable!"

He also suggested several questions we should take up in *Intercontinental Press*. We should have more on the segregation of Arabs in Israel and the Israeli government's ties to South Africa, he said. Moreover, we should expose the U.S. government's slanders of the Palestine Liberation Organization and the differences between the PLO and the Palestine Liberation Front.

He urged us to carry more exposing Washington's slanders against the Sandinista government in Nicaragua. He also

proposed that we evaluate the level of political degeneration in the leadership of Solidarity, the Polish union organization.

We can't promise to get to all of these questions right away, but if readers stick with us we'll take them all up. If other readers have suggestions or criticisms please send them along to us.

A reader from Luleå, Sweden, who renewed her subscription for a year, wrote, "I've most closely followed the articles on South Africa. I appreciate very much the interviews with ANC [African National Congress] leaders."

From Chicago, Illinois, we received a note congratulating us for our "News Analysis section, which is superb. Also, for the reproduction of Fidel's, Borge's, and Ortega's speeches; they're fantastic."

This reader said he welcomes "all news about Central America in general." If we continue like this, he said, "I will always be a faithful reader."

Endorsements like this help show why *IP* is so important. We hope they convince you to send a financial contribution to help us meet our costs. Our income from subscriptions and single-copy sales is not sufficient to keep us going.

Please send your contribution, large or small, to *Intercontinental Press*, 410 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014 USA.



Alex Mitchell addressed Healy group.

the Fourth International in the early '50s and led to a split in its ranks.

The issues involved conflicting estimates of the probable evolution of the Soviet bureaucracy, conflicting views on tactics towards Stalinist and social democratic parties, and sharp divergences on internal practices. The Fourth International split into two groupings known as the International Secretariat and the International Committee. The International Committee was led by James P. Cannon, the founder of U.S. Trotskyism. Healy took part in it.

Reunification of International

By 1956 the main disputes had receded. Both sides reached similar judgements on Krushchev's revelations that year, and stood together in defending the political revolution in Poland, and especially Hungary, against the Kremlin.

Leaders of the U.S. SWP felt these political agreements on such decisive questions made possible a principled reunification. They took initiatives to bring this about in 1957.

However, McCarthyite legislation prevented them leaving the country. Healy became isolated from his closest international collaborators and rightly feared his increasingly undemocratic and arbitrary organisational practices would be condemned in a reunified International.

The facts show he tried to block steps towards reunification. Lacking weighty reasons rooted in the class struggle, he resorted to misrepresentation and downright lying.

Disregard for facts and doctoring the truth became his hallmarks. The SLL's press became one of the most unreliable in left circles. In consequence he parted company with the real class struggle.

Cuban revolution

Hansen shows that the victory of the Cuban revolution in 1959 was decisive in showing further resistance to reunification was unprincipled and irrational. By 1961 both sides agreed a workers' state had been created and had to be defended. But for Healy there was no substantial difference between the Fidelista government and the Batista regime it overthrew!

He embarked on a course which led to the escalating degeneration — politically, organisationally, and morally — of the SLL and the WRP, founded in 1973.

He "discovered" that the U.S. pioneers of the world Trotskyist movement had been harbouring CIA and GPU agents all along, namely Joseph Hansen and George Novack. The "evidence" was Hansen's alleged "criminal negligence" when responsible for defending Trotsky's household in Mexico.

His big-lie technique boomeranged on him. On 14 January 1977 more than 1,000 socialists packed into a public rally in London to express solidarity with his targets. It brought together, despite differences on other questions, all the major leaders of the world Trotskyist move-

ment to condemn Healy's slanders.

Healy's Big Lie is a collection of the material printed in *Intercontinental Press* on the subject. It strikes an important blow for workers' democracy, exploding the trumped-up charges against two selfless revolutionaries.

A statement on his slanders entitled *A Shameless Frame-up* was signed by individuals and representatives of a wide range of left tendencies covering 27 countries.

In the statement by Mike Banda, WRP general secretary, in the *Newsline* 30 October 1985, entitled "G Healy's expulsion: the facts," it is reported that Healy had been found guilty of maliciously slandering David North, the leader of the U.S. Trotskyist Workers League, [U.S. supporters of the WRP, who have supported the Banda group in the split]. Banda explains that Healy slandered him as a CIA agent without a shred of evidence.

Today Banda and his central committee have yet to speak out against the frame-up of Hansen and Novack. Until they do, they will be rightly seen as accomplices of the very techniques of which they complain.

There are many lessons from the experience of Healyism: not least the impossibility of building an exclusively *British* revolutionary movement, outside and separate from the Fourth International. In that respect Healyism is only one variant — the most grotesque, to be sure — of the political consequences of an organisational break from working-class internationalism. □



GERRY HEALY

Healy split in Spanish press

'Combate' answers 'El País' coverage on 'Trotskyism'

By Miguel Romero

[The following article is reprinted from the Nov. 14, 1985, issue of *Combate*, weekly newspaper of the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), section of the Fourth International in Spain. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Last Wednesday, November 5, readers of *El País* [a major big-business daily] came across a surprising headline on page six: "Fight over funds of the British Trotskyist party."

In order to make sure that the "news" would not go unnoticed, it was placed in a box and illustrated with a photo of Vanessa Redgrave.

The wire service report that followed would overwhelm the desires of those who love tempestuous emotions: the extraordinary actress and eccentric political activist had hidden an old man in her house. Gerry Healy, the former general secretary of the British WRP [Workers Revolutionary Party], who was accused by the new party leadership of "sexual deviations" for having seduced "at least" 26 young members. But in reality the heart of the matter was a

struggle over the party's property, worth some 345 million pesetas [US\$2.2 million].

In the hands of Mario Vargas Llosa, all this could give rise to a second volume of *Historia de Mayta*. The reference to the Peruvian novelist is not an idle one because, as is well known, Vargas Llosa is a fervent defender of the literary "lie," understood as the writer's right to manipulate real facts as he chooses in the service of his literary and political objectives. This method can be used to write good or bad novels. But applied to the press, it results in pure and simple yellow journalism.

A sordid story

For those who know a little bit about the old factional histories of the Fourth International, this sordid story is not hard to understand. Gerry Healy was one of the main figures of the 1953 split, the most serious in the International's history. The majority of the English section of that time remained with him.

And this was the origin of one of a proliferation of internationalist currents led by "strongmen" in the Trotskyist crisis of the 1950s and the first half of the 1960s, the so-

called "wandering in the wilderness." The current is called "Healyism," and in Spain it includes a group called the LOC [Communist Workers League].

"Healyism" is characterized by being a true exemplar of a sect. Its principal quality, therefore, is paranoia. Not only the "consciousness" of being surrounded by enemies, but also viewing those who are the closest as the worst enemies, and seeing anyone who does not share the sect's points of view as necessarily an agent of the bourgeoisie or the KGB, or an obstinate "sexual deviate," or all those things at once.

To take one example, "Healyism's" main and virtually only political activity in recent years has been to spread the story that Trotsky was murdered by the main leaders of the Fourth International of that time, who "obviously" were agents infiltrated by the Stalinist KGB.

What must be taking place now in the "British WRP" is a gang war to gain control over not just the property, but especially the "power" in the sect.

Not only is the story depraved, it is above all insignificant. The sect must have little more than 100 members and is only known because of the Redgrave family's membership within it.

Trotskyism and sects

That *El Pais* has provided a prominent report of this history is due to the general criteria it uses to deal with everything that exists to the left of the Communist parties. It remains silent or distorts any influential, positive activity, whether by the Mexican PRT [Revolutionary Workers Party], the English SWP [Socialist Workers Party], or the Italian DP [Proletarian Democracy], while emphasizing the obscure episodes of any sect, which are served up as an "example" of the marginality and degeneration of the far left.

Asserting that this "WRP" is "the British Trotskyist party" can only be due to great ignorance or bad faith. In the extremely complex panorama of the far left in Britain there must be a dozen groups that call themselves "Trotskyists" and many others calling themselves "Stalinists," or "Maoists," etc.

But there are only three significant organizations: the so-called "Militant" current, the SWP, and our comrades organized around the newspaper *Socialist Action*. These organizations have very different lines and may be right or wrong on different questions. But they are present in the important struggles that take place in Britain, often with real influence, from the miners' strike to Greenham Common [antimissiles demonstrations].

Naturally these organizations may have internal problems of varying degrees of seriousness. But they do not have the type of morbid histories that the international editors of the "independent press" enjoy. Well then, good luck to them and to those who might believe in them.

One final point. As we have repeated many times, "Trotskyism" — viewed as a "move-

ment" or as a "program" that would encompass all the groups and currents that in one way or another call themselves "Trotskyists" — *does not exist*.

What do exist are organizations of revolutionaries, reformists, and sects. And within each category there are diverse programmatic and ideological reference points. There is no question but that the histories of the

Yugoslav bureaucrats back down

Three left-wing intellectuals who were found guilty of "hostile propaganda against the state" in a Yugoslav court in February remain free as authorities carry out damage control on a trial that caused embarrassment to many leaders of the League of Yugoslav Communists (LYC), the country's ruling party.

Miodrag Milic was sentenced to two years in prison, Milan Nikolic to 18 months, and Dragomir Olujic to one year. (See *Intercontinental Press*, Feb. 18, 1985, p. 76.)

But in an appeal heard some six months later, Olujic was acquitted, Milic's sentence was reduced to 18 months, and Nikolic's to 8 months. Charges were reduced to defaming the state.

As yet, neither Milic nor Nikolic has been ordered to begin serving his sentence.

The three were among six original defendants arrested in May and June 1984. All were participants in a network of informal discussion groups, sometimes called the "flying uni-

"Trotskyist" sects are obnoxious and sometimes create problems.

But we have absolutely nothing in common with them. When we call ourselves Trotskyists, we are referring to the continuity of a communist struggle that confronted Stalinism and today seeks to build, together with the other revolutionary currents, a new international communist leadership. Nothing more, nothing less. □

versity," that had been meeting in Belgrade for seven years without police interference.

At the time of the original trial, important figures in the LYC stated their opposition to the arrests. Mitja Ribicic, a member of the LYC's highest body, told a Yugoslav magazine: "The political damage to our country is enormous when we settle differences of opinion in court."

Janz Stanovnik, a member of the rotating presidency of the Yugoslav republic of Slovenia, argued "personally, even though I believe the accused guilty of silliness, I would be very, very unhappy if the trial went ahead."

Since the trial, this view has gained in strength. In November, LYC Central Committee member Spiro Galovic told an interviewer: "They are acquiring undeserved fame and appear on front pages abroad only because we made a mistake. This was due, perhaps, to oversensitivity of officials in authority, who find subversion everywhere." □

Peruvian police kill 50 prisoners

New evidence has come to light that the deaths of 50 political prisoners in Peru's largest prison October 4 were not caused by an accident or prisoner-set fire, as the authorities originally claimed.

The Association of Democratic Lawyers of Peru reported recently that Peruvian police caused the fire at Lurigancho Prison outside Lima by attacking the political prisoners' pavilion with dynamite. More than 50 prisoners were killed and about 30 seriously injured.

Following the attack, some bodies were found that had been shot, decapitated, and dismembered, as well as burnt. Parts of several of these bodies were anonymously delivered in a basket to the office of Martha Huatay, a lawyer involved in defending political prisoners, the report said.

Relatives were denied access to the remains of the victims, whose bodies were secretly buried by the police on October 9. Prisoners who survived the attack are being denied medical treatment. They are demanding transfer to another prison, since prison officials have threatened them with another attack of this nature.

The government had claimed that the deaths were the result of a fire set by the prisoners in

their own mattresses. The police assault touched off a rebellion by 6,000 inmates throughout the huge prison.

The repression against political prisoners, many of whom are accused of being members of the Sendero Luminoso guerrilla movement, is not an isolated case in Peru today. The government of President Alan García, which came to office in July, has maintained military control over the southern Andean provinces under the guise of combating Sendero Luminoso.

In recent months the army has attacked the peasant communities of Lloellapampa, Accomarca, Umaro, Bellavista, Incaraccay, Tankiwa, Echatata, and Mayupampa. Men, women, and children were killed indiscriminately in these raids.

In one case two generals were dismissed for their responsibility for the massacre of 60 peasants in August. But in other cases the government has refused to investigate charges of army brutality in the countryside.

The military has also intervened against striking metalworkers in Lima (see *Intercontinental Press*, December 2) and has been used to evict as many as 10,000 squatters from the city's slum districts in recent months. □

Anti-apartheid movement has big impact

Creates openings for opponents of Washington's war against Nicaragua

By Steve Craine

During the past year, a significant mass movement against South African apartheid has emerged in the United States. The movement, which comes in response to the upsurge inside South Africa itself, has drawn into action individuals and organizations from many sectors of the population.

It has sustained a high level of activity throughout the year, ranging from widespread local protests, to regional conferences and actions, to a national demonstration in April held in conjunction with opponents of Washington's mercenary war against Nicaragua. Blacks, students, church groups, women's organizations, and trade unions have become involved in fighting to change the politics not only of the South African government, but of the U.S. government as well.

The fight against apartheid, especially when it targets Washington's backing for the racist regime, encourages opposition to other policies of the U.S. government. As the anti-apartheid movement has grown, new doors have been opened for discussion of Washington's support to counterrevolutionaries in Central America and action against it, especially in the unions.

On Nov. 27, 1985, some 1,000 people marched to the South African embassy in Washington to mark the first anniversary of daily protests there. This date can also be seen as the anniversary of the current wave of anti-apartheid activity across the country.

The daily embassy protests, initiated by TransAfrica and now sponsored by a new coalition called the Free South Africa Movement, have involved as many as 5,000 people on some days. Each day some of the demonstrators have also been arrested for crossing police lines onto the embassy grounds.

The list of prominent figures, including entertainers, elected politicians, and union officials, arrested in Washington for protesting apartheid continued to grow throughout the year, adding legitimacy to the idea of actively opposing U.S. foreign policy. By the anniversary of the protests, about 4,000 people had been arrested.

Richard Trumka, president of the United Mine Workers of America, told the Nov. 27, 1985, rally, "We must say to these multinational corporations — as workers and as consumers — if you continue to do business in South Africa, you can no longer do business here. We can no longer accept business as usual while Black children are shot in the streets and Black mine workers are forced to work at gunpoint."

One of the slogans raised at the anniversary



Demonstration in Houston, Texas, Oct. 12, 1985.

rally in Washington was "Boycott South Africa, not Nicaragua." The same slogan has been used elsewhere, including at a demonstration of 100,000 in London on November 2. There the Nicaraguan Solidarity Campaign played an active role in the protest at the South African embassy at Trafalgar Square.

The connection between U.S. (and British) policy in Nicaragua and South Africa has made this slogan a popular one. Since the explosion of activity in support of the South African freedom struggle involved many people who had not previously been concerned about Central America it provides an opportunity to win new opponents of Washington's war against the Nicaraguan government.

Another important step in bringing together support for revolutionary struggles in Central America and South Africa was the April 20, 1985, demonstrations for Peace, Jobs, and Justice held in several U.S. cities. From the beginning the actions were designed to pool the resources of movements against various aspects of U.S. foreign policy.

The more than 100,000 participants in the April demonstrations heard from representatives of the struggles in both Africa and the Americas. Many of these speakers explicitly linked the fate of their people's fight to that of their brothers and sisters on another continent.

Since then most major conferences and demonstrations called around the issue of apartheid have included speakers on the U.S. government's reactionary role in Central America.

In October a joint speaking tour of the United States was organized for youth representatives from the African National Congress

of South Africa, the South West Africa People's Organisation of Namibia, and the National Union of Nicaraguan Students (UNEN). Winding up their tour at a national, student anti-apartheid conference in New York City, the three youths called on U.S. students to step up protests aimed at stopping Washington's support to reactionary forces in their home countries.

Nicaraguan student leader Roger Urrite told the conference to increase solidarity with the people of South Africa and Namibia. The racist Pretoria regime, he said, "is a shame for all of humankind." Urrite also explained that Nicaragua has given the world an example of a successful struggle against a U.S.-backed regime. The Nicaraguan people's victory, he said, finally put an end to racist domination and opened the way to the construction of a democratic, popular system.

Unionists speak to unionists

A statement in solidarity with the freedom struggle of Blacks in South Africa recently came from a group of exiled Salvadoran trade unionists living in the United States. The statement was in support of anti-apartheid actions held in many U.S. cities on October 11. It said in part: "We understand well the pain and suffering of South Africans, since our own people are also suffering tremendous hardships. . . .

"The dreams of Salvadorans and South Africans are the same.

"• To share the natural resources of the country;

"• To share the land among those who work it;

"• To achieve *equality* under the law;

“• To have a job and a future.”

Unions in the United States have helped organize tours for Black South African unionists to get out the truth about the conditions they face under apartheid. In October and November four members of South Africa's National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) toured in the United States and Canada. The U.S. part of their trip was sponsored by the United Mine Workers of America, and in Canada the tour was organized by the Canadian Labor Congress, the country's main trade union federation.

In Chicago, the NUM members participated in one of a series of programs on South Africa that United Auto Workers Region 4 arranged for locals in the area. Following the South African unionists' talks, the UAW regional director called for “a ban on any further investments or loans to either the public or private sectors of the South African economy.”

Central American union leaders involved in fighting the domination of their countries by U.S. corporations have also been able to address union groups in the United States. Tours like these have reached thousands of U.S. workers with an appeal for international working-class solidarity.

A number of union-based committees for ongoing solidarity with Central American or South African freedom struggles have been formed, bringing serious discussion of U.S. foreign policy into many union meetings. These committees have also taken U.S. workers to Central America to see for themselves the sharp contrast between the tyranny in El Salvador and the revolutionary government in Nicaragua.

AFL-CIO convention

This increased level of activity around international issues found its way into the national convention of the AFL-CIO labor federation in late October. Discussion and debate on South Africa and Central America ran throughout the four-day meeting, held in Anaheim, California.

The convention unanimously adopted a resolution condemning the apartheid regime and its illegal occupation of Namibia. “The AFL-CIO calls on its own government and that of other industrial democracies,” the resolution read, “to ban new investments in South Africa; end all investment guarantees, export credits, and trade promotions with South Africa; stop new IMF [International Monetary Fund] and other bank loans; halt the sale of Krugerrands and the purchase of South African coal; punish violators of the UN oil embargo of South Africa; [and] embargo the sale of arms to South Africa....”

An amendment was also adopted calling for support to “the non-violent fight against apartheid organized by Bishop Desmond Tutu” and urging “members of organized labor to sign the freedom letter to Bishop Tutu to let him and our Black brother and sister trade unionists in South Africa know that [right-wing preacher] Jerry Falwell does not speak for America.” The freedom letter campaign is a mass petitioning effort begun by the Free South Africa

Movement.

Central America discussion

Union involvement around the issue of South Africa has created new openings for discussing Washington's role in supporting reactionary forces in Central America. Activists have found more opportunities and greater receptivity in the unions for opposing the U.S.-backed contra war against Nicaragua.

These openings have also increased as a result of the divisions in the union officialdom over U.S. policy in Central America.

Generally these differences follow the same lines as the divisions among Democratic and Republican politicians in Congress. The framework for both critics and supporters of the administration is how to defend the interests of U.S. imperialism.

At the national AFL-CIO convention, this division over Central American policy took the form of an unusually open discussion on the convention floor.

It was clear from the two-hour debate that those in the top ranks of the labor federation who are most critical of U.S. government policies in Central America have strengthened

their hand somewhat. The growth of the Labor Committee for Democracy and Human Rights in El Salvador, which now includes presidents of 19 AFL-CIO affiliates, is an indication of this.

This division in the officialdom can be taken advantage of by rank-and-file union members who want to build genuine opposition to Washington's war against Nicaragua and the Salvadoran people.

The burgeoning movement against South African racism is inspiring workers to become more active and helping to undercut the traditional stance of the officialdom that unions have no business discussing world affairs.

The new interest of U.S. workers in struggles in South Africa and elsewhere around the world was well summarized by an airline worker participating in a union-initiated anti-apartheid demonstration in Newark, New Jersey, in November. “We're backing this 100 percent,” he said. “Maybe we can do something about racism in South Africa. I think it's time we moved forward. Bread-and-butter issues are probably still number one, but we have to look at the international picture now.” □

‘New International’ focuses on South Africa

Activists in the anti-apartheid movement will want to study the latest issue of *New Internationalist*. The fall 1985 issue of the magazine, published in late November, centers on the nature of the revolutionary struggle in South Africa and the tasks of anti-apartheid fighters in South Africa, North America, and elsewhere.

New Internationalist is a journal of Marxist theory and politics published by leaders of the Socialist Workers Party in the United States and the Revolutionary Workers League in Canada.

The lead item in the new issue is “The Coming Revolution in South Africa,” by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes. This is a report, adopted by the SWP National Committee in August 1985, that describes the historical character of the revolution in South Africa, the tasks and social forces involved in it, and the leading role played by the African National Congress (ANC).

A thorough understanding of the nature of the revolution that is on the agenda in South Africa is essential to building the broadest, most powerful international movement to overturn the apartheid system.

“When we talk about the apartheid system,” Barnes explains, “we are also talking about a state.” This racist state has blocked the development of a modern class structure and the forging of a true nation-state in South Africa, he points out. “To make the national, democratic revolution in South Africa, apartheid rule has to be overthrown.”

Barnes' report explains why the Freedom Charter, adopted by a mass Congress of the People in South Africa in 1955, constitutes “a solid program for the national, democratic revolution in South Africa” and why it is “the

minimum program of a revolutionary workers' party, of a communist party, in South Africa today.”

The full text of the Freedom Charter is reprinted in *New Internationalist* following the report by Barnes. The issue also includes a January 1984 speech by ANC President Oliver Tambo.

Continuing the theme of South Africa in world politics are an article, “Southern Africa: A Decade of Struggle,” by Ernest Harsch, and excerpts from three speeches by Fidel Castro on the role of Cuban internationalist volunteers in Angola.

Barnes' report on the character of the South African revolution is also a contribution to an ongoing discussion of the Marxist theory of the fight for state power by the workers and exploited farmers. Three other items in the fall 1985 issue of *New Internationalist* also address this debate among revolutionaries.

Two of these were written by longtime leaders of the Fourth International and appear in a new section of the magazine called “Issues in Debate.” They are: “Semicolonial and Semi-Industrialized Dependent Countries,” by Ernest Mandel, and “Once Again on the Workers' and Peasants' Government and the Workers' State: A Self-Criticism,” by Livio Maitan.

The final item is a 1927 manuscript by Leon Trotsky, “What Were My Disagreements With Lenin on the Character of the Russian Revolution.” It is published for the first time in any language in *New Internationalist* and is accompanied by an introduction by the magazine's managing editor, Steve Clark.

To order this issue, send \$5.00 plus 75 cents for postage and handling to: *New Internationalist*, 14 Charles Lane, New York, N.Y. 10014, U.S.A. □

ANC leader gets good hearing

Unionists take lead in opposing apartheid

By Malik Miah

REYKJAVIK — Since November 15, dockworkers in this Nordic island-nation of 240,000 people have refused to unload goods arriving from South Africa. This militant anti-apartheid action came a few weeks after a visit to the docks by Aaron Mnisi, a representative of the African National Congress (ANC) of South Africa.

Mnisi had told the dockworkers at the Sundahöfn (the port) October 17, "Every penny paid for products from South Africa in the world is, in effect — consciously or unconsciously — support to the apartheid policy of the government in Pretoria. The money received for one orange in Iceland is enough for one bullet for the armed forces of the whites, the armed forces that now use guns against the people who demand freedom."

Mnisi, the ANC representative in Scandinavia, resides in Copenhagen, Denmark. He was on a broadly sponsored tour of Iceland, October 15–22.

After hearing Mnisi's description of apartheid and what the South African people are fighting for, the dockworkers adopted a resolution requesting that the governing body of Dagsbrún (Dawn — the union of unskilled workers that the dockworkers are members of) organize a ban on unloading of South African products or loading of ships destined for that country in Reykjavik harbor.

Dagsbrún adopted such a ban, which went into effect November 15. (See accompanying resolution.)

Active solidarity for the Black majority in South Africa and against the racist apartheid system began here about a year ago. It coincided with the new upsurge of the freedom struggle in South Africa itself.

In the fall of 1984 the National Association of Students, the Apprentice Union of Iceland (INSÍ), and the church relief institution organized what is called the NOD project. This project was part of a bigger project organized by similar organizations in Sweden, Finland, Denmark, and Norway.

The aim of the NOD project was to help educate Iceland's working people about the crimes of apartheid. Special educational materials were published and taken to union gatherings, campuses, and other places. Teach-ins were also organized.

The INSÍ, which has over 3,000 members, mostly in their teens and early 20s, put out special literature on South Africa.

A South African student leader was also brought to Iceland on tour during spring 1985. She toured for two weeks, spoke to meetings of apprentices and high school students, and was interviewed by the national press and other media.

In September the Youth League, an affiliate of the People's Alliance — the biggest workers' party in Iceland — began an educational campaign aimed at convincing people not to buy goods from South Africa and merchants not to sell them. Youth League members went to shopping centers with buttons and posters to carry out this campaign. Articles were written in the People's Alliance daily newspaper.

The high point of the solidarity effort to date was the Mnisi tour. He was the first ANC representative to tour Iceland.

The tour won broad sponsorship. In addition to the People's Alliance, his visit was sponsored by the Social Democratic Party; the Progressive Party, one of the two capitalist parties that make up the current Icelandic government; the youth affiliates to these three parties; the Women's Slate; and the Bárattusamtök Sósíalista — Militant Socialist Organization, Icelandic section of the Fourth International. The People's Alliance, Social Democratic Party, and Women's Slate hold seats in parliament.

Trade union sponsors included the Icelandic Federation of Labor (ASÍ), INSÍ, and the Icelandic General and Transport Workers' Federation, of which Dagsbrún is an affiliate.

Only the Independence (Conservative) Party and its youth league refused to support the tour. The Independence Party is the biggest capitalist party and generally supports the foreign policies of the U.S. government.

Mnisi kept a busy schedule. In addition to many media engagements and speaking to the dockworkers, he addressed several meetings.

He spoke to workers at a fish-processing plant during their coffee break. These workers, part of the all-important fishing industry, asked numerous questions about the conditions of working people in South Africa. Most of these processing workers are women, and their wages are some of the lowest in the country.

Mnisi also spoke at the convention of INSÍ and met with leaders of the two union federations — the ASÍ and the Federation of Municipal and State Employees. These two federations include all the unions in the country.

Mnisi also met with the prime minister, Steingrímur Hermannsson, and other representatives of the Progressive Party, the parliamentary group of the People's Alliance, and the bishop of Iceland, who pledged his support to the anti-apartheid fight.

After Mnisi's tour, the national convention of the People's Alliance meeting here November 7–10 adopted a strong anti-apartheid resolution. It called on the Icelandic government to carry out trade sanctions against South Africa.

And on November 24 a new South Africa solidarity organization was established. Meeting at the offices of the Apprentice Union, the new group plans to step up anti-apartheid efforts. □

DOCUMENTS

Ban on South African goods

Unions back dockers' refusal to unload ships

[The following resolution — "The case of South Africa" — was unanimously adopted by the central committee of the Icelandic Federation of Labor (ASÍ) on October 30. The translation for *Intercontinental Press* is by Kormákur Högnason.]

* * *

The violence and oppression, the lack of rights, that the Black majority has to live under meet growing opposition among civilized nations.

At sessions of the United Nations, appeals for the isolation of South Africa have been adopted. Bishops of the Nordic countries [Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden] and the Nordic workers' federations have urged actions. Many nations, among them the United States and the Nordic countries, have imposed trade sanctions.

In the daily newspapers last week an appeal was published by the official representatives of the Icelandic Federation of Labor, Federation

of State and Municipal Employees, Retailers Association, and the Grocer Division of the Retailers Association, in which consumers and merchants were urged to avoid South African products starting the middle of next month.

Workers' federations in different countries have imposed a ban on handling of South African products, among them Norway, Finland, and Sweden.

With these actions an answer is given to the call of the oppressed majority of the South African nation. Such actions are considered the only way to have influence on South African government authorities and thereby to avoid an all-embracing bloodbath in the country.

At the request of dockworkers in Sundahöfn [the port], the workingmen's union Dagsbrún [Dawn] adopted a ban on unloading and loading of ships sailing from and to South Africa. The central committee of the ASÍ declares its support to this decision and requests other trade unions to make the necessary requirements in support of these actions. □

5,000 march against apartheid

ANC: 'We draw inspiration from Dunnes strikers'

By Brendan Kerr

[The following article is reprinted from the Dec. 5, 1985, issue of *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, a weekly newspaper published in Dublin that reflects the views of Sinn Féin.]

* * *

"The biggest anti-apartheid protest in Ireland since the 1969 Springboks' [South African rugby team] tour," was how a delighted Tony French of the Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement described the 5,000-strong March against apartheid held in Dublin last Saturday, November 30th.

There was an undercurrent of both satisfaction and anger throughout the march — satisfaction that so many had taken to the streets to support the themes of "Sanctions against South Africa now!" and "Solidarity with the Dunnes Stores strikers," anger at the Dublin government's abstention the previous day on a United Nations General Assembly vote condemning apartheid as a "crime against humanity."

This gutless inaction by an administration led by self-styled opponents of apartheid such as Garret FitzGerald (a member of the Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement until 1984, when he manufactured a row over Sinn Féin's membership) and Foreign Minister Peter Barry was a slap in a face for the Dunnes Stores strikers and the majority of people in Ireland and South Africa.

On Saturday, 5,000 people marched in Dublin, 400 in Cork, and 200 in Galway to show how unrepresentative the FitzGerald government is when it comes to action against apartheid.

Colorful banners and imaginative placards

*Twelve workers at the Dunnes Stores supermarket chain have been on strike since July 1984 over their refusal to handle produce from South Africa. — IP

— many of them less than complimentary to Ben "Botha" Dunne and his supermarket chain — were the order of the day, as trade unionists, students, and anti-apartheid/political activists (including a sizeable Sinn Féin contingent) wound their vocal way from Merrion Square to the GPO, via the Department of Foreign Affairs to hand in a protest letter, and the Dunnes Stores head office.

Speaking on behalf of the 12 Dunnes Stores strikers (11 in Henry Street and one in Crumlin), Mary Manning, the check-out operator whose suspension for refusing to handle South African produce sparked off the dispute, thanked everyone present:

"During our 17 months on strike, we've sometimes felt very alone and isolated, but after today we know we have more support than we'd ever imagined."

Defiantly declaring that the strikers were far from beaten despite their arduous dispute — longer than the British miners' strike — Mary Manning delivered a tough warning to the Dunnes Stores boss, Ben Dunne:

"If you think we're going to go away, forget it! We're here forever, if it takes that long!"

John Mitchell, general secretary of the IDATU [Irish Distributive and Administrative Trade Union], the strikers' union, said, "One of the things achieved by the strikers is that people now ask if produce they buy is tainted by apartheid. The Dunnes Stores strike has brought the issue of apartheid to the streets of Dublin."

Dismissing claims that sanctions don't work, Caroline McCamley of the Council for the Status of Women pleaded, "Let us listen to the black people of South Africa who are being oppressed, who are calling for these sanctions."

"This week marks the 40th anniversary of the Nuremberg War Trials," the Anti-Apart-

heid Movement's Kader Asmal reminded people. "Today, in South Africa, we are witnessing the racially motivated crimes of the new Nazis."

It began to rain heavily for the first time that day as Essop Pahad of the African National Congress stepped up to the microphone. When the rain falls on Dublin rallies it's almost traditional for the crowds to melt away. Not today. They stood and they cheered.

Here the links between young Dublin supermarket workers (whose names have worldwide become bywords for action against apartheid) and the oppressed people of South Africa were clearly illustrated. Pahad, the spokesperson of those people's major revolutionary movement, the African National Congress, said:

"We in the ANC and our oppressed and exploited nation draw inspiration from the Dunnes Stores strikers."

"I have been impressed by the fact that young people in Ireland, who have their own problems such as the North of Ireland, can find an issue such as South Africa on which to take a principled position from which they do not derive any material benefit whatsoever."

"Long after the name of Ben Dunne has been forgotten, the names of the Dunnes strikers shall be remembered in Irish history."

He also paid tribute to the "vital and painstaking" support given to the ANC by the Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement over the years and went on to detail the heroism, sacrifices, and achievements of ANC activists, especially those imprisoned members and the fighters of the ANC's military wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation).

("When the ANC guy was talking about the 'three or four armed actions against the oppressor this week' it could have been Danny Morrison talking about the IRA. The only difference was the initials," one trade union activist later commented.)

Pointing to the Pretoria regime's banning foreign news reporters from entering the townships governed by emergency legislation, the ANC spokesperson said:

"The TV cameras may be switched off, but the killings continue unabated. The mass arrests continue. The inhuman torture continues. There are children who have had their heads shot away. But our people have said that apartheid has existed for too long, that this crime against humanity must be destroyed, and that we are ready to make the necessary sacrifices to bring this about."

Welcoming the formation of the new and militant multiracial Congress of South African Trade Unions, representing more than half a million workers and which has given the Pretoria regime six months to abolish the racist "Pass Laws" and withdraw troops from the townships, Pahad said:

"We are marching, comrades, and no amount of repression is going to stop us, no amount of killing is going to stop us."

"We are marching to freedom. Come, march with us. Together we can liberate South Africa from the scourge of racism and apartheid." □



Dubliners protest, November 30.

An Phoblacht/Republican News

Fourth Internationalists meet

Call for formation of new organization

By Megan Martin and Ron Poulsen

SYDNEY — Supporters of the Fourth International met here on November 16–17 to plan the launching of a new organization of revolutionary Marxists in Australia. Some 20 people from Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide attended the weekend of political discussion.

Around half of those present were former members of the Australian Socialist Workers Party who had been purged as part of the SWP leadership's break from the Fourth International. The SWP National Committee formally split from the International in August 1985.*

The meeting opened with talks on the historical significance of the Fourth International and on the character of the developing South African revolution. It concluded the following day with a decision to take steps to build a new organization of the Fourth International in this country.

The report on the Fourth International, presented by Deb Shnookal, noted that "the FI arose out of the struggle by proletarian internationalists led by Leon Trotsky to continue the communist policies of the Third International under Lenin and the Bolsheviks against the 'second wave of Menshevism' headed by Stalin."

*See *Intercontinental Press*, Sept. 23, 1985. The articles in that issue, along with related materials, are also available in an Education for Socialists Bulletin, *The Split of the Australian Socialist Workers Party National Committee from the Fourth International*, distributed by Pathfinder Press.

Since its inception, she pointed out, the Fourth International has been able both to analyze and actively respond to revolutionary developments from Eastern Europe to Algeria, Cuba to Vietnam. The victory of the Cuban revolution in 1959, under a leadership that had developed outside of and in opposition to Stalinism and Social Democracy, posed new challenges for the International. By responding positively to these challenges and recognizing the revolutionary caliber of the Fidel Castro leadership, the Fourth International was able not only to conduct an international campaign in defense of the Cuban revolution but also to reunify its own previously divided forces. In fact, as Shnookal explained, the reunification document adopted by the 1963 World Congress of the Fourth International described this victory as marking "the beginning of a new epoch in the history of world revolution." Had the International been incapable of embracing this revolution, assimilating its lessons, and defending it as its own, it would have ceased to exist as a revolutionary force, she said.

Today that task of helping to develop international working-class solidarity and of assimilating international revolutionary experience is posed from southern Africa to Central America. In the Pacific region powerful struggles are also developing from the Philippines to New Caledonia. Here the challenge is greater than ever for internationalists in the imperialist countries of the region, like Australia, to learn from these revolutionary advances, while deepening working-class opposition to imperialist intervention, particularly to that of their own governments.

A feature of the November meeting was a talk by Larry Seigle, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party in the United States, on the character of the South African revolution and its vanguard. He took up some of the main questions covered in the fall 1985 issue of *New Internationalist*, a Marxist political and theoretical magazine published by leaders of the U.S. SWP and the Canadian Revolutionary Workers League. This issue has several articles and documents on the South African revolution.

The meeting unanimously adopted the call for a founding conference of an organization of Fourth Internationalists in Australia to be held March 28–31 in Sydney (see accompanying box). A steering committee was elected to prepare for the conference, as well as a drafting commission to prepare an initial statement of aims for the organization.

The significance of this meeting was expressed by Ron Poulsen in his report on the conference call. "This regroupment is different to the prevailing 'unity initiatives' on the left which are in reaction to the crisis and fragmentation of the parties of the left here. All these proposed regroupment projects explicitly or implicitly share common ground with the oppressor nationalism of the Australian imperialist ruling class. Our regroupment, of people coming from different directions to rebuild the Fourth International here, is unique in that it is on the basis of proletarian internationalism, as an interrelated part of a world revolutionary working-class movement."

As Shnookal had concluded in her report the previous day, "The question posed by some — 'Why the Fourth International?' — is really the question 'Why an international at all?'"

"An international revolutionary movement does exist today," she pointed out, "of which we are a part, as are the revolutionary leaderships from Central America and the Caribbean to South Africa . . . all working towards the same goal — extending and defending the world revolution. That is why the Fourth International was founded and why we should be a part of it today."

All those interested in helping to build the Fourth International in Australia should write to: Post Office Box E 192, St. James Station, Sydney, New South Wales, 2000 or call (02) 550-1504. □

Call issued by Sydney meeting

[The following call was adopted Nov. 17, 1985, by Australian supporters of the Fourth International meeting in Sydney.]

* * *

Given the new situation in Australia created by the split of the Socialist Workers Party leadership from the Fourth International, it is necessary to regroup all those revolutionaries in Australia who remain active Fourth Internationalists.

Our aim is to build a revolutionary working-class organisation as an integral part of the building of a new international revolutionary movement — the task that has historically faced the forces of the Fourth International. This is the course that the Aus-

tralian SWP leadership abandoned. The platform of this organisation will be based on the historic revolutionary Marxist foundations of the Fourth International.

In order to launch such a membership organisation, a founding conference will be held in Sydney over the Easter weekend, March 28–31, 1986. At this conference a statement of aims will be discussed and adopted, along with perspectives for political work.

All those who actively support the rebuilding of the Fourth International in Australia, financially and through distributing the publications of the International, will be able to discuss the platform in its draft form and participate as voting delegates at the founding conference.

This publication is available in microform from University Microfilms International.

Call toll-free 800-521-3044. Or mail inquiry to: University Microfilms International, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.



Antiracist fight continues to grow

Arab youth form own organization, discuss alliances

By H el ene Viken

[In recent weeks two separate national anti-racist demonstrations were held in Paris. A November 30 rally, organized by young people from immigrant Arab families, culminated a march through France that began October 19.

[A December 7 demonstration, organized by SOS-Racism, marked the end of two marches through France that had begun October 21.

[According to the Paris daily *Le Monde*, 4,000 people took part in the first rally and 25,000 in the second.

[The inability of antiracist forces to join together in a single march reflects differences on a number of issues, in particular the role of autonomous organizations of young people of Arab background.

[Two similar marches across France for equality, held in 1983 and 1984, had had a big impact on French political life.

[The following article, written before these marches culminated in the separate Paris rallies, appeared in the November 1985 issue of *Critique Communiste*, a monthly magazine published by the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), French section of the Fourth International. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

In recent years the basic mover in the struggle against racism has been the youth from immigrant families. As the primary victims of racism in France, the Beurs¹ have demonstrated their strength and their ability to make their weight felt on the political scene.

Their movement is the bearer of new demands, of a cultural richness, and of a burgeoning of ideas that have been stifled too long by being shoehorned into the status of "immigrants," which they are not and refuse to be.

The present difficulties around the third march for equality, as well as the persistence of the reactionary and racist speeches of [National Front leader Jean-Marie] Le Pen or [Paris Mayor Jacques] Chirac have led us to set out, here, what is in our view a piece of history in and of itself: the history of the Beurs.

There are more than 2 million Beurs in France. Most were born here. They are the second, sometimes the third, generation of the immigrant families who came in the 1960s. Some have acquired French citizenship, others have not. This "choice" generally flows from a con-

straint: it is the only way to avoid having an irregular status. If they are not French, from the age of 16 they must cut through the difficult administrative steps needed to obtain a residence permit similar to the one held by their parents.

Whether or not they are French, they are part of the "Beur current," an "inside out" identity, halfway between immigrant and French, which bluntly expresses itself through the demand for equality and by pushing aside the cold game of customs. The Beurs have a history, a culture, and a deep-seated aspiration for autonomy and for recognition of their existence as such. They are for *integration* and against *assimilation*.

Mohamed Mrini aptly writes: "In the image of transit companies, the immigrant lived a 'pending' existence which was rooted in French society, while the winds of nostalgia and the hopes of return carried away some leaves that wilted as soon as they touched the ground of reality. Then came the children, from a generation suspended between two chairs, who through hammer blows of disappointment and hope built the stools and easy-chairs of a new art."²

For years, in fact, immigration was lived as a temporary thing.

The big migrational phenomena of the beginning of the expansion were encouraged by the bosses for structural reasons: the transformation of the production process with the growth of construction and development of immense "movable" worksites, the rise of mass production (especially automobile) factories that required the establishment on a large scale of a new division of labor.

That new division of labor can be summarized as follows: more and more unskilled workers or laborers, who were mobile, low skilled, receiving the lowest pay, cooped up in rooming houses, single, and with no desire to put down roots.

This massive superexploitation of the immigrants in turn made it possible to improve the social consensus regarding French workers.

In the early 1970s, the first phenomena of family regroupment began to appear. The immigrants married, had children in France, settled down, and put forward demands. The children of the immigration remained for a time "a nearly invisible and silent minority."³

Then, gradually their strength could be seen. Hybrids, born and raised in a country but pariahs of the society in which they live, the young people of the "second generation" would little by little express their revolt in the cities.

Repression was the response: police patrols, constant attacks and identity checks, and expulsion to their parents' country of origin, where they had never been.

At this point the first desire to organize arose, basically to confront the police, and then gradually in an autonomous fashion. There were the first theater troupes, groupings around social centers in the working-class suburbs of Paris, Lyon, and Marseille. The history of the Beurs began.

For the right to life

The history of the Beurs was first written in blood. They fell victim to a long list of racist crimes, crimes that were most often followed by acquittal or suspended sentences for the murderers.

Feb. 21, 1980, in Vitry: Kader Lareiche was killed by a bullet from a housing-project watchman, who got a five-year suspended sentence. October 1980: Lahouari Ben Mohamed was killed by a riot policeman, who was transferred. October 1980: little Hocine Sakhi was killed by a Metz confectioner, who was acquitted. And so on.

In the face of this situation, which had become commonplace and almost "excusable," wherein young people from immigrant families were portrayed as dangerous hooligans, while trigger-happy maniacs, whether cops or civilians, were presented as heroes of legitimate self-defense, the victims began to rise up. The Beurs came together and tried to change the course of things. They had one objective above all: the battle for the right to life, for equal justice for all.

The first festival of young people from immigrant families took place June 30, 1979, at Mantes-la-Jolie. In early 1980 strikes broke out at nearly all the universities to protest the Imbert Decree, which limits the possibility for foreign students to enroll.

April 1980 saw the birth of "Rock Against

forme, appeared in the *Cahiers de l'ANGI*, March 1985. A minister and member of CIMADE [an organization of Christians that supports immigrant rights and Third World development projects] in Lyon. Delorme was the initiator of activity in favor of immigrants, especially with the establishment of SOS-Minguettes Association, which initiated the 1983 march. [Minguettes is a Lyon neighborhood where a 1983 explosion by second-generation immigrant youth took place.]

1. The term "Beur," which second-generation Arab youth in France apply to themselves, was derived by applying a popular French inverted-syllable form of slang to the word for "Arab." — *IP*.

2. Mohammed Mrini, taken from "Les jeunes et le droit de vote," an article that appeared in the July 1985 *Expression immigr es-Fran ais*, published by the Federation of Associations of Support to Immigrant Workers (FASTI).

3. "Les Beurs ont une histoire," by Christian De-

Police," the first independent gathering, which organized three concerts in the Parisian suburbs.

In October 1980 and then in March 1981 there were massive demonstrations organized in Marseille to protest the murder of Lahouari and then Zahir Boudjal.

In April 1981 in Lyon, Christian Delorme began a hunger strike to protest the expulsion of young people who had been born or raised in France. Ten thousand people demonstrated in support of his action, leading to a three-month suspension of this procedure, which was later eliminated by the left [government of President François Mitterrand].

After that, no crime would take place without causing a mobilization of the Beurs, who soon got broad support from antiracist groups, especially the FASTI (Federation of Associations of Support to Immigrant Workers), which organized the first meetings of Beur associations in February 1983.

When the left annulled the 1939 law,⁴ there was a flowering of these associations under various names, which increased in the following year: "Suburban Zaama" in Lyon, the "ARAJ" in Aulnay, "SOS — things are stirring" in Bondy, "SOS Future Minguettes" in Vénissieux, "Magic Grain" in Saint-Étienne, "Mixture" in Villeneuve-sur-Lot, "Ripe Banana" in Rouen, "ANGI" in Aubervilliers, etc.

This as yet underground bubbling would burst into the light of day in an unprecedented mobilization, a spectacular and courageous initiative, the [December] 1983 march, which brought the Beurs in through the front door of history.

Never again like before

"Paris on the Beur," "Beur is Beautiful," "The Beurs at the Presidential Palace," "Yes sir, Mr. Beur." That was in December 1983. In a flood of journalistic inventiveness, the media competed in covering the large event that came together because of several obstinate Beurs who had just crossed France on foot for equality.

The success stemmed first of all from a sense of political urgency: the need to respond to Le Pen, to the fact that racist discourse was becoming commonplace and was, little by little, being adopted in a more or less polished or veiled form by the whole political class. "People" bluntly claimed that immigration was a problem, that the presence of too many immigrants made society unlivable, that "they" were responsible for unemployment, for insecurity.

Beyond that, the political men calmly legalized day-to-day racism and provided the ammunition for several dozen murderers who went out on shooting sprees in all the ghetto housing areas in our suburbs during the summer of 1983.

Since the traditional antiracist organizations were slow in reacting — hobbled in their pos-



Anti-immigrant graffiti on Paris wall says: "France for the French."

itions of moral protest (MRAP — Movement Against Racism and For Friendship Among the Peoples) or not knowing by which end to grab the enormous mammoth that was in the process of developing rapidly — the Beurs dared. In contrast to and against all (or nearly all), and despite the polite but dominant skepticism, they dared to announce they would march for equality.

"From Marseille to Paris, an antiracist space was won and progressively enlarged as the December 3 arrival approached. The 30 marchers at the start certainly did not know that they would unleash a formidable movement. The first movement of this youth — of so-called immigrant origin — which could take credit for sweeping away quite a few old cobwebs."

This quotation from an editorial in the "Special Issue" of *Sans frontière* put out for the march summarizes quite well the single and common sentiment at the time: the feeling of having dramatically changed the course of things, of having laid out the vision of another possible dynamic, the dynamic of tomorrow's society with a full and complete place for the immigrants, concretized by the achievement of civic rights.

"Put it back in its holster, they're coming," the slogan of the Parisian Youth Collective supporting the march, was widely taken up on all the banners: a symbol of quiet strength against the guns, of the massive desire in the housing projects for the right to live and for equality in the face of the judicial system.

"Right to vote, right to vote!" cried the mass of demonstrators December 3 at the square in front of Montparnasse, when [Minister of Social Affairs and National Solidarity] Georgina Dufoix tried to state that "nothing would be the same anymore."

The first sessions of the youth associations

took place June 9, 10, and 11 at Villeurbanne. They brought together 150 participants from 35 cities, representing 52 associations.

This was the first attempt to structure an autonomous movement of the Beurs. Autonomy was the central word in all the discussions. The preparatory document contained these highly significant expressions: "reclaiming our ability to speak for ourselves," "claiming all our rights," "participation in the decisions that concern us and participation in running our daily life," "mastery, finally, of strategies that can lead to an improvement of our condition."

Three commissions functioned during these sessions: association, equal rights, and police-judicial system. But it was still too early: many associations had begun to become active in the political field with the 1983 march and added problems without reaching solutions to them; others were still at the stage of cultural activity.

Asserting the desire for autonomy does not lead to concrete proposals for activities, does not turn toward the outside, and only with difficulty leads to a "traditional" platform of demands that still leaves the participants unsatisfied.

In the meantime, there were isolated demonstrations in solidarity with Talbot,⁵ demonstrations of the "crazy women of the Place Vendôme," that is, the mothers of victims of racism stubbornly demanding an accounting from the justice system in an ever larger desert.

The newborn movement would run head-on into all sorts of problems at the same time:

- How to establish a large antiracist move-

4. The 1939 law on the right of association placed a de facto prohibition on legalization of immigrant organizations.

5. A reference to a December 1983 strike by the largely immigrant work force at the Talbot automobile factory in Poissy. — IP

ment while avoiding dilution into ineffective humanism and while preserving the demands linked to equality?

- How to strengthen the ties among the Beurs themselves and their self-assertion while avoiding withdrawing into the immigrant community and instead exerting pressure on the evolution of society as a whole?

- What assessment to make of the left's joining in the Beurs march and the betrayal that followed immediately with the Talbot affair?

- What link can be made with the other communities that are victims of racism but made very little appearance alongside the Beurs in 1983?

- What link with the political and institutional world, which defends first and foremost the interests of the apparatus and seems to use the revolt of the Beurs in order to better stifle it later?

During and after the meetings, it was possible to distinguish two types of partial responses to this list of hard-to-solve problems:

One segment of the Beurs ("Suburban Zaama," associations from Lille, a segment of the Youth Collective of the Parisian Region, the ANGI) would press the need to place priority on organizing the Beurs, on asserting themselves as an autonomous force, on taking the time to bring together the associations that were being set up locally. They stressed building a diversified force, but one capable of defining common objectives against their specific oppression and exerting weight as a particular community in the evolution of the whole of society.

This "current" attached decisive importance to the platform for equality of rights (an absolute precondition of the struggle against racism) and to autonomy. It conceived of relations with the antiracist movement (at the time basically MRAP and FASTI) as relations of partners in which the Beurs had to be the dominant and motor force, because they were the only force capable of never giving in on the fundamentals.

The other segment (which would form Convergence '84 in July) opposed the organization of the Beurs among themselves, feeling that such a project was fraught with dangers (withdrawing into the immigrant community, inability to play an important role politically) and instead put forward the need for an alliance between "all the illegals" — all the immigrant or foreign-origin communities and all those in society who are in some general sense victims of inequality.

The question of the struggle against racism was therefore reduced to a general "pro-equality" schema seen as a plan for society.

An example was the call for the [December] 1984 march: "We are a category that has been placed in society's cellar. They don't want to hear our song and they don't want to see our soul. Therefore we demand our rights: rights aimed at carrying us to the heights of recognized citizens.

"In the process we have learned that the basement is bigger than we had thought and that it has rooms we did not know about. We

have met citizens who are less equal than others. They, too, demand their rights: sometimes the same ones as us, sometimes not."

The debates between these two currents would not reach a successful conclusion: the "split" was consummated during the summer, and Convergence '84 called the second march for equality for December 1984. The flow of events would bring new accelerations within the current of Beurs involved in this second march.

Grandeur and misery of Convergence '84

Between the autumn of 1983 and the autumn of 1984 the political landscape changed perceptibly. The European [parliament] elections showed Le Pen's national strength. The consensus of "democrats" and the left around the Beurs cracked. True, the single card was granted (with many limits).⁶ But there was nothing, not a word, not a gesture, not an act, on the right to vote. Instead, there was Talbot, [Premier Laurent] Fabius' statement during the summer that "Le Pen raises real problems, to which he provides false answers," Chirac's anti-immigrant offensive in Paris, the measures by the government restricting family regroupment, and the arrest of Toumi Djaidja, who was the initiator of the Beurs' march.

Dec. 1, 1984, when Convergence '84 arrived in Paris, 30,000 young people were in the street. The Beurs were present in massive numbers, but in addition the youth as a whole were mobilized through numerous joint initiatives in all the cities by the antiracist networks and the autonomous associations.

The left, however, had disappeared: the Socialist Party made no call and did not support it; the government was absent, as were the unions. The Communist Party could not have been more quiet regarding the march.

Convergence '84 was successful, against all odds and despite the defection of the big parties, in carrying out a show of strength against racism and for equality of rights. Because those who came, who were mobilized, were precisely those who do not wait until there is an official and reassuring consensus before expressing their struggle against racism.

They are the ones who reject any concessions in this arena and firmly believe in the need to build and assert a relationship of forces that reverses the course of things.

Among the communities of immigrant origin, the Beurs were by far the most numerous. Convergence with the others did not really succeed. It demonstrated that the Beurs are the most combative and most determined. They are also the main victims of racism since it is true that in France, for historic reasons, anti-Arab racism is dominant.

Among the antiracists, the youth are the most numerous. The youth, by definition a new social layer, suddenly appeared on the

scene, coming out of the high schools, the housing projects, and the suburbs, to express their hatred of French-style apartheid, their rejection of the dominant racist values, their full and complete solidarity with the Beurs, whom they had known since childhood.

At the end of the demonstration, when the strength created by the coming together of the antiracist youth, the local united networks, and the Beurs was obvious, Convergence '84, which was caught up in its very general language against inequality, provided no other perspective.

On the contrary: Farida Belghoul, one of the leaders of Convergence, ended the December 1 march at the Place de la République, with the "Open Letter to Convinced People." This letter sharply attacked "skin-deep antiracism" and "those who are in solidarity but not concerned." It reproached those very people who had been mobilized in the provincial cities and in Paris for "soothing their bad consciences" in that way.

Convergence '84 therefore went from asserting the need for an opening to build equality (an assertion that was too general and partially utopian because it is not based on what had given rise to the strength in 1983: the specific inequalities in France against immigrants) to a sectarian tone — denouncing the antiracists and refusing to understand the real advances in the common fight of antiracist organizations, associations of young Beurs, and the radicalization of the youth as a whole. Everything that had made for the richness of the crossing of France by the "mixture" motorscooters!⁷

This was an enormous shortcoming that would turn a courageous and effective initiative into a memory without a future. Once again, while racism continued its crimes, while the far right stepped up its campaigns, while the left's promises grew more and more blurry and equality was reduced to the category of utopias of a social movement viewed as ephemeral, nothing was left after the march: no perspectives for ongoing organization, no worthwhile plan.

The Beurs' associations seem to have retreated back to the local plane. So too the antiracists, in united collectives that were the legacy of the two marches.

From this apparent vacuum, SOS-Racism took its impetus.

"The march (of Convergence) was an extraordinary adventure and then nothingness; a great powerless adventure. It was necessary to create conditions for solidarity to be expressed in an ongoing manner and to mobilize beyond the already convinced," stated [SOS-Racism chairperson] Harlem Désir at one of the first press conferences of SOS-Racism.

SOS was able to respond to this immense

6. Previously immigrants needed two separate cards: a residence permit and a work permit. The Mitterrand government replaced these with a single card, valid for both purposes and good for 10 years. — *JP*

7. This is a play on words. The march across France took place on motorscooters, which run on a "mixture" of gasoline and oil, and an SOS-Racism leader stated that France would benefit from an ethnic "mixture." — *JP*

potential among the youth: we know what followed. A million buttons [bearing a raised hand and the slogan "hands off my buddy"] sold in a short time; a massive mobilization in the high schools and in the housing projects of those who had never before been involved politically; the spread of the movement in the factories and in society as a whole; a national and massive reaction to the murders in Menton and Miramas; and finally, 400,000 people at the "night of the buddies" at the Place de la Concorde on June 15, 1985.

SOS-Racism addressed itself first to the antiracists: the Beurs had been mobilized in 1983 and 1984. They had been the vanguard of the youth. In SOS-Racism they found the opportunity for a convergence — to build a relationship of forces that would make it possible to raise the central question of equality with other methods.

Some joined SOS on the basis of that analysis. But we must state that on the whole, the organized forces of the Beur current moved from polite silence to growing hostility, going so far as to reject SOS.

We can find traces of criticism almost from the beginnings of SOS-Racism's success. Nacer Kettane (producer of Radio Beur) wrote in March 1985: "The instantaneous disintegration of Convergence '84 after its arrival is the mirror image of what it left in our memory. The racist crimes continue, the insecurity of the North African community grows day by day as fascism raises its head. Once the marchers fell back into anonymity, once the convergents dispersed, the way was open for an association like SOS-Racism that reduces things to the most innocuous antiracism, which is the most nonthreatening for all the confused political parties. While there is no question here of 'putting down' SOS-Racism, which at least had the courage to place itself across the path of the sorcerers' apprentices, we must nonetheless stress that there were no North Africans in its leadership structure and that it forgot about the main demands of a whole community for whom racism means the threat of death. Because today, being Arab means being active every day and wearing a badge on your face around the clock."

Similar reproaches came from the pen of Mohamed Jabbad of the ANGI: "There, too, we can only rejoice at seeing more and more antiracists publicly identifying themselves. . . . But what credit do we give to Georgina Dufoux when she sports her little button after having prohibited family regroupments? . . . We must not forget that the basic contribution of the movement of young people from immigrant backgrounds was to give a content to the antiracist fight: the struggle for equality."

The editorial in the March 1985 issue of the publication of the FASTI, signed Carlos Bravo, expressed similar reproaches.

In an incendiary article entitled, "BHL, Barre, Big Kitten and the others,"⁸ Farida Belghoul sharply opposed the sell-out that SOS



Popular slogan of antiracist movement: "Hands off my buddy."

represented in her view: "France does not want our [Beur] history." She concluded with a quote from an American Black leader, Eldridge Cleaver: "There are people who are only too ready to think for us, even though we are the ones who die. But they aren't willing to take it all the way and die for us."

However, the dizzying growth of SOS-Racism demonstrated that this was not some big media sensation aimed at stifling the roots of the Beur mobilization and the question of equality.

On the contrary, when Harlem Désir forcefully came out for the right to vote before an audience of journalists, there was a considerable response.

SOS showed that it was capable of bringing new layers into action and organizing them, young people who cannot be suspected of wanting to salve their bad conscience through a gratuitous act. Of course, the criticism by Beur leaders was rightly aimed at a number of sponsors who were quick to take advantage of the occasion. But this was not the essence of SOS.

By rejecting dialogue, by standing aside from a movement in the process of being born, the Beur movement undoubtedly committed an error. It squandered a historic chance for merging its strength, its ideas, its determination, as well as its experience, with these young people who were ready to struggle at their side for equality.

This latent hostility turned into open conflict after errors made by the leadership of SOS. In the beginning, the SOS leadership, despite its activity being positive over all, did not understand the existence of a dispersed but real Beur

movement, the links of a community carrying a desire for autonomy.

Some errors weighed heavily in the balance.

- SOS-Racism's "hegemonism," which had already been criticized by Christian Delorme in the "Letter to SOS" in May 1985: that is, a self-assertion of SOS, which was necessary to build it, but which little by little changed into a desire to "cover the ground at all costs," often without regard to the local realities, the experiences in the cities, the links drawn between the diverse Beur, immigrant, and antiracist components.

- The tendency to give special emphasis to media events that drew large numbers of people (and this is a good thing), but which gave short shrift to building a real organized mass movement that could confront and act in unison in the reality of daily racism by taking up the demands for equality expressed by the victims of racism.

- The presence of the Union of Jewish Students of France (UEJF) in the leadership, which certainly exerted great weight in the decision by SOS to demonstrate alongside Zionist organizations for freedom of movement for Jews in the Soviet Union and in the refusal to take a position at the time of Israel's [Oct. 1, 1985] raid on Tunis.

Because for the Beurs, Palestine is part of their identity, a far-off identity certainly, but one which is, like the struggle of the NLF [National Liberation Front] in Algeria, an identity of oppressed people firmly identifying themselves with all the liberation struggles of their fathers.

The division around the third march took place in the context of this process and was in no way inevitable. It flowed from SOS-Racism launching its march precipitously and in its own name, without having taken the time for a real encounter with the associations of young Beurs, the immigrant organizations, the FASTI, the MRAP, Without Borders, etc.

This error by SOS-Racism, despite a real desire to bring together more forces than in the previous years, weighed very heavily in the present situation of division of the antiracist forces. It weighed especially heavily because the Beur desire for autonomy has had difficulty finding means of expression and going through a needed clarification between two concepts that have already appeared. The first concept is to build a Beur movement as an element pushing forward a large, antiracist united front, which would at the same time maintain its own expression. The second view is to build an autonomous Beur movement as an end in itself, treating the antiracists as a contributing force for solidarity.

Confronted with this problem when a march in competition with its own was announced, SOS-Racism moved in a positive fashion: proposals for unity and public recognition of the existence and need for a "movement of young people from immigrant backgrounds."

Obviously the gap caused by disagreements and mutual misunderstanding will not be bridged so easily. Even if, as we hope, the two marches for equality that took off separately in

8. A reference to right-wing ideologue Bernard-Henry Lévy, rightist former premier Raymond

Barre, and the present minister of the economy, finance, and budget Pierre Bérégovoy. — IP



Goon squads attacked immigrant workers during the 1983 Talbot strike.

October 1985 end up in a convergence and re-found unity in [Paris in] December.

The stakes are real. The autonomy of the Beurs, and therefore building their mobilization and their self-expression, represents a great richness in the struggle of everyone against this society. Because they are specifically oppressed, their fight is a carrier when organized as an unconditional challenge to institutional inequality linked to immigrant status and by extension to nationality and skin color.

This is what the history of the Beurs has expressed for four years, the banner of equality they have brandished with such determination, their refusal to compromise and their rejection of calls to be reasonable, as well as their desire to involve themselves in political life by demanding their place on the voting rolls in 1986 or by pushing their own autonomous slates.

But it is obvious that alone they run the risk of isolation, of strengthening all the processes of rejection, and of constant and violent conflict in their disfavor. They run the risk of a

generalized ebb in the fight for equality, meaning the triumph of the idea that convergence is impossible, and thus their failure to be integrated into society.

The antiracists have shown that they are a force in and of themselves, alongside the Beurs and the immigrants, who are capable of fighting on the same demands — that they are not simply a supporting force, a force “in solidarity.”

The young people who have worn the [“Hands off my buddy”] button have very forcefully expressed their desire for a different society, which they assert should be multicultural and multinational.

The forces placed in motion by the Beurs and then in the whole youth have forced the workers’ movement to get involved in the fight against racism and for equality: unity has made its weight felt against Le Pen.

The richness of the gathering and the convergence must be safeguarded and developed. As the bulk of local experiences have proven for three years it is possible and it is urgent.

The fight for equality takes place through enlarging the number of fighters. Numerical and qualitative growth does not have to be synonymous with dilution. On the contrary, the role of the autonomous Beur movement in asserting and building the antiracist movement is decisive for their progress together in the struggle for equal rights.

But if they ignore each other, this would drive back all aspects of this historic fight, in particular the unity of the youth and of the working class, which would guarantee the relationship of forces needed to consign the reactionary ideologies to oblivion, where they belong. □

Canada

Quebec unions debate political action

Unionists reject PQ, Liberals in December 2 election

By Michel Prairie

[On December 2 voters in Quebec overwhelmingly defeated the Parti Québécois (PQ), which had held office since 1976. The Liberal Party, led by Robert Bourassa, won 99 seats in the provincial legislature, and the PQ held on to only 23. Before the elections the PQ had 61 seats, the Liberals 53, and independents 6.

[The PQ, a capitalist party, won popular support in the 1970s for its promise to extend the rights of Quebec’s French-speaking majority. Recently, however, it has lost support from many Québécois workers who have been victimized by the PQ government’s antilabor austerity measures.

[This was reflected in the discussions in two important union meetings held shortly before the elections. The first was a special conven-

tion of the Quebec Federation of Labor (FTQ), which is affiliated to the Canadian Labor Congress (CLC), Canada’s largest trade union federation. The other meeting was that of the General Council of the Quebec Teachers Federation (CEQ).

[We are publishing here reports from these two meetings that appeared in the November 11 and November 25 issues of *Socialist Voice*, a fortnightly published in Montreal that reflects the views of the Revolutionary Workers League, Canadian section of the Fourth International.]

* * *

MONTREAL — The Quebec Federation of Labor (FTQ) will not support any political party in the December 2 Quebec provincial elections.

The decision was taken November 2 by a vote of 384 to 269 (with 5 abstentions) by delegates attending the third special FTQ convention in Montreal. In a sharp departure from the positions taken in the 1976 and 1981 elections, the delegates rejected a resolution from the FTQ leadership to support the Parti Québécois.

This is the first time that the members of the most important of the three Quebec union federations have so directly rejected the policy of class collaboration with the PQ that the FTQ leadership has been engaged in for over 10 years.

The discussion was opened by Fernand Daoust, FTQ general secretary, who presented to the delegates the FTQ leadership’s generally positive balance sheet of the PQ government today.

“The measures taken to assure the French

character of Quebec are positive," he said. "Despite the terrible economic crisis, Quebec has done as well, if not better than elsewhere. The government has maintained innovative projects like the Corvée Habitation [a government-supported housing project] and the Fonds de solidarité [solidarity fund]." The Fonds de solidarité is an FTQ-sponsored scheme to raise money from individual members to aid small businesses. The plan is backed financially by both the Quebec and federal governments.

In the document read to the delegates, Daoust recalled the reforms adopted by the PQ government since its election in 1976, such as the anticab law, the automobile insurance legislation, and the law on agricultural zoning.

However, the FTQ leadership also criticized the brutal cutbacks carried out by the PQ government in 1982-83 against the public sector workers. "That was the blackest period for the government," underlined Daoust.

Nevertheless, in face of the possibility that the Liberal Party under Robert Bourassa could win the December 2 election, the declaration submitted by the leadership concluded: "In our opinion the Parti Québécois remains the best instrument for realizing our demands and attaining our social objectives."

From the very beginning of the discussion, it was clear that the convention was divided and that a large portion of the delegates opposed giving support to the PQ.

The opposition was mainly led by the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE). CUPE members were a majority of FTQ members directly hit by the 1982-83 PQ attacks against the public service.

"We can't continue to support our employer," said CUPE member André Asselin, to applause from a big section of the convention hall.

Another CUPE delegate, Louise Valiquette, reminded the delegates that Quebec Premier Pierre Marc Johnson had been one of the principal architects of Bill 37. For all intents and purposes, this law removes the right to strike from public sector workers. "We won't get back our right to strike by electing Johnson," she concluded.

CUPE member Carole Robertson also reminded the delegates that the Council on the Status of Women, a governmental body, had itself condemned the measures taken by the government against the public sector because they were principally aimed at women.

However, the opposition did not only come from the public sector delegates. Several from the private sector also refused to give their support to the PQ. Raymond Coulombe, a member of l'Union des employés de services sur la Côte-Nord (Service Employees Union on the North Shore), explained to the convention that at their last convention his local union had voted against giving support to the PQ.

"In 1963," he added, "I was for Quebec's independence. Today in 1985 I am still an independentist. But the PQ is not."

Opposition to the leadership's proposal was also particularly strong from the delegation representing Local 57 of the Syndicat des em-



FERNAND DAOUST

ployés professionnels et de bureau (SEPB — Office and Professional Employees Union). Currently, 325 members of the SEPB have been on a five-month strike against one of Quebec's biggest banking operations, the Caisse populaire Desjardins.

Lesser-evil politics

Contrary to several newspaper reports, delegates from the private sector did not form a solid bloc behind the FTQ leadership. Only the United Steelworkers and a portion of the delegates from the construction unions fully supported the leadership's pro-PQ position. Two days earlier, at their convention in Quebec city, Quebec Steelworkers had voted almost unanimously to support the PQ.

"Bourassa wants to privatize the provincially owned companies," said Sidbec-Dosco worker André Tremblay. "We will lose 4,000 jobs at Sidbec if the company is sold."

"We have two bad choices before us," he concluded. "If the Liberal Party returns to power, it will be worse for us than if the PQ is returned."

Finally, after two hours of discussion, the delegates rejected the executive's proposal in a secret ballot.

An important step forward

The refusal to support the PQ in the current elections represents an important step forward for the FTQ and for the entire labor movement, both in Quebec and in English Canada.

In doing so, the FTQ is refusing to play the "lesser evil" game in these elections.

The lesser-evil policy is a cancer in the labor movement because it has no class framework. It forces the labor movement to rely on capitalist parties like the PQ (or [Prime Minister Brian] Mulroney's Conservative Party in the last federal elections) for advancing its interests, instead of relying on its own forces and

its own class organizations.

Delegates who spoke at the FTQ's special convention hit the nail on the head: It's not by electing Johnson in place of Bourassa that labor will move forward.

Johnson is opposed to public sector unions having the right to strike. He's for privatizing Crown corporations such as the liquor retail network. He's ready to sign the anti-Quebec constitution imposed on the province in 1981. And this is only a partial list.

As Steinberg worker Richard Langelier from the United Food and Commercial Workers said in his contribution to the convention discussion, "The reforms carried out by the PQ in the past were not presents from the PQ to us. It was our own struggles which won them. It's by mobilizing that we will win new gains, not by supporting that party."

For working-class politics

For more than 10 years, the trade union movement in Quebec has supported the PQ, a bourgeois nationalist party, rather than building its own working-class party. This class-collaborationist policy has led to a complete dead end, both in realizing the goals of the national struggle and in struggling for social reforms.

The FTQ is 100 percent right when it says that unions should take political action.

To resolve every big question that confronts the labor movement today requires action on the level of government, whether it's plant closures in Montreal's east end (where a rash of recent company closure announcements threaten 5,000 jobs), the need for an increase in the minimum wage, or women's right to abortion.

If the working class does not want to remain tied behind capitalist governments, it must develop its own independent labor political expression, both organizationally and on the level of program.

That's the main challenge facing the unions today.

The next step

There are three things that the Quebec labor movement can do immediately to make headway in this direction.

First, it can continue to defend its interests in action. That means building solidarity with those fighting for their rights, no matter what the election outcome.

It should carry on with the fight against Law 37, involve the unions even more deeply in the battle against apartheid, and clearly come out against the Quebec government signing the constitution.

The second step unions can take is to deepen the discussion now under way within the labor movement in Quebec on the working-class political alternative that needs to be developed in order to struggle against the bosses and their governments.

Last spring, delegates to the convention of the Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN — Confederation of National Trade Unions) voted to put into question the CSN's



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tradition of not openly supporting any political party. The delegates decided to open up a discussion on independent labor political action. This discussion is intended to lead to the adoption of a position on this key question at the CSN's next regular convention in 1986.

Every union in Quebec should follow this example.

The third step our unions can take to develop a working-class policy independent of the capitalists and their parties, is to follow the example of Local 510 of the United Auto Workers at Pratt and Whitney in Longueuil. The union is calling on its members to vote for the NDP [New Democratic Party] in the December 2 elections.

The NDP-Quebec is a reformist party with a procapitalist program.

But it's also a workers' party. The NDP-Quebec is linked to the NDP in the rest of Canada. In English Canada the NDP has powerful ties to the trade union movement. Most of the large pan-Canadian unions are affiliated to the NDP. For example, many locals of the UAW and the United Steelworkers are affiliated.

The NDP-Quebec is running several dozen candidates in the current provincial elections. Most workers who wish to cast an elementary class vote in these elections see an NDP vote as the only way to do it.

"The support that many workers are ready to give to the NDP in these elections is positive," said Carole Caron, Revolutionary Workers League candidate in the December 2 elections. "These workers see that the NDP represents a different class than the PQ or the Liberals, and they are right. Their support has nothing to do with looking for the lesser evil. That's why I'm urging trade unions in Quebec to actively support the NDP in these elections. Workers should vote for it, except in Crémazie, the constituency where I'm running.

"This is the best way at the present time working people can concretely help our unions to take the road of independent working class political action." □

Teachers' union General Council tilts toward New Democratic Party

By Michel Prairie

MONTREAL — The General Council of the Quebec Teachers Federation (CEQ) has decided not to back any party in the December 2 Quebec provincial elections. At the same time, the Council stated it was favorably inclined toward the New Democratic Party (NDP) and the Mouvement socialiste (MS). The decisions were taken at a special meeting held in Montreal November 9.

The adopted position represents a compromise between two points of view which clashed during the discussion. On one side, a significant section of the 250 delegates wanted to affirm the nonpartisan tradition of the CEQ in elections. In contrast, the leadership of the federation defended a resolution which was a thinly disguised call for a vote for the NDP and the MS.

'Should we wait 15 more years?'

CEQ President Yvon Charbonneau argued most clearly for the executive's position.

He recalled that in 1970 the Quebec union movement held dozens of inter-union conferences, from one end of Quebec to the other, on the question of working-class political action. "The participants wanted progress toward the creation of a labor party," he said. "But this interest was channeled into the Parti Québécois when it was formed."

"Today," he continued, "we still don't have a labor party. Are we going to wait another 15 years to act?"

Strong opposition

There was strong opposition to this point of view among the delegates.

Lorraine Pagé, president of the Alliance des professeurs de Montréal (Montreal Teachers' Alliance), the most important union affiliated to the CEQ, led the opposition by submitting a counter-motion explicitly reaffirming the traditional nonpartisan stance of the CEQ toward political parties in the elections.

This position was supported at the microphones by those delegates who were opposed in principle to the CEQ as a union giving support to a political party.

"We each have our own political values," declared Marcel Duhaime. "We are not going to trust someone else to express them for us."

Several delegates took the floor to explain that they had no confidence in parties like the NDP or the MS. "The NDP has a nice program on paper," said Céline Desrosiers. "But look what the NDP did to women in Manitoba, when it closed Dr. Morgentaler's abortion clinic."

Finally, after more than two hours of discussion, the delegates adopted *both* motions: the main points of the one submitted by the executive and the counter-motion submitted by Pagé.

Despite its contradictory character, the pos-

ition taken by the CEQ is, in the words of Yvon Charbonneau, "a small step in the right direction."

This is true because all the big questions facing Quebec unions today and the working class as a whole require political solutions. To move forward, the unions need their own party — a party ready to mobilize in the streets to defend struggles, like those of the Caisse populaire strikers fighting for union organization.

They need a party which defends the right of women to abortion, not only in words but in practice. They need a party which struggles for Quebec's national rights, and which educates and organizes the working class in order to establish a government of workers and farmers.

Workers in Quebec can't vote for a party like that in the December 2 elections because it doesn't exist. The NDP and the MS are reformist, procapitalist parties which counterpose elections to real concrete struggles. The labor movement should oppose the programs of these parties, not support them as the CEQ resolution suggested.

But in the December 2 elections the NDP is the only party that has real ties to the trade union movement. It is organizationally linked to the trade unions in English Canada and to several pan-Canadian unions with considerable weight in Quebec, like the steel and auto-workers unions. For this reason, the candidates of the NDP offer workers a chance to express a class vote against both the Liberals and the Parti Québécois. In the Crémazie riding [district] they can do this by supporting the candidate of the Revolutionary Workers League, who is running on a socialist program.

In order to draw an elementary class line between working people and the two employers' parties, our unions should therefore call on working people to vote for the NDP on December 2. In this way they can help push forward the discussion on working-class political action which began 15 years ago in the Quebec labor movement and has started once again. □

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Constitutional proposals of FSLN

Daniel Ortega presents Sandinistas' guidelines to commission

[On September 5 the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) issued its proposal on what kind of constitution Nicaragua's National Assembly should adopt. The proposal was presented to the assembly's Special Constitutional Commission by Daniel Ortega, coordinator of the Executive Commission of the FSLN National Directorate, and president of Nicaragua.

[The six other political parties represented in the assembly have also presented their views on what the new constitution should contain, as have the country's mass organizations and unions and several parties that are not seated in the assembly.

[The Special Constitutional Commission, made up of representatives of the seven parties in the assembly, is continuing its discussions on the constitution. Popular assemblies of working people are also scheduled to discuss the constitution in the near future.

[Currently, Nicaragua is governed by the Fundamental Statute on the Rights and Guarantees of Nicaraguans, which was decreed by the workers' and peasants' government shortly after the July 19, 1979, overthrow of the Anastasio Somoza tyranny. In November 1984 the Nicaraguan people elected delegates to the National Assembly, whose job it is to draft the constitution.

[The following is the full text of the FSLN's proposals for the general principles to be reflected in the constitution. The text has been taken from the FSLN daily, *Barricada*. The translation and footnotes are by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Four hundred eighty-seven years ago, Europe and America discovered each other. Coming from two civilizations at different levels of progress, the European man and the American man unveiled with amazement the violent and dazzling mysteries revealed in that encounter.

Europe saw a new source of enrichment in the people and territory of America. All of America became subjugated, exploited, and aligned with the colonial order.

Pedrarius Dávila was the first governor and captain-general of Nicaragua, beginning in 1527. Domination, trade, and exploitation established a new order, in a colonial relationship justified by divine right and enforced by the holy alliance of popes and kings. It was a new order that legalized the exploitation of man by man. Even the slave trade was authorized by royal charter.

In 1821, Central America won its independence from Spain. But the peoples did not break the chains of exploitation. New powers — Britain, Germany, and the United States —

fought among themselves over who would replace the Spanish power.

U.S. imperialism asserted itself in this role. It thwarted the independence struggle waged by the peoples in the south, north, and center of the insurgent America of Bolívar, Juárez, and Miranda.¹ Our peoples were suppressed in order to align us to the expansionist interests of the U.S. imperialists, who imposed the Monroe Doctrine.²

"America for the United States" was their slogan. The U.S. rulers intervened, occupying and plundering the lands. They made rivers of blood flow in Texas and northern Mexico, which they cut off from the rest of Mexican territory. Blood flowed in Argentina's Malvinas Islands; in Valparaíso, Chile; in Puerto Rico; in Cuba; in Panama; in La Guaira, Venezuela; in the Dominican Republic; in Honduras; in Guatemala; and in Nicaragua.

Walker³ took the place of Pedrarius. Next came the U.S. warships to bomb Nicaraguan ports and the Yankee occupation troops to invade and occupy our country, along with successive governments that defended the exploitation of our people.

All bipartisan regimes represented the same class

I. From Pedrarius to Somoza, the different regimes that imposed themselves on the people of Nicaragua had a class character that institutionalized the right of exploitation of man by man, the right of the privileged minorities

to trample on the working people, the humble people, the peasants.

From Pedrarius to Somoza, feudal, mercantile, and capitalist monopoly was on the throne. In those days, a mixed economy did not exist.

From Pedrarius to Somoza, a bipartisan regime was in place. Under this regime, only the landlords, rich merchants, bosses, and bankers had the right to exercise political power. In those days, political pluralism did not exist.

From Pedrarius to Somoza, an international policy of submission to a foreign power was in effect. Nicaragua became an aligned country, under colonial and neocolonial forms — without sovereignty, without the right to self-determination and independence. In those days, nonalignment did not exist.

From Pedrarius to Somoza, only the wealthy exploiters were owners of the press and radio. Only the capitalists, the bourgeoisie, had access to the means of communication. In those days, there was no freedom of the press.

From Pedrarius to Somoza, the workers, the peasants, all the toilers were denied the right to organize. In those days, freedom of organization did not exist.

From Pedrarius to Somoza, the armies and police were instruments used by the rich exploiters to assassinate and repress the working people of the cities and the countryside. In those days, the people did not have an army or police force.

From Pedrarius to Somoza, education, health care, and housing were denied to the peasants, the workers, the downtrodden. In those days, there was no social welfare for the people.

From Pedrarius to Somoza, there was no justice, freedom, or peace in Nicaragua, because a reign of terror held sway. The exploiters enriched themselves at the expense of the workers and peasants, who gave their blood and sweat through varied forms of exploitation imposed on them by their class enemies.

It was this reign of terror that fed class hatred, class contempt, and class domination by the landlord, the employer, the big merchant, the banker, the bourgeois, the capitalist — the exploiters who had institutionalized their right to crush the people. In those days, human rights were not respected.

The revolution reclaimed the dreams and the blood of the victims of exploitation

II. All these centuries of domination, from Pedrarius to Somoza, were ground to dust by the people of Nicaragua, who triumphed in the revolution of July 19, 1979, led by the Sandinista National Liberation Front.

The long accumulated, just demands, the

1. Simón Bolívar was the principal leader of the struggle for Latin American independence from Spain in the early 19th century. Benito Juárez, president of Mexico in the mid-19th century, led the struggle to oust the French-installed regime of Archduke Maximilian. Francisco Miranda was a Venezuelan general who fought under Bolívar.

2. The Monroe Doctrine, declared in 1823 by U.S. President James Monroe, asserted that any intervention by European countries against the newly independent Latin American nations would be considered by Washington to be "the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States." When the United States became an imperialist country at the end of the 19th century, this doctrine was interpreted in a totally different way. From a policy of defending the independence of Latin American countries against their former colonial masters, it was turned into a justification for Washington's intervention in the affairs of Latin America to protect the interests of U.S. imperialism.

3. William Walker was a U.S. adventurer who invaded Nicaragua in 1854, attempting to force its annexation to the United States as a slave state. He made himself president of Nicaragua, but was driven out by Central American armies in 1856. He was later captured and executed.

tormented voices of the exploited, the tombs of the Indians, peasants, workers, and artisans, of the thousands of women and men who were victims of the totalitarianism imposed by the exploiting masters for more than 452 years — these tombs were opened up on July 19, 1979. The entire people were brought back to life, along with their genuine history, which then began to become known.

The people buried with Somoza the ideas that had arrived with Pedrarius and were used to justify their exploitation. The people defined their new history.

Since July 19, 1979, our interests have coincided with those of the peoples on the road to development, no matter where they are in the world. We are the brothers of the peoples struggling for justice, freedom, independence, and self-determination, and against racism and apartheid. For this reason, we are nonaligned.

We are defenders of the unity of the peoples of Central America, the unity of the peoples of Latin America. We are defenders of the unity of Latin America, of Asia, Africa, Europe, and Oceania, of the unity of the peoples of the world who are building and defending peace.

We are defenders of peace and, therefore, defenders of universal justice. Thus we struggle for a new international economic order that will free the peoples from unjust economic relations and the crushing weight of the foreign debt.

We are defenders of democracy, of this democracy we are constructing, of this power of the workers and peasants, of this people's power that is building a pluralist government for the benefit of Nicaraguan society.

We are defenders of these new economic relations that give power and rights to those who produce the wealth, and under which, all production must benefit the workers and peasants.

We are defenders of this new revolutionary system that sprang from the very roots of the Nicaraguan people, a system that is the power of the workers, the power of the peasants, the power of the working people, a system that will never again be the power of the exploiters.

The original program of the revolution was born with the FSLN and is being applied today

III. In the sixth year of the great people's victory, we are proceeding with the institutionalization of the revolutionary process.

For six years, the Sandinista National Liberation Front has been defending the application of the original program of the revolution.

In the early 1960s, when it arose as the historic choice for the Nicaraguan masses, the Sandinista Front proposed its program to the nation. This program was then systematized and presented to the people in 1969. Later, in October 1977, the Program of the Sandinista Front was elaborated and presented as a governmental program.

The original program of the Sandinista Front is the program of the workers, the peasants, the Nicaraguan working people, who offer all the political, social, and economic sectors of the nation the possibility of participating in the

construction of the new society.

The original program of the Sandinista Front defines a new order in which political, economic, and military power rests with the working people.

That is the program we applied when we confiscated the wealth of Somoza and the Somozaists; when we nationalized the banks and export trade; when we nationalized the mines and natural resources; when we moved ahead to legalize land possession and give the poor peasants land, which has now reached a total of 8.6 million acres.

It is the program we applied when we gave out parcels of land to the humble working people of our cities.

We were consistent with the original program when we brought education, health care, and social services to the working people.

We are consistent with the original program when the organizations of the workers have grown to more than 1,340 unions.

We were consistent with our original program when the press and radio stopped being the monopoly of the totalitarian capitalist exploiters. For the first time in Nicaragua's history, there are newspapers and radio and television stations in the hands of the working people. Thus, freedom of the press really exists in Nicaragua.

We are consistent with the original program when we defend the right of the workers and peasants to organize politically, without denying that same right to other sectors of the nation. For the first time in the history of Nicaragua, seven political parties, of the most varied political — ideological shades, participated in the [1984] elections and joined the National Constituent Assembly.

We are consistent with the original program when we defend our right to independence, to self-determination, and to have friendly relations with all the peoples of the earth. Nicaragua defends an international policy of nonalignment, rejecting all attempts at subjugation by those accustomed to disrespect the peoples.

We are consistent with the original program when we defend the right of the people to organize themselves in their Sandinista People's Army; in the Sandinista People's Militias, and in the Sandinista Police; so that the people can defend their interests; so that never again — ever — will guns defend the land grabbers who jailed, tortured, and assassinated peasants in order to rob them of their land, so that never again — ever — will guns be pointed at the workers, who used to be repressed, jailed, and murdered by an army and police force in the service of the Somozaist-Cosepist⁴ exploiters. These exploiters maintained a politicized army and police force to defend their own class interests.

We are consistent with the original program when we defend the right of Nicaraguans to practice or not practice a religion. We have

4. COSEP, the Superior Council of Private Enterprise, is the main organization of the Nicaraguan capitalist class. It continues to exist today.

promoted and preserved at the same time the religious traditions of the people.

We are consistent with the original program when women, youth, professionals, intellectuals and artists, journalists, artisans, small industrialists — all social sectors — are flourishing organizationally and in their consciousness of being Nicaraguan.

IV. We have been applying the original program of the Sandinista Front throughout these six years. We have not yielded — nor will we ever yield — to the pressures, blackmail, or threats made by Nicaragua's enemies to get us to betray the working people.

There are some who place their hopes in the illusion that through foreign aggression, the Sandinista Front will yield to the terrorism of the U.S. rulers, and the original program of the revolution will be perverted to the benefit of the exploiters and the U.S. imperialist policy of domination. These people even have illusions in the so-called "National Dialogue"⁵ proposed by the U.S. government. To these deluded people, we say, once and for all, that the only national dialogue the Sandinista Front supports is that carried out within the institutional framework of the revolution.

Nicaragua is a sovereign, free, and independent state. We will never go back to accepting the dictates of any foreign power.

In Nicaragua, there is an institutional framework that channels the revolutionary system; this framework must be respected. The revolutionary system is crystal clear. It is a system with its roots in the working class, in the peasantry, in the Nicaraguan working people as a whole. It is a system that establishes the people's power needed for social, political, and economic transformation, but does not negate any social, political, or economic sector. On the contrary, it invites all to participate in the gigantic historic task of creating this society of free men.

The revolution, therefore, is not up for discussion. It is irreversible. Within the system, we all have the right to dissent in order to enrich it, make it more dynamic, and perfect it. It is the participation of all the people in drawing up the constitution of the republic that will give a legal framework to the new system that arose with the revolutionary triumph.

This is also what is at stake in the war the U.S. rulers maintain against Nicaragua, a war that has lasted for more than four years.

The U.S. rulers are determined to destroy the Nicaraguan revolution.

They refuse to recognize the changes that the power of the people brought about on July 19, 1979. They reject the possibility of an independent, free, and sovereign Nicaragua. Appealing to a geopolitical determinism that assumes domination over peoples and governments, they have behaved and continue to behave like imperialists.

From this comes their decision to smash the

5. Refers to the demand made by President Reagan in April 1985 that the Sandinista government negotiate with armed counterrevolutionary groups.

Nicaraguan revolution. It explains the irrational drive of the president of the United States and high U.S. civilian and military officials, who have unleashed domestic and international forces to search out support for their terrorist policy.

The speeches, trips, threatening messages, and press statements of the U.S. president and government officials are violently disproportionate to the size of our small country, which has made a decision to stop being a slave to imperialist policy.

With the world confronting problems of security that threaten the very existence of humanity and with the U.S. strategists of the apocalypse proposing a desperate arms race, we can understand how the barbarians who govern the United States carry out military actions like the one they executed in Grenada or the one they have prepared for Nicaragua.

We can also understand the sympathy the U.S. rulers have for the terrorists they aid materially and morally, terrorists who assassinate children and working people in South Africa, El Salvador, and Nicaragua, all in the name of democracy.

The U.S. strategy is clear: they want to destroy the Nicaraguan revolution in order to kill the hopes for change, democracy, and political and economic independence that are awakening today in Latin America.

By destroying the Nicaraguan revolution, the U.S. rulers want to bury the dream of Bolívar, which today marches forward in the great Latin American convergence that demands political and economic-financial respect for its peoples.

By destroying the Nicaraguan revolution, the U.S. rulers want to kill the hopes of the people of Nelson Mandela in South Africa, who are struggling against apartheid and for their independence and freedom.

By destroying the Sandinista People's Revolution, they intend to strike a blow against the nonaligned nations and even against the struggle of the honest men and women of the United States who are putting up resistance to the imperialist policy of their government.

To reach this goal of liquidating the Nicaraguan revolution, the U.S. rulers continue to drive forward with their state terrorist policy, ignoring international law. Forty years since the defeat of fascism, and 40 years since the founding of the United Nations, this policy, by its words and actions, recalls the days when the fascists began their ill-fated race for military hegemony.

The terrorist actions of the U.S. government have already produced more than 12,000 dead, wounded, or kidnapped Nicaraguans. It has also meant the displacement of more than 72,000 peasants in the war zones and more than \$1.3 billion in material losses.

The necessary infrastructure is already in place to put into practice a direct intervention with U.S. troops.

The aggressive policy of the U.S. government has achieved substantial advances in the U.S. Congress. That body has committed itself to the illegal, terrorist action by approving \$27



1979 demonstration. "Today, workers and peasants are the source of popular power."

million in financial aid to the counterrevolutionary forces. The U.S. government has already invested more than \$130 million sowing destruction in Nicaragua.

The U.S. plan is to increase the number of mercenary forces to no less than 30,000 terrorists, with greater involvement of the governments of Honduras, Costa Rica, and El Salvador as bases of aggression against Nicaragua.

The U.S. plan assumes the use of Nicaraguan political groups, newspapers, church officials, and businessmen as internal forces complementing the military aggression. These groups have the mission of opening up an internal political front.

The U.S. plan dismisses any dialogue or negotiations with Nicaragua or mediation by the Contadora Group.

The U.S. plan promotes the proposal for a dialogue with the counterrevolution as a maneuver to wear us down. This proposal is part of the plan to destroy the Nicaraguan revolution.

The U.S. plan continues the strategy of draining us economically, in the belief that the people will lose their self-confidence, that is to say, their confidence in the revolution, and that they will then even support the intervention of U.S. troops.

The U.S. plan aims to block the drafting of the constitution.

The aggressor's plan continues to escalate, and therefore, defense of the homeland is our predominant task.

Driving forward the task of military defense is the duty of all Nicaraguans. Likewise, it is a duty to deepen the development of an economic policy of survival, so that it corresponds to the level of aggression we are suffering and to the effects of the economic-financial crisis hitting the people of the world.

To advance institutionalization is to defend the revolution

Working to establish the institutional forms of the revolution is also the task of all Nicara-

guans. It is for this reason that, in the middle of the military aggression and economic crisis, we propose to draw up the constitution of the nation, a constitution that backs the institutional framework of the popular, democratic system that arose with the revolutionary triumph.

V. The Sandinista National Liberation Front comes before the Special Constitutional Commission to express its political will to strengthen the institutionalization of the revolution.

The Sandinista Front believes that formal constitutional status should be accorded to the rights for which the heroic people of Sandino fought until they achieved the revolutionary triumph on July 19, 1979, and for which the people continue to fight, defending these rights from foreign aggression.

1. The blood of the peasants, workers, Indians, youth, women, and children — first shed under colonial exploitation and then under yankee expansionism and imperialism — demands a constitution that formalizes the eradication of exploitation of man by man. The Sandinista Front advocates the incorporation of this principle in the constitution.

2. The Sandinista Front advocates that the constitution embody the fundamental principles of the new system that has emerged with the Sandinista People's Revolution and which has represented a change in the power structure; today, workers and peasants are the source of popular power. The constitution should provide a legal framework for the system of popular democracy, which is the power of the working people. It is a democratic system that also guarantees the participation of all political, social, and economic sectors of the nation.

3. The Sandinista Front advocates the constitutional principle of a unified, democratic state with electoral mechanisms to ensure the participation of all national sectors; a state in which the political will, legislation, and adequate mechanisms exist to guarantee the individual, civil, political, economic, and cultural

rights of all Nicaraguans.

4. The Sandinista Front advocates nonalignment, political pluralism, and a mixed economy as constitutional principles that help strengthen the power of working people within the revolutionary system that emerged on July 19, 1979.

5. As a state and a nation that aspires only to peace, we are proponents of détente, adversaries of military conflict, and promoters of peaceful coexistence among the peoples and nations of the world, regardless of their economic, political, or social systems. In this sense, we will advocate that our constitution embody the highest values and the most noble political advancements that belong to the democratic and progressive legacy of humanity. Our laws and institutions, in turn, will be nourished from and become part of the democratic conquests of all peoples of the earth.

6. The Sandinista Front advocates constitutional recognition of the need for Central American integration, based on respect for the self-determination of the region's peoples.

7. The Sandinista Front advocates constitutional recognition of the need to work for Latin American unity, in defense of the self-determination and political and economic sovereignty of our peoples. Nicaragua's acceptance of the Contadora Agreement expresses our identification with Latin American principles.

8. The Sandinista Front advocates that the constitution embody the principles of anti-imperialism, defense of the homeland, national sovereignty and independence, international solidarity, and relations with all nations of the world.

9. The sacrifice of the peasants of Rancherías, Los Arcos, Uluse, El Bijao, La Tronca, Yucul, Jalapa, Waslala, Río San Juan, Rivas, and all Nicaragua, calls for the inclusion of agrarian reform as a constitutional right so that all peasants may own their parcel of land. The Sandinista Front advocates the incorporation of this fundamental right in the constitution.

10. The just demands of working people for health, education, housing, services, and the supply of basic goods are rights which the Sandinista Front considers should be included in the constitution.

11. The Sandinista Front advocates that the principles of genuine democracy and social justice — principles for which Sandino shed his blood — be written into the constitution.

12. The Sandinista Front advocates the right to freely form popular, labor, and social organizations.

13. The Sandinista Front advocates that the constitution ensure that workers and peasants have access to the mass communications media.

14. The Sandinista Front advocates that the constitution uphold the nationalization of exports, banking, and natural resources and state ownership of the holdings confiscated from the Somozas and their accomplices.

15. The Sandinista Front advocates the constitutional principle of autonomy for our brothers and sisters of the Atlantic Coast, in

order to strengthen the unity of the nation.

16. The Sandinista Front advocates the constitutional principle of freedom of religion.

17. The Sandinista Front advocates that the constitution provide for the institutionalization of the Sandinista People's Army, the Sandinista People's Militias, and the Sandinista Police.

18. The Sandinista Front advocates the constitutional principle of respect and veneration of the heroes and martyrs who shed their blood in the liberation struggle and continue shedding their blood on the war fronts in the defense of this free nation.

19. The Sandinista Front advocates that the constitution guarantee support and recognition to the mothers, children, widows, and families of the nation's heroes and martyrs.

20. The Sandinista Front advocates a constitutional principle of recognition and incentives for the men and women who excel in the nation's defense, the military, production, education, science, culture, and sports.

The Sandinista Front has inherited the banners of José Dolores Estrada, [Benjamín] Zeledón, Sandino, Rigoberto [López Pérez], and Carlos [Fonseca]. The Sandinista Front, historic vanguard in the process of social, political, and economic transformation taking place today in Nicaragua, commits itself to continue defending the revolutionary process — which provides for the open discussion and drafting of the constitution in the midst of U.S. aggression — with the discipline, selflessness, and sacrifice of its members.

The Sandinista Front, fist and soul of the Nicaraguan people, will continue defending this process and will never betray the aspirations of the workers and peasants. We will continue building this new homeland with our guns in our hands and the constitution in our hearts, until we achieve the peace denied us today by the yankee enemy of humanity.

National dignity guarantees the future.
Free homeland or death!

10 AND 20 YEARS AGO



December 22, 1975

Washington has supplied \$25 million in arms and support funds over the past three months to one of the sides in the Angolan civil war, according to a recent White House leak. A "high-ranking Government official" quoted by David Binder in the December 12 *New York Times* said that this secret operation was designed "to create a stalemate" in the war.

The official said that another \$25 million worth of supplies was earmarked for Angola. The aid, he said, was to counter the Soviet and Cuban support to the Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA — People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola).

The first \$25 million in arms, according to the source, was distributed by the Central Intelligence Agency, mostly through the Mobutu Sese Seko regime in Zaïre, which supports the Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola (FNLA — Angolan National Liberation Front) and the União Nacional para Independência Total de Angola (UNITA — National Union for the Total Independence of Angola).

The source cited by Binder claimed that the second \$25 million worth of arms and funds, which are to be sent to Angola "shortly," would exhaust the CIA's "contingency funds." Officially, additional aid for the MPLA's rivals would need congressional authorization. Besides directly channeling arms and money to the FNLA and UNITA through Zaïre, Washington has sought to bolster the Mobutu regime's ability to aid its allies. In November, the White House requested congressional approval for \$19 million worth of military equipment to Mobutu, up from \$3.5 million the year before.

President Ford, according to Binder's source, authorized the current \$50 million supply operation because "the Russians are in to win" all of Angola. "Our effort is to have a stand-off between the factions," the government official said, "so as to get all the parties together in a coalition."

WORLD OUTLOOK

PERSPECTIVE MONDIALE

("World Outlook," the predecessor of "Intercontinental Press," was not published from Oct. 29, 1965, to Feb. 4, 1966, due to the illness of its editor, Joseph Hansen. Until February 1986, we will be reprinting selections from 21 years ago.)

December 18, 1964

Robert Williams, the militant American Negro leader living in political exile in Cuba, recently praised the People's Republic of China for conducting a successful test of a nuclear weapon. He offered his comments upon reaching Canton November 4 during a trip to China.

Another well-known American Negro leader, Malcolm X, expressed similar sentiments in an interview granted the Hsinhua News Agency November 5 while visiting Accra [Ghana].

China's successful explosion of an atomic bomb, he said, was "the greatest thing that has ever happened in the twentieth century to the black people."

He said that it helped not only the cause of the Afro-Americans but the cause of all peoples of the world fighting against the imperialists.

He praised the Chinese government's proposal for a world summit conference to discuss the complete prohibition and destruction of nuclear weapons.

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