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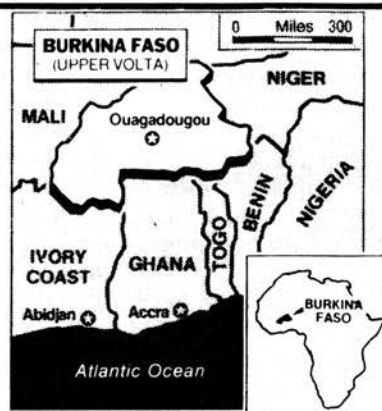
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Reagan snubs Soviet offer, continues nuclear tests

By Doug Jenness

On December 28 the Pentagon conducted its latest nuclear test about 100 miles northwest of Las Vegas, Nevada. The explosion produced a blast 10 times stronger than the bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945. The objective was to try out an X-ray laser powered by a nuclear explosion, with a view to using it in the Pentagon's antisatellite weapons system. This is part of its Star Wars program.

There was nothing exceptional about this nuclear test. It was one of a long string of underground tests Washington has been conducting at its Nevada site as part of its development of a \$4 billion antisatellite weapon.

But what is noteworthy is that on the very same day as the December 28 test, a statement by the government of the Soviet Union was printed in the *Washington Post* calling on the U.S. government to join it in a moratorium on nuclear tests. The statement, which originally appeared in the December 19 *Pravda*, the principal Soviet daily, was published in the *Post* as a paid advertisement by the Soviet government.

The statement noted that on Aug. 6, 1985, the Soviet Union began a unilateral moratorium on all nuclear tests until Jan. 1, 1986. "But it can be extended beyond that date," the document affirmed, "if the United States joins the moratorium as well."

The statement noted that "a joint Soviet-U.S. moratorium on any nuclear explosions would become a major landmark on the way toward eliminating the nuclear danger. . . . The political significance of such a joint step by the USSR and the United States would be great." It would also give a signal to other nuclear powers, the statement said.

France, for example, is currently engaged in a massive testing program in the Pacific that has provoked widespread opposition from Pacific islanders. A U.S.-Soviet moratorium would give a big boost to the struggle to halt French tests in the region.

The proposed moratorium would apply to underground tests. In a 1963 treaty, the U.S., Soviet, and British governments agreed to halt nuclear testing in the atmosphere, underwater, and in outer space. The French government continued to carry out atmospheric tests in the Pacific until 1974, when a strong international campaign forced it to stop.

The publication of the Soviet statement in the *Washington Post* was part of a series of initiatives by the Kremlin to encourage Washington to join the moratorium. Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev reiterated this proposal in his statement at the conclusion of the November summit meeting with President

Ronald Reagan and again in a December 5 letter to the U.S. president.

At every juncture the White House has turned down the Soviet offer. When it isn't simply calling the proposal a "propaganda move," the Reagan administration contends that it would be difficult to verify Soviet compliance.

The Soviet government has responded by pointing out that immediate verification could be achieved by agreeing to a proposal by the governments of Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico, Sweden, and Tanzania to set up special monitoring stations in their countries. Moreover, the Kremlin has stated that it is agreeable to on-site monitoring of nuclear weapons in the Soviet Union. In August the Soviet government permitted the first international inspection of its nuclear reactors.

Reagan responded to Gorbachev's offer on verification with a letter proposing that experts from both countries get together to discuss it. But this is simply a stalling tactic, as Washington pushes ahead with its nuclear testing program.

The real reason for Reagan's obstinate refusal to agree to a moratorium — a move that would have widespread support both in the United States and internationally — was referred to in an article in the December 25 *New York Times*. The *Times* noted that U.S. officials pointed out last summer "that they rejected a moratorium even if it could be verified because it would interfere with the development of new weapons for the proposed space-based missile defense program."

Cuba and UN terrorism debate

By Doug Jenness

In mid-December U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz was in London urging Washington's European allies to contribute more to counterrevolutionary military operations aimed at overthrowing the governments of Nicaragua, Angola, Kampuchea, and Afghanistan. At the very same time, U.S. government officials were cheering the adoption of a resolution by the United Nations General Assembly condemning "terrorism."

This document, adopted December 9, was the result of a decade-long debate in the UN. The compromise resolution offered a loose definition of "international terrorism" as actions "which endanger or take innocent lives, jeopardize fundamental freedoms and seriously impair the dignity of human beings."

This compromise formula was worked out

The Pentagon is driving full speed ahead with its Star Wars missile system. It has already spent \$1.2 billion on the program and has fired two test weapons into space.

When Congress voted December 18 to bar funds for two tests against satellites in space projected for 1986, a Defense Department official declared, "We'll find a way to go ahead." Another Pentagon spokesman said continuing the program "will keep the Soviets' feet to the fire" in arms-control talks.

The Reagan administration has been barreling ahead with its Star Wars program despite the Soviet government's 1983 halt on antisatellite weapons tests.

Moscow's statement in the *Washington Post* said that if Reagan continues to reject a moratorium on underground tests "this will lead to the Soviet commitments under the unilateral moratorium being no longer valid after the announced deadline, which is only a short time away. For obvious reasons, in the face of military preparations overseas, the USSR cannot sacrifice the interests of its security and the security of its allies and friends."

As has generally been the case with nuclear arms, Moscow is forced to develop and expand its weapons systems in order to defend itself from threatening imperialist armaments.

Washington's determination to push ahead with nuclear testing and Star Wars is part of its ongoing military buildup. It continues to reinforce its arsenal of nuclear-tipped missiles, which it is deploying in an ever tighter ring on land and sea around the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, Cuba, Vietnam, and other countries where capitalism has been abolished.

Moreover, Washington is stepping up its assistance to counterrevolutionaries who are attempting to topple the governments of Nicaragua, Angola, Kampuchea, and Afghanistan. And it is beefing up its conventional military forces, which are being readied for bigger interventions, including the massive use of U.S. combat troops, in Central America and other areas of the world. □

in the immediate aftermath of the November summit meeting between U.S. President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. It was vague enough that in the final vote the resolution was adopted unanimously by governments participating.

This vote, however, did not reflect unanimous enthusiasm for the resolution. The heated debate leading up to the resolution's adoption centered around three drafts. One was sponsored by the U.S., Spanish, and other imperialist regimes; another by the Cuban government; and the third by the Colombian delegation.

A compromise was eventually agreed to and submitted to the General Assembly's legal committee, which includes all 158 voting members of the Assembly.

The Cuban delegation, however, strongly

disagreed with the deletion of any reference to "state terrorism." This omission was made in deference to the delegations from the principal imperialist countries, including the United States.

As a result, Cuba was alone in casting a dissenting vote in the December 6 session of the legal committee on a proposal to submit the compromise resolution to the General Assembly. Israel and Burkina abstained. The other 118 participating governments backed the proposal to submit the resolution.

On the following day, a Havana Radio Progreso news broadcast reported that Cuba opposed "all resolutions on terrorism that do not include U.S. terrorism against Nicaragua, attempts by the CIA to assassinate Cuban leaders, Israeli crimes in occupied territories, and South African acts against Angola and the so-called Frontline countries."

"The Cuban delegation," the news report continued, "said the Cuban position is based firmly on principles, because Cuba believes that the United Nations, in approving a document on terrorism, must do so clearly and unequivocally so there will be no doubts."

During the discussion in the legal committee, representatives from Nicaragua, the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and several Arab countries expressed regret that the resolution did not specifically condemn "state terrorism."

Israel's objection to the resolution came from a totally different direction. Israeli UN Ambassador Benjamin Netanyahu said the resolution attempted to "legitimize terrorism" because it referred to the right of self-determination in such a way that it could be applied to Palestine.

After losing the fight in the legal committee and clearly registering its position on the serious flaws in the resolution, the Cuban delegation voted for it in the General Assembly.

Vernon Walters, chief U.S. delegate, called the UN vote, "a symbol of new times." And Robert Rosenstock, another U.S. representative at the UN, called it a "major achievement of this session."

Praise also came from Oleg Troyanovsky, the chief Soviet delegate. "It is an important resolution," he said. "We support it all the way and wholeheartedly."

The debate and vote on this resolution registered political opinions. But like other resolutions adopted by the United Nations, it is clearly unenforceable.

Just one day after the vote against "ter-

rorism," the UN Security Council went into emergency session at the request of the Nicaraguan government to deal with an act of U.S. state terrorism: the use of a SAM-7 missile by CIA-organized mercenaries to shoot down a Nicaraguan helicopter, resulting in the loss of

14 lives.

This underlines the fact the Cuban delegation spotlighted so clearly with its dissenting vote: that the chief terrorists in the world today are the imperialist governments, especially the one in Washington. □

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Debate opened on abortion rights

Botched, illegal abortions leading cause of maternal death

By Cindy Jaquith

MANAGUA — Botched, illegal abortions are the leading cause of maternal death in Nicaragua today. Hundreds of women — if not more — are dying each year.

Thousands more wind up permanently mutilated because of the law that denies women the right to safe, legal abortions.

In November 1985, the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) opened up a public debate in the pages of its daily newspaper *Barricada* on whether to legalize abortion.

10 percent death rate

The first *Barricada* article appeared on November 19. It was a front-page report on a study by doctors and social workers at the Bertha Calderón Women's Hospital in Managua.

Barricada reporter Leonel Urbano described the staggering findings of the study. From March 1983 to June 1985, this hospital alone admitted 8,752 women suffering complications from illegal abortions. This represented 10 patients a day and 45 percent of all admissions to the hospital.

In the 109 cases selected for thorough study, 10 percent of the women died. Another 26.2 percent required hysterectomies, leaving them permanently sterilized.

The study also investigated the psychological effects of illegal abortion. Urbano described the findings: first is "the phase of anguish stemming from the decision to have an abortion, anguish produced by the current illegality of abortion and by the whole ideological-religious, cultural, and social weight of open condemnation of the woman at such a dramatic time."

Second, "the phase of the abortion itself, which is characterized by *pain*, since the procedures are performed outside hospital facilities, without anesthesia or proper care."

Third, "the postabortion phase, characterized by the drama of the usual rejection of the woman by the health-care facilities themselves and by the feelings of guilt and frustration that will always accompany the woman."

The hospital team that conducted the study made two recommendations: first, that the Ministry of Health make birth control devices, currently hard to get, more readily available to women and that it implement family planning and sex education programs; and secondly, that the revolutionary government revise the antiabortion law.

The current antiabortion law

Nicaragua's antiabortion law dates back to the regime of Anastasio Somoza, who was overthrown in 1979 by a revolution of workers

and peasants led by the FSLN. The law prohibits all abortions except those deemed necessary for "therapeutic" reasons — when the woman's life is in danger. A woman who wants a legal abortion must have the approval both of a three-doctor Ethics Committee and of her spouse or parents.

For the tiny fraction of women who are successful in getting permission, a public hospital abortion costs 150 córdobas. An illegal abortion in a back alley costs 10 or 20 times more. In a private clinic it costs up to 40,000 córdobas. And the average cost in a public hospital of caring for a woman injured by a botched abortion is more than 96,000 córdobas.

"The statistics are bloodcurdling," Urbano wrote, "in terms of the deaths, the aftermath for the women, and the financial costs. But the statistics cannot measure the abortion dramas themselves, which are even more grave. After six and a half years of the revolution, very little has been done about this problem."

"In dealing with this question, there is no place for arguments about our tremendous economic limitations, the [U.S.] embargo, or the criminal military aggression" against Nicaragua. "On the contrary, a problem is being neglected that makes the others worse. We are losing lives and money."

Urbano called the antiabortion law "obsolete" and "inhumane. The right of a woman to freely determine her own destiny is being trampled upon."

He called on the Nicaraguan Women's Association (AMNLAE), other mass organizations, teachers, doctors, legislators, and social scientists to begin the urgent discussion on how to solve the abortion crisis. "The debate is now open," he concluded.

'I'm not good for anything'

Barricada followed this article up by running interviews with victims of the antiabortion law, as well as with doctors and others.

One woman worker being treated at the Bertha Calderón hospital told the newspaper she got an illegal abortion from a woman who sells clothing.

"I did it because I had financial problems," she explained. "I have two kids and I was about to lose my job because I was having trouble finding someone to take care of them for me. When I got pregnant again, I thought, it's better to have an abortion than to be unable to take care of my children."

The woman ended up with a perforated uterus. "People say we're no longer good for anything without a uterus," she said to *Barricada*. She is now receiving psychological as well as physical treatment.

The hospital ethics committees have also come under some scrutiny. *Barricada* reported on the case of a woman quadriplegic who became pregnant. According to *Barricada* she was denied a legal abortion because the doctors saw no medical "reason" for the operation.

In another case, a 14-year-old, mentally disturbed girl who had been raped could not get a legal abortion because the doctors decided her pregnancy was proceeding "normally."

Some doctors who support legal abortion told *Barricada* that many physicians practice a double standard. They refuse to perform abortions at public hospitals, hiding behind the law. Then they turn around and perform them illegally in their private clinics for a fat fee.

Working women propel debate forward

The abortion debate is coming to the fore today in Nicaragua as the cutting edge of a more general discussion on the status of women in the revolution. The driving force propelling the discussion forward is working women in the cities and countryside.

In September 1985 AMNLAE held a national congress to examine where the struggle for women's liberation stood six years after working people took political power here. The conclusion of the delegates, large numbers of whom were workers or peasants, was that although the 1979 revolution opened the door to ending women's oppression, big contradictions remain.

The revolution brought thousands of women into productive jobs and into active roles as participants in neighborhood defense committees, AMNLAE, unions, and the armed forces and militias. This began to transform them politically, and it had a progressive effect on the attitudes of men, too.

But Nicaragua's ability to carry out the economic and social transformations necessary to free women from sole responsibility for household and child-rearing tasks has been limited. And deep social prejudices against women remain.

In many ways, the grinding, U.S.-sponsored war that Nicaragua has suffered for nearly five years has brought these contradictions to a head, shining a spotlight on the gap between the status of women today and the goals of the revolution.

On the one hand, the mobilization of thousands of men into the defense effort has accelerated the number of women entering the productive work force, including traditionally "male-only" jobs. At the same time, as AMNLAE delegates pointed out, these women discover they are often victims of discrimination in the factory or on the farm cooperative. And the relatively small number of women en-

tering "male-only" jobs points up the larger number still unable to get hired or trained.

Social and economic crisis

The biggest effect of the war, however, is the social and economic crisis it is imposing on Nicaraguan society, a crisis that bears down on working women particularly hard. The enormous resources the revolutionary government has to spend on defense have meant a sharp reduction in spending for child care, hospitals, and education. These social services are needed all the more by women today.

Washington's economic strangulation of Nicaragua is forcing factories to shut down for lack of materials, increasing unemployment. Inflation continues to spiral and shortages remain.

The burden is especially heavy on women because tens of thousands of them are the sole support of their families. At the Victoria de Julio sugar mill, for example, the majority of the 500 women workers have no husband or permanent companion. This is the case in many other factories as well.

In many cases, the women's husband has been drafted into the army or killed in combat.

Very frequently too, the woman is raising children alone because the man who got her pregnant has abandoned the family.

Many working women have unplanned pregnancies because of the woefully inadequate access to birth control and sex education. Women who want to raise a child face the dilemma of the lack of child care and the need to hold onto their jobs.

Those who opt to terminate a pregnancy have nowhere safe to turn because of the anti-abortion law. A relatively safe — but illegal — abortion in a private clinic costs at least five months' wages for the average woman worker in the cities. It is much higher for a farm worker or peasant. Thus these women are forced into the hands of the butcher abortionists.

More deaths than under Somoza

According to one doctor interviewed by *Barricada*, more women are dying from botched, illegal abortions today than died under Somoza. She attributed this to the war-induced inflation, which makes it even harder to scrape up the cash for a halfway safe abortion.

At the AMNLAE congress, delegates reported on deaths from illegal abortions in both the cities and rural areas and demanded something be done. AMNLAE has gone on record favoring legal abortion. It also calls for a stepped-up program of sex education, family planning, and access to birth-control devices.

As the experience of six and a half years of the revolution has demonstrated, lack of the right to control their own bodies — to decide when and if to have children — limits women's ability to determine every other aspect of their lives, from their personal relationships, to their jobs or education, to their ability to be politically active. Thus the abortion debate gets right to the heart of the question of women's rights as a whole.

On Nov. 25, 1985, *Barricada* carried a feature centerspread, in a larger-than-normal typeface, interviewing a number of doctors about abortion. The individuals interviewed hold a variety of views on the subject and on women's rights in general, giving a preview of the kind of debate that will unfold here as the issue is discussed more broadly.

The opponents of legalizing abortion raised both crude justifications for the current law and, in some cases, arguments against opening up the inevitable political confrontation with enemies of the Nicaraguan revolution.

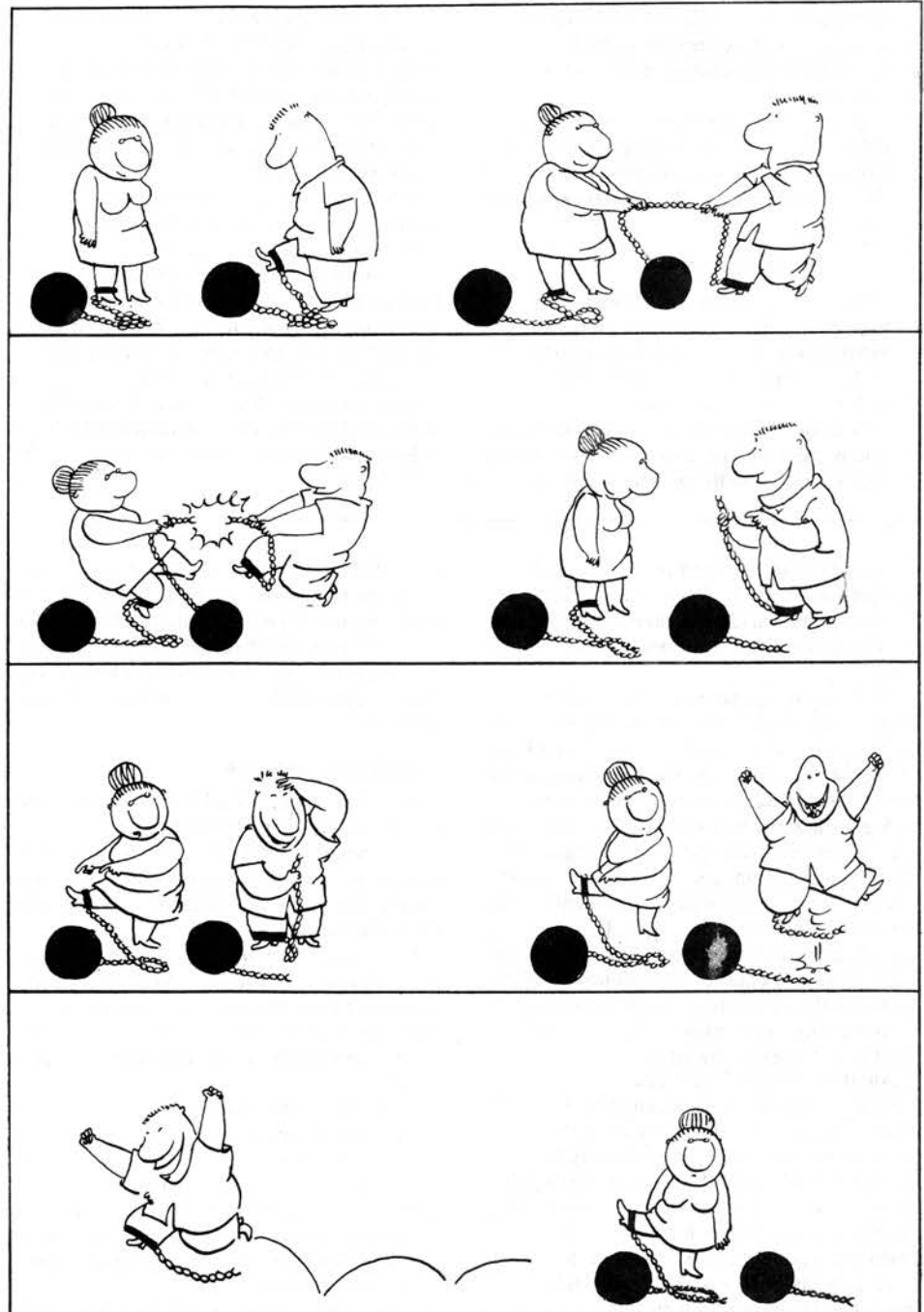
A male gynecologist and supporter of the capitalist Independent Liberal Party said, "I'm not opposed to abortion on moral grounds, but

I disagree with it because of our need to increase the population."

Another gynecologist said he favored family planning, but thought making abortion a right would "legalize the unlegalizable. Because once the egg unites with the sperm, you have life."

A woman doctor, who previously headed the health ministry's mother-infant program, said the antiabortion law should be modified but not repealed. "They'll call us communists" if abortion is made completely legal, she said.

In response to these objections, a woman pediatrician said, "In Nicaragua, the man is only a sporadic figure in the home. So what does the woman do when she gets pregnant for



Cartoon from FSLN daily "Barricada."

Roger Barricada

'What it's like to be a woman'

"A question for the enemies of legal abortion: Have they thought about what it's like to be a woman?"

This was the title of an editorial column in the Nov. 26, 1985, *Barricada*, daily newspaper of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN). It was run as part of the debate on legalizing abortion. The author was staff writer Sofía Montenegro.

Montenegro painted a fictionalized but all too real portrait of the fate of a single Nicaraguan woman who becomes pregnant. Her boyfriend's reaction is: "How could you do this to me? I thought you were taking something." He obviously has no intention of helping support a child. In fact, he secretly has another girlfriend who is also pregnant.

In the following excerpts from the column, Montenegro describes how the woman resolves the dilemma she faces. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.

* * *

You go to friends for advice. Some sell you the line about the virtues and glories of motherhood. Others are more realistic. A child is nice, they tell you, but it's a millstone around your neck.

It never fails that one woman tells you you're very young, and she passes you a slip of paper with an address on it. Or

another tells you, it's a sin to have it done, now get ahold of yourself. A third recites to you the latest encyclical, or whatever it's called, from the pope on abortion. . . .

You, who have never been allowed to make any decisions on your own, now have to make some, and in spades. . . .

The days and weeks pass before you decide. You don't have a nickel. The abortion costs 40,000 córdobas, and you only make 8,000 a month. When you figure out your finances — if you didn't spend a cent of your wages — it would take you five months to save up!

You know the banks don't make loans for abortions. And the hospitals don't do them, because you already went there and asked and they almost bit your head off. Then they asked for the written certificate from a doctor, a statement that the abortion would be "therapeutic."

You stubbornly go to a doctor you know, and he gives you another litany and also assures you that "it's time you had a child."

No one will give you permission to not have a child. You are driven to desperation. You make a sudden move. You go to an amateur who is more like a witch doctor than a doctor. He massacres you.

And amid the pain, the blood, and the shame and humiliation, you realize that the one thing you *do* have permission to do . . . is to die!

the fourth, fifth, or sixth time? She goes out and gets an abortion. Many such women die, leaving behind wandering, abandoned children because today there's no one to take care of them."

"The way things are now, we're not defending these children," she said, "we're condemning them to abandonment. As a woman, I have to defend the right of the woman to decide for herself, including the right to an abortion."

A psychologist and AMNLAE activist said she disagreed with population arguments. "Historically, women's reproductive capacities have been manipulated. Arguments about the need to increase the population have always been used in this country. What's the result? Unwanted children, abandoned children, abused children. . . . In this country paternal irresponsibility still exists. Having children must be a conscious decision."

Another woman doctor added, "Today the woman is not the one deciding to have the child. The responsibility for a baby should be assumed by the couple, but currently the man doesn't care or worry about whether he's going to have a child or not. And the woman today decides nothing. Often she doesn't even decide when she's going to go to bed with the man. I have patients with up to 12 kids who have never had an orgasm in their lives."

Another woman doctor rejected the idea that

expanded birth control and sex education were sufficient to solve the problem: "Sex education is a long-range project. Family planning has not been accomplished yet. We need an immediate solution so that they don't keep dying. There is no other alternative but to legalize abortion."

'Reactionary prejudice'

In a November 24 editorial column, *Barricada* staff writer Daniel Martínez took up some aspects of the discussion. He pointed out that the scope of the problem is far larger than simply the cases documented at the Bertha Calderón hospital.

What about "the ones who didn't make it to the hospital?" he asked. "What about those who don't have the privilege of being able to pay a private doctor to do the curettage secretly, supposedly to preserve their image in society?"

"What about the women reported as suicides from swallowing large numbers of pills, when in reality they were trying to abort themselves with a pseudo-prescription passed by word of mouth . . .? And what about the women living in faraway rural areas who get abortions under who knows what kind of conditions and whose death rate is unknown?"

"Why is abortion a crime?" Martínez asked. "Put another way, why is it that a woman —

single or married — who becomes pregnant without wanting to is forced to carry the pregnancy to term? Why doesn't she have the right to terminate it in a timely and scientific manner, if that's her conscious wish?"

"In my opinion, in addition to socio-economic reasons, many of these abortions take place to hide a love-sex relationship that is supposedly illicit. Does this society we are constructing want to call women to order concerning the legitimacy of their sex lives? No. These terrible abortions happen as a result of a reactionary prejudice, which should be overcome in the new Nicaragua.

"The best way to avoid this problem is by contraception," Martínez said.

"It's true," he wrote, "that for two decades contraception was a weapon of the 'Alliance for Progress,' a type of preventive genocide practiced by imperialism against our people. For this reason, revolutionaries and progressive sectors of our Latin America are quite stubborn regarding the question of contraceptives.

"But in a qualitatively different situation, such as we have under the Sandinista People's Revolution, preventive measures ought to be a free health right, enjoying full institutional backing."

Catholic church hierarchy

In the initial weeks of the public debate, Nicaragua's Catholic church hierarchy did not openly declare its views. But these are well known. The hierarchy is vehemently anti-abortion and has traditionally sought to reinforce the oppression of Nicaraguan women, playing on their social and economic dependence to try to use them as a battering ram against the revolution.

Led by Miguel Obando y Bravo, recently promoted to cardinal by the Vatican, the church hierarchy is a central organizer of the counterrevolution inside Nicaragua. Its current efforts are focused on an ideological offensive aimed at eroding support for the revolutionary government and the FSLN among working people. In this debate, the question of women's rights plays no small part.

Paralleling the propaganda of the U.S.-directed mercenaries outside the country, one theme in the church's ideological arsenal is the lie that the Sandinistas are destroying the Nicaraguan family. This has been coupled with a major appeal to Nicaraguan women to oppose the military conscription of their sons, including the organization of antidraft demonstrations by some mothers of draft-age youth.

The legalization of abortion would strike a big blow to the counterrevolution. It would not only save lives, but increase the confidence of Nicaraguan women in themselves and in the revolution. And it would be a blow to the reactionary campaign of the Vatican internationally against this fundamental right of women.

Thus the debate on abortion is a very important one that has implications for the entire Nicaraguan revolution and extends beyond the borders of that country. □

Abortion rights actions scheduled

Thousands to protest attacks by terrorists, government

By Steve Craine

Women's rights activists in the United States are preparing for the first national women's rights demonstration in almost eight years. The "National March for Women's Lives: East Coast/West Coast" will be held in March to defend the right to safe, legal abortion and contraception.

The basic right of women to control their own bodies has been coming under increasing attack from the government, as well as from right-wing forces that have used terror to back up their antiwomen campaign.

The upcoming demonstration, which was initiated by the National Organization for Women (NOW), will be held in two parts — on March 9 in Washington, D.C., and on March 16 in Los Angeles, California.

NOW is seeking endorsement and cosponsorship from unions; Black rights, student, and anti-apartheid groups; other women's organizations; and all those who support the cause of women's equality. A letter appealing for support states, "We are determined to make these marches massive and magnificent to visually display that we are the actual majority. . . ."

NOW President Eleanor Smeal stated that the actions are intended to "serve notice that the lives of millions of women — both in America and around the world — are threatened by efforts to outlaw abortion and birth control."

Women won a tremendous victory in January 1973 when the U.S. Supreme Court, in the case of *Roe v. Wade*, struck down all federal and state restrictions on access to abortion. This ruling declared abortion a constitutional right for all women.

Because the right to control their own bodies

is so fundamental to women's equal participation in all aspects of society, powerful forces in the capitalist political parties and the church hierarchies want to return to the days before the 1973 court decision.

Before the 1973 ruling, women who had abortions and doctors who performed them were both subject to criminal prosecution in most states. As a result, many women had to bear children against their will. Hundreds of women died, and thousands more were maimed each year by back-alley and self-induced abortions.

Racist oppression meant that Black and Latina women suffered the most from these restrictions on their rights.

Over the past several years, the primary tactic of antiabortion legislation has been to deny tax-supported funding for the medical procedure. First, federal legislation, known as the Hyde Amendment, excluded abortion from the medical services covered in federally funded state insurance programs for the poor.

Then, in 1981, the U.S. Congress cut off federal funding for abortions. Today only 13 states and the District of Columbia provide financial assistance to poor women who need abortions.

In July 1985 the Reagan administration launched a frontal assault on the right to abortion. The U.S. Justice Department filed a brief urging the Supreme Court to reverse its historic 1973 ruling and to "return the law to the condition it was before [*Roe v. Wade*] was decided," eliminating any reference to abortion as a constitutionally protected right.

Four days after this new attack on women's rights, a national convention of NOW announced plans for the March demonstrations.



Abortion clinic in Wheaton, Maryland, was one of at least 24 bombed in 1984.

The urgency of a massive show of support for abortion rights is also underlined by the rash of terror attacks on abortion clinics around the country. On December 2, four bombs, targeting clinics in Oregon, were discovered before they could harm anyone. The following week a bomb exploded in the bathroom of the Manhattan Women's Medical Center in New York City.

The previous month two abortion facilities in Louisiana were hit by arson attacks; one of them was burned to the ground. In 1984 at least 24 arson or firebombing attacks against abortion clinics were reported.

Across the country right-wing opponents of women's rights have stepped up a campaign of intimidation aimed at women seeking abortions. They have tried to disrupt clinic operations and to scare away patients with hostile demonstrations equating abortion with murder. Bloody pictures, and occasionally actual fetuses, have been waved in the faces of women attempting to visit their doctors.

The viciousness of these attacks is being met by a strong response to NOW's call for action. Committees to organize for the abortion rights action have sprung up in many cities and on university campuses.

The union movement has a special stake in this fight for democratic rights. The inability of women workers to control their reproductive lives has always been used by the employers as an excuse to pay women less and to divide the working class.

The Coalition of Labor Union Women has long been a champion of abortion rights. Its participation and the participation of other union bodies will be an important component in the March demonstrations and a powerful answer to the entire right-wing drive against workers' rights. □

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ANC leader's interview with 'Cape Times'

Oliver Tambo addresses South African people

[The following is the full text of an interview with Oliver Tambo, president of the African National Congress (ANC), South Africa's vanguard liberation organization. It was first published in the Nov. 4, 1985, issue of the *Cape Times*, a major daily newspaper in Cape Town, South Africa. It was conducted by the *Cape Times* editor, Anthony Heard, while Tambo was visiting London.

[Although Tambo is a "banned" person in South Africa, and thus may not be legally quoted in that country, the *Cape Times* chose to publish the interview in full. The newspaper said in an introduction that it did so "as a contribution to peaceful solutions in South Africa in a matter of overwhelming public importance." A few days after the interview was published, Heard was dragged off to court and charged under a section of the Internal Security Act. If convicted, he faces a jail sentence of up to three years.

[The footnotes are by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Question. The ANC is officially portrayed in South Africa as a communist, terrorist-type organisation, almost presented to the public as demons. Now, since the public have no access to your views, how would you answer this, particularly the charge of being a communist-controlled organisation?

Answer. It is important to observe that this has been a persistent portrayal of the ANC by many people who are opposed to us. But the ANC is as ANC as it ever was. It is true that the ANC has members of the Communist Party who are members of the ANC. That has been the case almost since time immemorial. The ANC was established in 1912 and the South African Communist Party [SACP] in 1921, and so there has been an overlapping of membership all along the line.

But ANC members who are also members of the SACP make a very clear distinction between these two independent bodies. We cooperate a lot, but the ANC is accepted by the SACP as leading the struggle. There is absolute loyalty to that position. It is often suggested that the ANC is controlled by the Communist Party. . . by Communists. Well, I have been long enough in the ANC to know that that has never been true.

The Communist Party has its positions and the ANC has its positions. The ANC is guided in its policy and all its members are loyal to the Freedom Charter,¹ and that is where you find



OLIVER TAMBO

all the positions of the ANC. They are reflected in the Freedom Charter. We don't depart from the Freedom Charter. So there is no problem of the ANC being controlled.

Now this is also extended to control by the Soviet Union; much of this is propaganda. We go to the Soviet Union as we go to Sweden and to Holland and to Italy to ask for assistance in one form or another. And in all these countries we do get assistance, and assistance is given quite unconditionally. The Western countries, who do support us and we very much appreciate the assistance they give us, do not give us weapons of course, because they generally do not approve and their laws do not allow it. But in the socialist countries we get the weapons, so we go there to get what we can't get elsewhere. And that's all there is in it.

Q. Are you getting more support from the West now?

A. We are getting a great deal of support from the West, increasing support, in material terms, too; that support is growing.

Q. So the charge that you are a communist organisation, you would reject strongly?

A. We would reject that. We would say that there is a communist party. So we are fortunate

because if one is looking for a communist party it is there, but the ANC is not the Communist Party.

Now, the other aspect of being terrorists: Again, there is a lot of exaggeration about this terrorism. Long before we had injured a soul, when we were very, very careful in our sabotage actions to avoid hurting anybody, and that is what we have been doing for the better part of 20 years now . . . even when we started, this was called terrorism. We knew what terrorism was, and we thought that the people of South Africa are being misled about what terrorism was. We could have been terrorists if we had wanted to, but we chose not to be. So even that has been an exaggeration.

It is true that more recently, as for instance in May 1983 when a bomb exploded² and others were attempted, this was stepping up things. It is proper to recognise that this was after 20 years at it. We started in 1961, and 20 years later you get a bomb exploding. We could have done this much, much earlier on numerous occasions. We did not want to be seen as terrorists; we are trying to put on pressure. And we have been notoriously restrained in our armed actions — notoriously.

Q. What future do you see for whites in future South Africa?

A. The ANC and all of us in the ANC have always considered and accepted that whites like ourselves belong to our country. They are compatriots, fellow citizens. We took the earliest opportunity to dispel the notion that we were fighting to drive the whites out to somewhere, and we made it clear that they belong to South Africa. They had their role to play as we would like to think we had a role to play, although we are excluded. And so this has been basic.

We have asked whites to join us in the struggle to get rid of the tensions that come with the apartheid system. We have hoped that we could together build the future nonracial South Africa, and by nonracial we really do mean nonracial. We mean a society in which each one feels he or she belongs together with everybody else, where the fact of race and colour is of no consequence, where people serve according to their abilities and their skills, where we together work to unite our people, and we

2. On May 20, 1983, ANC guerrillas detonated a car bomb outside the South African air force headquarters in Pretoria, killing 18 people, many of them air force and other military personnel. This action came in retaliation for a December 1982 South African military attack on Maseru, the capital of the independent country of Lesotho, in which 42 South African refugees and Lesotho citizens were killed.

1. The Freedom Charter is the program of South Africa's national, democratic revolution. It was first adopted by some 3,000 delegates from a wide vari-

have adopted policies which discouraged the polarization of our people either into ethnic groups or into white versus black.

Q. And do you distinguish between any particular white group?

A. No, no. Our charter says that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, and we say that people who have chosen South Africa as their home are welcome there. There is plenty of room for them, and we should accept them as South Africans and they in turn should accept us as South Africans. This is the kind of society that we are hoping will emerge.

Q. Is there any reassurance or assurance that you could give whites about their physical safety, their jobs, and their home security under an ANC-led government? How would you address the question of their insecurity, which is manifest at the moment?

A. What we would hope our white compatriots will learn to understand is that we don't really see them as whites in the first instance. We see them as fellow South Africans in the first instance. They are as good as black. In fact, let us say, they are Africans. We see them as Africans. We are all born there in that country, or most of us are. We live on this continent. It is our country. Let's move away from these distinctions of Europeans and non-Europeans, whites and nonwhites.

Q. So, it is security for all, as it were?

A. It is. It is security for all, and it would be in the interests of all of us that everybody feels secure. Everybody's property is secure; everyone's home is secure. The culture is secure. We believe our cultures will begin to merge. We have got a rich variety which, when it comes together, is really going to be something we can put out to the world. So all this would be respected. There would be room for it all.

But the main thing is, and the sooner we

We have asked whites to join us in the struggle . . .

begin to grapple with this problem the better, not to proceed on the basis that the Africans are going to do something to the non-Africans, but to begin on the basis that we all belong to that country. Let us not look at one another's colour. Let us not address that. Let us see one another merely as fellow citizens.

Q. How do you view the business leaders, the PFP [Progressive Federal Party], the dominees [religious figures] who have been seeking talks with the ANC? How do you feel about this?

A. We feel very good indeed because, you see, in the fifties when we were a legal organisation we were getting across very effectively to the white community.

The ANC was getting accepted, and its objectives were getting generally accepted among the whites. We were uniting the country where apartheid separated it. Now this is because we had access. I recall Chief Albert Lutuli [the late ANC leader] going to Cape Town . . . and do you remember the effect he had, the impact he made? Well, when he came back to Johannesburg from that trip, there were thousands of white people at Park Station, thousands who came to meet him as a result of the impact he had made. So this is the kind of situation that had developed.

Then we got banned and this contact was broken. And now the white community has been brought up to regard the ANC as something very, very dangerous. The one effect of this visit by the businesspeople has been to open the lines of communication, because I am sure they saw us as something very different from the way we had been projected all the times, and I think they said as much.

Q. Are you keeping in touch?

A. We do keep in touch. And then we next looked forward to the visit of the young people.³ We thought, what a good thing that they should get together and begin to look at their future together. This was a very good thing. And the contribution is not one-sided. It is not as if we are giving or receiving all the time. I think we are enriching one another with views about what should be done with our situation.

We had hoped to see the ministers of religion who wanted to come. We thought that was another opportunity. Then of course the PFP came along, and we had very good exchanges with them. All this is much-needed communication, especially at this time, because at some point we have got to agree on what to do about our own future.

Q. Could you briefly set out your economic theory, particularly on questions like nationalisations and wealth redistribution?

A. I don't know if I would call it a theory. It appears in our charter, and all we do is to interpret what the charter says. We have not attempted to depart from that in any way. We start with what the charter says, and broadly the interpretation is that the state would control some of the industries, solely with a view to ensuring an equitable distribution of the wealth that we have, and I think that this was at the back of the minds of the people who drew up the charter, and it was more than the ANC.

We said our country is poverty-stricken as far as the blacks are concerned, and by blacks I mean Coloureds and everybody else. . . . They are very poor. Even the whites are not really wealthy, but the wealth is contained in

3. A reference to an attempt by eight students from the Afrikaans-language Stellenbosch University to travel to Lusaka, Zambia, in October 1985 to meet with representatives of the ANC Youth League. The trip was blocked when the South African government seized the students' passports.

the hands of a few. And we look at the country: 13 percent overcrowded by millions of landless people who are starving and dying.⁴

What do you do about this? Where do you get the land from to give them? You have got to address that question. You have got to say how to end this poverty, how do we handle the wealth we produce in such a way that we can relieve some of these problems. The solution we saw was one of nationalisation, and, of course, when we meet the businesspeople they say that nationalisation will destroy the South African economy.

Q. Do they accept some measure of redistribution?

A. They seemed to. Yes they do. They ac-

Our country is poverty-stricken as far as the blacks are concerned. Even the whites are not really wealthy, but the wealth is contained in the hands of a few . . .

cept some measure of redistribution. It is the method, the mechanism, how to achieve it — this is of course where we did not agree and could not agree. But they accepted, they understood, what we were trying to get at: That you cannot have a new South Africa which does not address this problem.

Q. What about private property; how far would nationalisation extend, as you see it?

A. It would be a mixed economy. And certainly nationalisation would take into account the situation as we find it at the time — the realities of the situation in which we find ourselves. But there would be private ownership, that would all be geared to the situation that obtains at the time. Also, we don't envisage fighting in the streets over it. We think that we will have to approach this from the point of view of what the people want. If the people want one form of distribution above another, well, it must be like that.

Q. There would be a debate about the level of nationalisation?

A. Yes, there would be a debate.

Q. What sort of environment could that debate take place in? Would you see free media, free expression, freedom of newspapers?

A. Absolutely.

Q. What about violence? In what circumstances would you as leader of the ANC be

4. A reference to the Bantustans, the impoverished rural reserves for Africans that comprise 13 percent of the entire country.

prepared to renounce violence and start talks? What are the circumstances that can bring that about, because I think that's what, frankly, everyone wants, on all sides, to stop. I am sure that no one wants it to go on forever.

A. No, not even we. This question of violence worries many people. The unfortunate thing is that people tend to be worried about the violence that comes from the oppressed. And so the tendency is to want to know, as you want to know, on what terms would we end violence. Really, there would be no violence at all if we did not have the violence of the apartheid system. And even if there was, and there has been for two decades, it's been restrained. But if you look at what comes from the other side, during those two decades there has been massive violence.

So we then have to say to ourselves: Of

There would be no violence at all if we did not have the violence of the apartheid system . . .

course we can stop our struggle, we can stop even our violent actions, but on that basis what would be the reason for that? And in return for what?

Q. Is there a possibility of a truce?

A. There is always a possibility of a truce. We see the possibility of a truce. It would be very, very easy, if for example, we started negotiations. We have said that negotiations can start, serious negotiations. . . .

Q. With the government?

A. Yes, with the government when they are ready, because at the moment we think they are not ready. And we have said to them that if you wanted negotiations, we would not go into that without Nelson Mandela and the other political leaders and the political prisoners. Now, a serious indication of readiness for negotiations would be the release of all these leaders, because they have got to be part of the process of preparation for serious negotiations which will not just be talks for the sake of talking. It is quite conceivable that in that situation of preparing for negotiations and looking at necessary conditions and so on, this question could arise. But we have had a problem about just saying we are now suspending our struggle, which is what it would mean.

Q. On one side, as it were?

A. On one side, without any indication on the other side of their willingness to do anything about what every one of us knows is their violence. We have said: Lift the state of emergency, pull out the troops from the townships, and the police. And release the political prisoners. We have even said unban the ANC. Do all these things to create a climate.

Q. Which you would welcome?

A. We would welcome a climate of that kind, and if the rest of the leaders were there I think it would be time to get together and put the question: Can we really do anything about this? Everybody would then be there. But we are getting this persistent refusal on the part of Botha either to release Nelson Mandela and the other political prisoners, and we say: What are you going to do with treason trials . . . it is simply a form of repression. Who are you going to negotiate with, if you want to negotiate. If he withdrew the treason trials and did all these things by way of lifting the pressures that rest on us, we would begin to see that the other sides are ready to talk.

But we have argued that it is not necessary for hostilities to cease before negotiations start. Before the Nkomati accord, there were lengthy negotiations between the South Africans and others before there was any signing of an agreement. The agreement that was signed in Lusaka between the South Africans and the Angolans was preceded by a series of meetings and negotiations.⁵

Q. Is anything going on at the moment . . . i.e., talks about talks between the ANC and the South African government?

A. No, nothing at all. Which is why we think that they are not ready to have any talks. They are not even ready for other people to talk to us. We are South Africans. If we meet we can only talk about our country. We are not going to fight about it. We talk about it, and they don't like this. But I think what they do not like is that in meeting we get to understand each other better, and we, the ANC, certainly benefit from these talks, and we would think that those we talk to also benefit. So this is moving in the direction of resolving our problems, but they are not prepared for that.

Q. Violence against people, civilians. What is the ANC's attitude on this, bearing in mind the fact that down the years the ANC has in my opinion held back to a great extent on what one might call indiscriminate violence or going for soft targets?

A. I am glad you have put it that way, because it is often forgotten that we have been at the receiving end all the time, and we have held back. And it is not conceivable that we could go on like that indefinitely without anything changing. But one must see in this holding back the reluctance of the ANC on questions of violence. But when once, of course, we have decided we have got to fight, then we must fight.

Q. What about soft targets?

5. The Nkomati accord was a nonaggression pact signed between the South African and Mozambican governments in March 1984; the Lusaka agreement, signed in February 1984, dealt with the terms of a South African military withdrawal from the areas of southern Angola that it then occupied.

A. The question of soft targets has been exaggerated out of all proportion. As I have once had occasion to observe, when the police go into a township and shoot, when they did on the 21st March, repeating Sharpeville,⁶ they were hitting soft targets, and this whole year has been a year of shootings of, really, soft targets. So people are being killed. It has never been quite like this. But they are being shot, and even children are being killed . . . so when the ANC talks about soft targets this creates an alarm, and yet the ANC is going no further than saying that we have got to intensify our struggle if we are in a struggle. If we stop, we stop. But if we are in struggle and we feel the demand of the situation is that we struggle, then we must intensify that struggle. We have held back for too long. Now, if we do intensify we are not going to choosing carefully to avoid hurting anybody, but we will move into military personnel, police, and so on.

Q. But you won't go for civilians as such?

A. No, we will not go for civilians as such. We think that civilians will be hit as they are hit always. They were hit in Zimbabwe. . . .

Q. In a crossfire situation?

A. A crossfire situation, in any war situation.

Q. But not cinemas and supermarkets and . . . ?

A. We will not go into cinemas and bars and places like that. We won't do that. But we will certainly be looking for military personnel, police, and so on.

Q. Why will you hold back, because often in guerrilla war the limits do get more and more extended? Is it a moral feeling about killing civilians, or what?

A. Because we are not fighting against

We are not fighting against people, we are fighting against a system . . .

people, we are fighting against a system and we can't kill people. Why? Why would we kill them? We cannot even kill whites because we are not fighting whites at all. We are fighting a system.

Q. On foreign policy, do you see [the future] South Africa as a pro-Western, nonaligned, or as a Soviet-socialist-leaning country? For instance, in the sale of minerals and raw materials — would these be denied to

6. On March 21, 1985, South African police massacred 19 Blacks in the township of Langa, near Cape Town. This came on the 25th anniversary of a massacre that very same date in 1960 in Sharpeville, in which 69 Blacks were shot down.

anyone? What about Commonwealth membership? Where do you see South Africa standing in the world?

A. First of all, nonaligned in terms of East-West, developing trade with all countries of the world, strengthening trade links, so maintaining the lines of trade for mutual benefit.

Q. So the Americans can be sure of getting their needs?

A. The Americans will be sure to get it, if they are willing to pay for it. We would want to trade with all the countries of the world, in the interests of our own economy.

We would come back to the Commonwealth because the basis for the exclusion of South Africa would have gone. And we will establish very peaceful relations with countries. We will work very closely with the rest of the African continent, and certainly with the countries of southern Africa. We would become members of SADCC,⁷ or it might be called another name by then, and we could build together a small common market of our own. South Africa would therefore be admitted into this wider economic grouping that we have in southern Africa. And we would be a very influential country in the world.

Q. Do you feel this would unleash resources that we have not been able to unleash?

A. I am certain. I think the economy itself would be stimulated by the energies that would be unleashed, and the prospects of peace and stability. We think the country would be transformed, politically and socially and economically.

Q. I presume you favour sanctions. Do you to the point where people lose jobs and the economy suffers seriously?

A. We think the economy must be put into difficulties because the economy strengthens the regime. It enables them to do all the things that they want to do. This question of losing jobs, for the victims of apartheid it is nothing. To be a victim of apartheid means to be many, many things above losing a job, which you are losing all the time anyway. And the way we looked at it is: The more effective the sanctions are, the less the scope and scale of conflict.

Q. If there was a new grouping in South African white politics, with liberal Afrikaners who were formerly Nationalists and Progressive Federal Party people like Slabbert forming a new bloc, would you be prepared to deal with them and on what basis?

A. We have met Van zyl Slabbert, and we hope to meet various leaders of organisations.

7. The Southern African Development Coordination Conference, comprised of the governments of Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The SADCC aims to lessen the southern African region's economic subordination to South Africa.



Marchers at Cape Town funeral carry portrait of jailed ANC leader Nelson Mandela.

An organisation that is opposed to the apartheid system we regard as on our side. I don't think that we would refuse contact with such an organisation, because we would see it moving in the direction that we are. We do of course encourage our white countrymen to mobilise and make their contribution to changing the apartheid system, and on that basis we ought to be able to find a modus vivendi with them.

Q. You strike me as a somewhat reluctant revolutionary. With what measure of enthusiasm did you turn to accept that there had to be violence? How did you yourself personally respond to this?

A. I suppose I was angry and frustrated, like we all were, and I continued to be angry and frustrated, to feel that this system must be fought. But I was a full supporter of the policy of nonviolence because we thought it would bring us the fulfillment of our objective. When that failed then we had to look for an alternative. We found the alternative in combining political and armed actions, and it is one of those things that you have to do, as there is no alternative. I don't think I am peculiar in this respect. I think that many people in the ANC would be glad if there was no need for violence, but the need is there and we have got to go ahead with it, bitter as it is.

It is painful to see anybody being killed, to see children being killed, no matter who kills them. The death of children is a painful thing, and you do have to say what brought us to this situation where these things are happening. We naturally feel that it is the system that has made it impossible for us to avoid what we strove to avoid with such resolve when we

were first confronted with this violence. But as individuals, and certainly as an individual, I don't like violence.

Q. You are enjoying great attention in London. To what do you ascribe this?

A. I think, generally, in many parts of the world there is a lot of interest in what is happening in South Africa, and people are discussing it. And when a member of the ANC in my position is around, many people want to try and understand where we go from here. What is more, the discussion now revolves around the question of what sort of South Africa. In the past there was just denunciation of apartheid and so on, but a new interest has emerged, an interest in what takes the place of what we are seeing now and how do we move from the present to something different. This represents real movement forward for us. We have reached the point where people are expecting change and are beginning to reflect what that change involves, and this has been part of the interest. People want to know, when apartheid goes (because they are sure apartheid is going), what takes its place.

Q. To what extent is the current internal unrest in South Africa orchestrated by the ANC and to what extent is it spontaneous?

A. Both words are not very applicable. There is a great deal of spontaneity in the sense that when you shoot at people they are angered and want to do something in retaliation. You would not say that the ANC is orchestrating all these responses. They are almost natural. So there is an element of spontaneity. But I would not use the word orchestrated.

I would say that the ANC has called on our people, and in some cases they are very disciplined about it, in others there are excesses; the ANC has said, let us destroy these structures of separation and apartheid. That is where it starts. Now, in this process other factors come in. The authorities come in and shoot and the people respond . . . and you have a situation of escalation which can tend to conceal the true nature of the conflict as being the people resisting the implementation of the apartheid system and preventing it from working. This is the essence. □

Castro book printed in Iran

A recently published collection of speeches by Cuban President Fidel Castro is selling well in bookstores in Iran.

Less than one month after its release in October 1985, nearly 3,000 copies of the Farsi-language *Fidel Castro Speaks, Vol. 1* were sold. This 716-page volume includes 18 speeches and interviews by Castro from 1960 to 1981 and a chronology of the important events of the Cuban revolution.

It is the second book in a series published by Solidarity Publications. The first, *In Defense of the Nicaraguan Revolution: The Sandinistas Speak*, was published earlier in 1985.

Yevtushenko and artistic freedom

Are there new openings in long fight against Stalinist repression?

By Doug Jenness

There is no doubt that the most significant event at the recent writers' congress in Moscow was Yevgeny Yevtushenko's blistering attack on censorship, silence, distortion of history, and privilege in the Soviet literary world. (The full text of his speech is reprinted on page 14.)

Yevtushenko, one of the Soviet Union's best-known and most popular poets, told the congress, "When you read the periodically re-touched pages of our modern history, you bitterly see that the pages are interspersed with white spots of silence and concealment, dark spots of obsequious truth-stretching and smudges of distortions."

"Only not concealing and not hushing up things in our native land," he appealed, "can give us the moral right to be universal. That is what socialist civic conscience is all about."

New York Times correspondents in Moscow reported that Yevtushenko's speech received prolonged applause and that many other writers phoned him about it following the congress.

That so prominent a literary figure as Yevtushenko, whose poetry is regularly published in major Soviet journals, made this speech at this time testifies to the mounting pressure of writers against the stifling restrictions on Soviet literature.

Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev has called for innovations in other areas of society, especially the economy, and has initiated some reorganization in the government and the top leadership bodies of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). Writers and others are attempting to test whether or not an opening also exists to challenge the censorship and conformity imposed on art and literature by the Soviet bureaucracy.

Yevtushenko: the rebel youth

More than two decades ago Yevtushenko was internationally known as a poet with a revolutionary internationalist outlook and as a rebel against the bureaucratic strictures of the Soviet regime. In recent years, however, he has not been as outspoken in his criticisms of the Soviet government.

Born in 1933, Yevtushenko began to come to the fore as a recognized poet during the period of de-Stalinization following the death of Soviet leader Joseph Stalin in 1953. General Secretary Nikita Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin at the 20th Congress of the CPSU in 1956 gave this process increased momentum.

Even though all restrictions were far from being lifted, writers and artists had more opportunities to express themselves than they had



YEVGENY YEVTUSHENKO

under Stalin's reign of terror. Some writers like Yevtushenko hoped the unfolding process would lead to a return to the greater freedom of expression that existed in Soviet society in the first years after the 1917 Russian revolution, when Lenin was alive.

These writers attempted to press the openings as far as they could. They became popular, especially among the younger generation, and their public readings drew large throngs.

One of Yevtushenko's most famous poems was "Babi Yar," written in 1961. Babi Yar was a ravine near Kiev in the Ukraine where thousands of Jews were massacred and buried by the German invaders during World War II.

Although many memorials were built in the Kiev area following the war, the Soviet bureaucrats disregarded requests to build one to commemorate the tragedy at Babi Yar. Yevtushenko's poem implied that the Soviet hierarchy's callous indifference was due to anti-Semitism. Appealing to the Russian people, he wrote:

"... I know you.
Your nature is international.
Foul hands rattle your clean name."

The publication and circulation of this poem contributed to the effort that eventually forced the government to erect a monument at Babi Yar in 1966.

Like many young people throughout the world in the early 1960s, Yevtushenko was

profoundly inspired by the Cuban revolution. He made several trips to Cuba and had many discussions with Cuban President Fidel Castro. Yevtushenko's enthusiasm for Cuba went far beyond the prescribed formulas of Soviet diplomacy. He was captivated by its revolutionary spirit and its freedom of expression. He wrote many poems expressing his feelings for the revolution.

In one poem, "Russia and Cuba," published in *Pravda* in December 1962, Yevtushenko wrote:

"... upon this island, where
Lenin has been adopted by new kin,
in a similar but unlike figure,
Russia sees her own youth once again."

Yevtushenko was in Cuba in late 1961 during the period when Aníbal Escalante was bureaucratically attempting to dominate the Integrated Revolutionary Organizations (ORI), predecessor to the Cuban Communist Party. His factional clique operation was cut short by the majority of the party leadership, headed by Castro. Escalante was removed from his position as ORI organizational secretary, and the party was reorganized on a democratic basis. Castro made a nationally televised speech in March 1962 to explain to the Cuban people what had happened.

A couple of months before Escalante's removal, Yevtushenko wrote a poem called "The Mozarts of Revolution" in which he likened Castro to Mozart and bureaucratic cliquists like Escalante to the musician's jealous rival, Italian composer Antonio Salieri. The poem, published in the Soviet literary journal *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, explained that the Mozarts of revolution always have their Salieris, "but the Mozarts — prove themselves stronger."

He concluded the poem with the following stanza:

"... trusting in that music [of the
revolution] wholly,
I have been of its Mozarts
and not of its Salieris."

Stalin's heirs

At its Central Committee meeting in late 1962, the CPSU decided to permit more leeway in criticizing Stalin. In the weeks following this action, there was a literary outpouring against the terror imposed during the regime of the deceased tyrant. A couple of novels were legally published, including *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* by Alexander Solzhenitsyn. This was based on the author's own experience in a Soviet prison camp during

World War II.

Much poetry was also published, including some by Yevtushenko. His sharpest, "Stalin's Heirs," had actually been written in October 1961 when Stalin's body was removed from the mausoleum in Red Square. But the officials held up publication for a year.

As the title indicates, Yevtushenko went beyond criticizing Stalin. "Yes, we have moved him out of the Mausoleum," he wrote. "But how are we to remove Stalin from Stalin's heirs?" Stalin, he observed, "left many heirs all over the globe."

As Stalin's heirs in the Kremlin were attempting to clean their skirts of the hated leader in late 1962 and early 1963, they simultaneously opened a campaign against artistic freedom. This initially took the form of attacking abstract art and jazz. Showings of abstract art were canceled or sharply curtailed. Khrushchev signaled the official attitude toward abstract art with the crude remark, "You can't tell whether such paintings were done by human hand or smeared by a donkey's tail."

Yevtushenko came under attack for defending the right of artists to use abstract expression. Khrushchev complained that the young poet justified his position by pointing to the example of Cuban artists with different views of art, who at the same time defended the revolution.

In April 1963 Yevtushenko's scheduled tour of the United States was "postponed," and the Soviet press published demands to prohibit his travel abroad altogether.

The opposition to him had escalated following the publication of his memoirs, *A Precocious Autobiography*, in five installments in the French left-wing weekly, *L'Express*. This work presented the poet's unorthodox views of Soviet society and the bad conditions facing Soviet writers.

Under pressure from the Khrushchev regime, Yevtushenko "confessed" his error in having the *Autobiography* published.

Sharp reversal

Within a short time the process of de-Stalinization in the field of literature and art had suffered a sharp reversal. Many critical writers stopped speaking out as much. Others began publishing and circulating their writings clandestinely.

By the 1970s the crackdown against freedom of expression had become more severe. Many writers were jailed, placed under house arrest, or exiled. Some were placed in mental hospitals for "treatment." This situation did not substantially change in the 1980s.

Yevtushenko was among those who succeeded in maintaining their legality by limiting and softening their public criticisms. At some important junctures, however, Yevtushenko has been very open in his criticisms.

Unlike many of the Soviet dissident writers of the 1960s and 1970s who ended up abandoning communism and praising the imperialist governments, Yevtushenko has remained a communist who defends the Soviet Union against imperialism.

In the mid- and late 1960s Yevtushenko was on the editorial board of *Yunost*, the organ of rebel youth writers.

At the 23rd Congress of the CPSU in 1966, *Yunost* was subjected to repeated denunciation for "ideological defects" and for publishing works by Alexander Tvardovsky, editor of the Soviet literary monthly *Novy Mir* and a leading representative of the anti-Stalinist intellectuals.

Later Yevtushenko joined other writers in opposing the censorship of Solzhenitsyn, and urged that his novel *Cancer Ward* be published. He opposed Solzhenitsyn's expulsion from the Union of Writers.

Shortly after Solzhenitsyn was arrested in February 1974, Yevtushenko published an open letter in the Milan daily *Il Giorno* defending Solzhenitsyn. The letter, entitled "Is It a Crime to Defend a Man?" explained that while he did not agree with many of Solzhenitsyn's views, the government's action against the author was wrong. He described the various maneuvers by the bureaucracy to get him to publicly attack Solzhenitsyn, including the cancellation of his public performances.

In a statement to the Union of Writers, he stated, "I have proven my adherence to the ideas of socialism not only by my verses but also in public appearances abroad, when young fascist toughs attacked me right on stage, trying to drag me down from it. Now, attempts are being made to drag my poetry down from my very own native, Soviet stage."

Yevtushenko reminded the writers' organization that *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* and "Stalin's Heirs" were never reprinted by Soviet authorities. "Instead," he said, "a number of memoirs and novels were published in which Stalinist blunders were artificially painted over and history was distorted with beautifications."

Yevtushenko was among the Soviet literary figures and intellectuals who spoke out against the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968.

He sent a telegram to Soviet leaders Leonid Brezhnev and Aleksei Kosygin on August 22 denouncing the invasion. "I am deeply convinced," he said, "that our action in Czechoslovakia is a tragic mistake and a bitter blow to Soviet-Czechoslovak friendship and the world Communist movement."

Supports Vietnam revolution

Yevtushenko also strongly supported the struggle of the Vietnamese freedom fighters against U.S. imperialism. In 1970, when the National Guard shot and killed four Kent State University students who were protesting U.S. aggression in Vietnam, Yevtushenko wrote a poem addressed to one of the students, Allison Krause.

The poem, published in *Pravda* on May 18, 1970, identified with both the antiwar struggle in the United States and the liberation struggle in Vietnam.

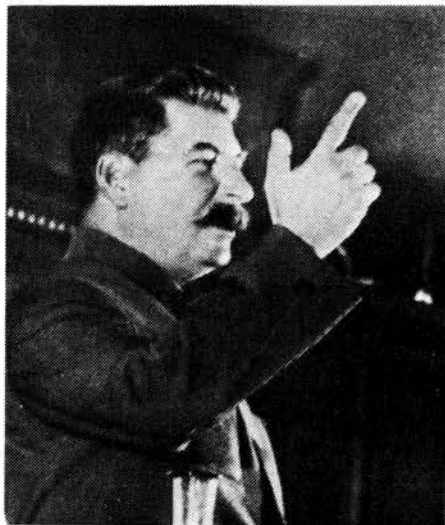
The following day, the *New York Times* selectively reprinted excerpts, attempting to transform a revolutionary poem into a purely pacifist one.

This is a bit ironic because in reprinting Yevtushenko's recent speech, the *Times* scandalized *Literaturnaya Gazeta* for publishing only excerpts of the speech and undermining its critical content. The abridged version in the Soviet literary journal appeared as part of a 10-part spread on the writers' congress. The *Times* published the full text, putting in italics the sections omitted in the Soviet Union.

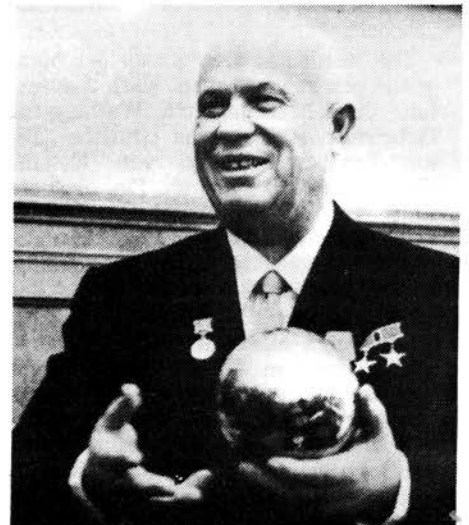
Putting the *Times* and its hypocrisy and anti-Sovietism aside, there are some revealing things to note about what the Soviet authorities decided to delete.

Yevtushenko's phrase that Lenin was "not so fond of" poet Vladimir Mayakovsky was eliminated.

Mayakovsky was a prominent writer who supported the Russian revolution of October 1917, even though he had many political disagreements with the Bolsheviks. Lenin was also among the Bolshevik leaders who didn't



JOSEPH STALIN



NIKITA KHRUSHCHEV

care for Mayakovsky's literary style.*

Under the pressure of the deepening bureaucratization of the Soviet Union in the late 1920s, Mayakovsky committed suicide in 1930. The Stalinist officialdom then selectively utilized some of his writings to promote "socialist realism" as the only legitimately revolutionary art. Mayakovsky was virtually

*On one occasion, apparently the one Yevtushenko refers to in his speech, Lenin praised one of Mayakovsky's poems for its political content in spite of his dislike for the poet's style.

In a report to a group of Communist workers in March 1922 that took up the problems of bureaucratism, Lenin stated, "Yesterday I happened to read in *Izvestia* a political poem ["Incessant Meeting Sitters"] by Mayakovsky. I am not an admirer of his poetical talent, although I admit I am not a competent judge. But I have not for a long time read anything on politics and administration with so much pleasure as I read this. In his poem he derides this meeting habit, and taunts the Communists with incessantly sitting at meetings" (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 223).

DOCUMENTS

Speech by Yevtushenko

Soviet poet opposes concealment, hush-up

[The following is the text of a speech given by Soviet poet Yevgeny Yevtushenko to a writers' congress held in Moscow, Dec. 11-14, 1985. The translation from Russian is by the *New York Times*, which published the speech December 19.]

* * *

Two citations. Tolstoy: "The epigraph that I would write for history would say: I conceal nothing. It is not enough not to lie. One should strive not to lie in a negative sense by remaining silent."

Shchedrin: "A system of self-flattery might cause rather pleasant dreams, but at the same time a rather rude awakening."

Not concealing anything and remaining silent about nothing are the cornerstones of civilization, baked to the point where their bottoms are burnt, but one on which Russian literature has stood and will continue to stand.

Lenin was nurtured on Russian classics. This ethic enabled him to withstand the test of power and fame, unlike his unchosen successor. When the country was torn by dislocation and hunger, Lenin was not afraid to attack the newly emerged Soviet bureaucracy and Communist arrogance, support Mayakovsky — whom he was not so fond of — for his poems that assailed bureaucracy and, putting the interests of the famished nation ahead of ambition and schemes, painlessly transferred the country onto the rails of the New Economic Policy.

Provincial concern about everything that the émigré princesses of Maria Alekseyevna will

canonized.

Now, more than 30 years after Stalin's death, it still doesn't sit well with his heirs to admit that Lenin "was not so fond of" Mayakovsky.

The high priests of Soviet letters also omitted the paragraph referring to the forced collectivization of agriculture and the "merciless purge" of the political vanguard of the working class by Stalin's regime. Yevtushenko clearly defends the giant strides made in industrial development by the world's first workers' state, but he frankly states that forced collectivization and the purges were "contrary to Lenin's legacy."

Moreover, the entire section beginning with "We will not forget the bitter lesson" and ending with "their poisonous radio menus from things that we hide and hush up?" was also cut.

Yevtushenko's speech and the hopes of many writers represent a challenge to the Soviet bureaucracy that cannot be easily pushed aside "with white spots of silence and concealment." □

say was alien to Lenin. Lenin understood that not remaining silent was a self-cleansing force, and that self-flattery was destructive. Pasternak brilliantly divined the civic spirit of Lenin. "He governed the flow of thoughts, and only because of this he governed the country."

A break in the flow of thoughts and in the course of building socialism is impermissible, as it would be equally baneful for building and for thinking. We do not have the right to nihilistically forget the great firsts of industry — Magnitogorsk, the Turksib, the Kuzbas. But we also do not have the right to be silent about the fact that in those same years, contrary to Lenin's legacy, the precious agricultural wisdom of many peasants, undeservedly branded kulaks, was being crushed underfoot, and a merciless purge was under way of the Bolshevik guard, of the best commanders of the Red Army and the industrial cadres, of the leading representatives of Leninist thought.

Today's long-awaited striving for change for the better in our country gives us profound hopes that self-flattery will be forever rejected, and that nonconcealment will become the norm of civic behavior. We, men of letters, will not be worth a penny if we simply report and laud the social transformations taking place independently of us. We are obliged not only to facilitate these transformations but to prepare the ground for them.

Truly civic writings not only reflect historical events but are themselves historical events. The acceleration of scientific and technical progress is unthinkable without acceleration of

the spiritual.

We will not forget the bitter lesson when cybernetics was branded bourgeois pseudoscience and creative genetics was accused of being reactionary by half-educated persons with titles. This intellectual stagnation stopped short the economic prosperity deserved by our people and reached such limits that in our rich and beautiful land 40 years after the war there still exists in a number of cities the rationing of butter and meat, and this is morally impermissible. Any sort of closed distribution of foods and goods is morally impermissible, including the special coupons for souvenir kiosks that lie in the pocket of every delegate to this congress, myself included.

Also morally impermissible are displays of ugly clothing in apparel stores, thousand-people-long lines for something as simple as sneakers. And the most criminal among all the deficits is the shortage of paper for the books that people read while half the timberlands are being cut down for boring pseudoscholarly brochures.

We do not have the right to be lulled by the agreeable sight of a forest of upraised hands at meetings if among those who raised their hand something was left unsaid, concealed. Bureaucratic check marks indicating that an undertaking went over smoothly are still not the first signs of the long-awaited changes. Articles calling for publicity are not the same as publicity itself.

Editorials on the need for freshness of thought and language often are written in a language so dry that you involuntarily yawn — was it not for these needs that the greatcoat of the hapless Akaky Akakiyevich was once stolen. When you read Klyuchevsky and Solovyev, you see Russia's real history, complete and unconcealed. But when you read the periodically retouched pages of our modern history, you bitterly see that the pages are interspersed with white spots of silence and concealment, dark spots of obsequious truth-stretching and smudges of distortions.

The fear of a creative analysis of our Revolution has led us to the flagrant, unacceptable fact that in the series of "Lives of Famous People" we still have no book on Lenin. In many textbooks, important names and events are arbitrarily excluded. They not only fail to list the reasons for the disappearance of leading people in the party, but sometimes even the date of their death, as if they were peacefully living on pension.

How many times in the history of the Great Patriotic War has the origin of victory been assigned to this or that geographical point. It is time people understood that the origin of victory was not at a geographical location but in the very heart of Soviet man. How long are we going to go on helping all those foreign Maria Alekseyevnas who happily concoct at least half their poisonous radio menus from things that we hide and hush up?

A nation that allows itself to analyze its own mistakes and tragedies bravely knocks the ideological weapon out of its enemies' hands, for it is spiritually invincible. Only fearless-

ness in the face of the past can help to produce a fearless solution to the problems of the present, the only correct solution.

Marx and Engels have this to say about ideological quacks, about the false civic conscience of cowardly bureaucrats who carelessly carve up the body of literary works: "It is simply a country surgeon who knows but one universal, automatic remedy — the knife. It is a charlatan who drives the rash inside so as not to see it, totally indifferent to the fact that it could affect the internal organs."

True literary works cannot "rock the ship of state," for they are themselves the masts of the ship.

Recently I saw for the first time Aleksei German's film "Road Checks," which impressed me very much with its tragic truth illuminated by the all-purifying flame of the Great Patriotic War. Yet this film lay on the shelf for 15 years, covered by the offensive dust of undeserved accusations. To this day Soviet readers have not had access to "The Foundation Pit" or to the whole of "Chevengur," two of the finest civic works by that pure Russian patriot Andrei Platonov.

Many perceptive civic writings await constructive criticism and then a meeting with the reading public. Time itself demands a rejection of the "roadblock" psychology. At the same time an implacable red light should blaze out in front of the false civic conscience of self-deception and self-flattery, in front of the heaps of "useless verses," the bricks of "useless novels," whose authors are content to write better than their neighbor on the same staircase, quite forgetting that in the house of literature, where they are illegally permitted to reside, their immortal neighbors are Pushkin, Tolstoy, and Dostoyevsky.

Dostoyevsky wrote of Pushkin: "Take one thing only in Pushkin, just one of his remarkable features, to say nothing of all the others, his ability to be universal, to respond to everything, his all-embracing humanity."

In literature, as in conscience, there are no provinces. The capital of literature is the writer's heart, which contains within it the whole world. Belinsky said: "For the poet who wants his genius to be recognized by everyone everywhere, being national is the first, but not the only condition. It is essential that while being national, he should also at the same time be universal."

Our literature must continue the "universal response" bequeathed to us by the classics. National responsibility must not turn into national narrowness.

The writer's duty in the ominous shadow of the atomic bomb is to respond to the groans of the prisoners in Chilean prisons, to the stifled gasps from the ruins of Beirut, to the cries of protest from the British women surrounding the rocket base at Greenham Common and to the dying whispers of the starving in Ethiopia. But for us humanity begins with our native land. Only not concealing and not hushing up things in our native land can give us the moral light to be universal. That is what socialist vic conscience is all about. □

Australia

Nicaraguan leader on Asian tour

Foreign Minister D'Escoto speaks on fight for sovereignty

By Nita Keig

SYDNEY — About 400 people came together here on short notice November 30 to hear Nicaragua's foreign minister, Miguel D'Escoto.

The meeting, sponsored by church and solidarity groups, followed the conclusion of the official part of D'Escoto's visit to Australia. During this trip he, and other representatives of the Nicaraguan government, met with Prime Minister Bob Hawke, Foreign Minister Bill Hayden, and other leaders of Australia's Labor Party government. The visit was part of a diplomatic tour that also took the Nicaraguan officials to New Zealand and China. It was the highest level delegation from the Sandinista government ever to have visited the region.

In his opening remarks D'Escoto stressed the importance of the visit in advancing one of the Nicaraguan people's most pressing objectives, that of deepening and safeguarding their country's independence. He explained that in order to improve the quality of life of its people and to protect itself from the enormous economic and military pressures being exerted on it by the United States government, Nicaragua must diversify its material and economic dependence on other countries.

As an illustration of these pressures, D'Escoto referred to recent warnings issued by Washington to the governments of three Latin American countries. These governments were told that if they voted in favor of Nicaragua's application for a loan from the World Development Bank the U.S. government would view that as a hostile act and would take retaliatory measures.

In defying the will of the world's leading imperialist power, the Nicaraguan people are going through difficult times, D'Escoto explained. "What we are defending in Nicaragua is what is most precious to us — our sovereignty and independence."

D'Escoto outlined the social gains that have accompanied this achievement of sovereignty and independence by the Nicaraguan people since the overthrow of the Somoza dictatorship in 1979. Illiteracy has been reduced from 50 percent to slightly over 12 percent; one in three Nicaraguans is now attending school (not counting those involved in adult education classes); free medicine and a free health care system have been established; and there are now more than 200,000 children able to attend child-care centers.

All these advances, which would be remarkable even in a more wealthy, industrialized country, have been achieved despite \$1.5 billion worth of deliberate damage and sabotage of the Nicaraguan economy by the U.S. government and its mercenary forces.

The leaders of the United States are "deadly

afraid" of Nicaragua, D'Escoto said. From the amount of time dedicated by the U.S. press to blasting, denigrating, and defaming the Nicaraguan revolution, he pointed out, "one would think Nicaragua was a huge superpower. In fact it is a superpower — a moral superpower."

Nicaragua is "truly in a state of emergency," D'Escoto stressed, but one "declared not by the Nicaraguan but by the U.S. government." The Reagan administration has tried everything short of a direct invasion by U.S. troops in order to destroy the Sandinista revolution, and it will continue to seek any pretext to allow it to use this option. Under these circumstances, D'Escoto said, the Nicaraguan government has done "nothing or very little compared with what other governments of other countries would have done" in the way of internal security measures.

The measures require that people seek permits before holding street demonstrations and rallies, reserve the right to censor material in the press concerning military and security matters that affect the war against the counterrevolutionary forces, and suspend the right to strike in the face of five years of economic sabotage by the U.S.-backed forces.

He challenged the critics of Nicaragua's government "to match the record of our people in fighting for civil liberties in our country, the time spent in jail under Somoza." In the event of a direct invasion of their country by U.S. troops, the Nicaraguan people would demonstrate very clearly their defense of the freedoms and gains represented by their revolution and its government.

In speaking of the valuable aid Nicaragua has received from many governments that refuse to be pressured by Washington, D'Escoto also spoke of the lukewarm response from other governments that are prepared to accept the trampling of the principle of self-determination and to bow to the view that "might is right." "Is it realistic to stand up to the United States? Does little Nicaragua really have a future?" they ask.

D'Escoto likened this attitude to a situation where a woman has just been shot by her husband for serving the breakfast cold. As she lies bleeding on the floor, the neighbors bombard her with questions. "But why did you serve him his breakfast cold when you know he doesn't like it that way?"

The struggle of the Nicaraguan people, D'Escoto concluded, is a "struggle for life and peace, but not peace at the price of independence. Submission is not peace. Our people have a saying 'Free homeland or death.' This saying is not just a slogan. It is the best way of expressing the innermost feelings of a people who have suffered and died because they have loved freedom and independence." □

Peasants fight corporate land-grabbing

Demand stable prices, end to militarization and repression

By Terry Pugh

[The following article is reprinted from the November–December 1985 issue of *Union Farmer*, published by the National Farmers Union in Saskatoon, Canada.]

* * *

Escalating corporate control over the Philippines' rural economy, coupled with a steady increase in military repression in the countryside, has sparked a new campaign by Filipino farmers for social and economic justice.

The Kilusang Magbubkid ng Pilipinas (KMP — Peasant Movement of the Philippines) began a series of strikes, rallies, and protest actions on October 21 to pressure the government of Ferdinand Marcos into repealing several repressive laws and ending militarization of rural areas.

The "National Day of Protest" on October 21, in which three people were killed by police when over 15,000 peasants and supporters marched on the U.S. embassy in Manila, also marked the beginning of an industrywide peasants' strike in the province of Mindanao.

According to Carlos Buico, a tenant farmer from Mindanao and a member of the KMP's national board, the campaign marks the first nationally coordinated initiative by peasants to challenge the Marcos dictatorship on an economic level.

The KMP, he explained, was founded in July of this year after more than a decade of organizing efforts at the local, provincial, and regional levels. The imposition of martial law by Marcos in 1972 meant that building a cohesive and militant peasant union was a gradual and difficult task, he noted. But with a membership of over 500,000 and an effective influence of more than 2 million, the KMP has emerged as a major force which neither Marcos nor the foreign-owned agribusiness corporations can afford to ignore.

Farmers tour Canada

Buico, along with Cynthia Hallare of the Philippine Peasant Institute based in Quezon City, recently toured several Canadian centres to meet with representatives of the National Farmers Union (NFU), the Canadian Farmworkers Union (CFU), and a number of church organizations.

The tour was part of the KMP's campaign to focus international attention on the growing crisis in the Philippines and to build solidarity with the peasants' struggle. Scheduled meetings with American farmers' and farmworkers' organizations had to be cancelled when the KMP representatives were denied entry visas

to the United States.

In an interview in Saskatoon October 24, Hallare said the protest campaign involves peasants across the Philippines and is also drawing in workers, students, and the urban poor. Centred around seven basic demands, the KMP's action represents a direct challenge to the growing dominance of multinational corporations in the Philippine economy, which is heavily dependent on agricultural exports for foreign exchange.

Under the Marcos regime, land has increasingly been taken out of staple crop production and replanted with nontraditional, higher-value export crops such as yellow corn and soybeans. Ownership of land is also being concentrated in the hands of a relatively few multinationals, with more and more displaced peasants being forced to work for the corporations as agricultural wage laborers. The Philippine Peasant Institute estimates as many as 70 percent of the country's peasants are completely landless.

"The seven basic demands," she explained, "include reductions in fertilizer prices, farm credit interest rates (which range as high as 400 percent), and consumer rice prices; a dismantling of the fake land reform program of 1972; stable farm gate prices for palay (unmilled rice); strict limits on foreign and corporate ownership of land; and an end to militarization and political repression in rural areas."

Military repression has claimed the lives of thousands of farmers and farmworkers since martial law was first declared, she explained. Growing repression of peasant leaders in particular and rural people in general is being justified by the Marcos regime under the guise of military reprisals against the guerrilla forces of the New People's Army (NPA).

But according to Buico, the "real purpose of the increasing militarization" is to facilitate a drive by multinationals to acquire ever greater parcels of cultivated farmland. Under the government's strategy, peasants are relocated to "strategic hamlets" in a manner similar to that employed by U.S. armed forces during the Vietnam war.

Strict curfews and other controls are used to keep the peasants from returning to their farms, allowing the multinationals, in conjunction with state agencies like the National Development Corporation (NDC), to confiscate the "idle" land and plant export crops. Faced with the "choice" of working for the corporation, migrating to urban shantytowns, or starvation, most peasants become wage laborers on corporate-owned farms.

"Land-grabbing," he continued, "is just one aspect of the Marcos regime's renewed em-

phasis on promoting raw and semi-processed agricultural exports."

Militarization and corporate control

Shortly after declaring martial law in 1972, explained Hallare, Marcos implemented a "so-called land reform program" which greatly enhanced the entry of foreign multinational agribusiness corporations into export crop production in the Philippines.

"Under the guise of liberalizing landholding patterns, the government provided investment incentives and built the necessary infrastructure to make large-scale production of export crops more profitable," she explained.

"Peasants were also 'encouraged' to switch from cultivation of staple domestic crops to high-yielding, hybrid varieties for the export market. The Green Revolution fundamentally altered production patterns and trapped many peasants in a cycle of indebtedness and dependency on foreign multinationals for inputs and markets."

Despite official government emphasis on exports of light manufactured goods, agricultural commodities remained the Philippines' leading foreign exchange earner throughout the 1970s.

In 1983, Marcos shifted the focus of economic incentives programs to more directly favour agribusiness multinationals. The Balanced Agro-Industrial Development Strategy (BAIDS) laid out by Marcos at that time allowed for tax incentives, tax write-offs, and state-sanctioned land-grabbing on behalf of corporate investors.

A proposed law, the Agricultural Development Incentives Act (ADIA), is presently being pushed by the government to further enhance the profitability of export-oriented agriculture by circumventing both the 1935 and 1973 versions of the Philippine constitution. Foreign and corporate ownership of land under the constitution is limited to 1,024 hectares. ADIA would remove all ownership limits on corporate lands used for export crops.

While ADIA has never been declared law, in practice it is used as justification for land-grabbing, said Hallare. The largest landholders presently include Del Monte (39,000 hectares), Dole (30,000 hectares), and Guthrie (8,000 hectares) [one hectare = 2.47 acres].

A Canadian multinational, Massey-Ferguson, has 5,000 hectares of land, which formerly belonged to the Cagayan Sugar Corporation in Piat, Cagayan. Massey-Ferguson is experimenting with highly mechanized production of yellow corn, while the thousands of farmworkers who used to be employed on the now-bankrupt sugar plantation are being de-

nied access to the land.

"BAIDS and ADIA have provided a framework for the government to step up peasant exploitation and increase military repression in rural areas," explained Hallare.

A report released by the Philippine Peasant Institute in early October revealed that "cases of arrest, harassment, torture, rape, and looting are common occurrences. The main victims of mass evacuations, zoning, massacre, salvaging (selective assassinations by the military), and bombings are the peasants, and 70 percent of all detainees are peasants and farmworkers."

The report adds that the military is intensifying efforts to install "food blockades" in highly organized peasant communities and in areas where multinationals have ownership of large tracts of land. "Food blockades," according to the report, involve the use of strategic hamlets and rationing of rice by the military to peasant families.

Because farmers are prevented from farming their own land, which was usurped by the multinationals, they are totally dependent on the military for rice rations, which the Peasant Institute describes as inadequate and expensive.

"Under the present system of food blockades, peasants and their families are experiencing slow starvation and sickness," explains the report.

Peasants fight back

The emergence of the KMP and the militant peasant movement is in many ways a result of the climate of fear which the Marcos regime is cultivating in rural areas, notes Buico. "Farmers and farmworkers are realizing they have no choice but to protest because if they do not, they will still be killed — not by bullets but by starvation.

"The KMP is growing and is pressing for peaceful change, but there are many members of the peasant union who have joined the NPA and advocate armed struggle as the only alternative left."

Shortly after the October 21 demonstrations, KMP chairman Jaime "Jimmy" Tadeo was forced to go underground when Marcos singled him out for "Presidential Detention."

Despite the harassment, Buico said, the KMP will continue to build support for its program both domestically and internationally. An "International Farmers and Farmworkers Conference" is being planned by the KMP for next October in Manila. □

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Burkina

Mali invades, provokes war

Aids imperialist drive against Burkinabè revolution

By Ernest Harsch

Burkina's popular, anti-imperialist revolution is under direct attack.

On the morning of December 25, troops and tanks from the neighboring West African country of Mali invaded Burkina and seized a number of localities. Malian planes bombed villages and towns, some as far as 70 miles from the border. Grain depots were destroyed and civilians were killed.

Burkinabè troops and militia members responded and within a few days succeeded in retaking most of the villages that had been seized. The Burkinabè air force likewise struck at military targets inside Mali.

Several cease-fires were declared during the first days of the war, but were quickly broken by the Malian authorities. On December 28 Malian planes bombed four provincial capitals. The next day another cease-fire was proclaimed.

The government of Mali, headed by Gen. Moussa Traoré, has sought to portray Burkina as the aggressor. This has been echoed by the big-business news media in the United States and other imperialist countries. In addition, the war is presented as a squabble over a disputed 90-mile stretch of land along the border.

But Burkina's president, Thomas Sankara, called the Malian attack an attempt to open the way toward "the overthrow of Burkina's popular government." He noted that exiled opponents of the Burkinabè revolution, based in both Mali and the Ivory Coast, were preparing to attack as well.

Burkina's ambassador to the United Nations, Leandre Bassolé, made a similar point at a rally in New York sponsored by the Young Socialist Alliance December 28. "We know that behind this problem of the border lies something else," Bassolé stated. "The Malian authorities are just the puppets. They know what they are doing. They are trying to allow the imperialists to come and overthrow our revolution. We also know that the Malian authorities, in the near past, received some arms from a Western country. That's another indication that someone is pushing from behind."

Bassolé added, "We are now fighting to protect and consolidate our revolution, and also to protect our national integrity."

The revolution in Burkina (formerly called Upper Volta) began in August 1983. Since then the country has been swept by massive mobilizations of peasants, workers, youth, and women. Mass-based Committees for the Defense of the Revolution have been built. The governing National Council of the Revolution (CNR) has enacted numerous progressive social measures, including a sweeping agrarian

reform. It has adopted an anti-imperialist course.

From the beginning, the imperialists and domestic counterrevolutionaries have tried to halt this process. Washington and Paris (Burkina's former colonial ruler) have taken the lead in this. They have denied Burkina much-needed economic aid. They have encouraged coup attempts and terrorist actions. The neighboring regime of the Ivory Coast has been particularly open in its hostility, providing assistance and refuge to Burkinabè counterrevolutionary groups.

The Traoré regime in Mali, which took power in a proimperialist coup 17 years ago, fears the political impact of the Burkinabè revolution among the youth and working people of Mali itself. As it has tried to implement austerity measures dictated by the International Monetary Fund, it has faced greater discontent.

At the same time, the imperialists have stepped up their aid to Traoré. U.S. Vice-president George Bush visited Mali in March 1985, leading to increased U.S. economic assistance. Around the same time, French Defense Minister Charles Hernu visited Mali twice, as a prelude to greater French military aid.

The border dispute with Burkina — a legacy of the artificial borders introduced by French colonial rule — was the pretext the Malian authorities used to provoke the war.

The Burkinabè government has repeatedly sought a political solution to the conflict, urging that it be settled through the World Court. While the Burkinabè authorities have appeared before the World Court, the Traoré regime has refused to do likewise.

Since the Malian attack, the Burkinabè government has reiterated its desire for a negotiated solution to the border issue. It has also urged the Malian authorities to observe a cease-fire and abide by the mediation efforts of other African governments.

At the same time, the CNR has affirmed its right to militarily defend the country. A CNR statement declared that "conscious of the urgent need to defend our homeland and our revolution and to guarantee the security of innocent people, the National Council of the Revolution calls for a total mobilization of all the forces of the nation, military units, and militia units of the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution."

Speaking in New York, Ambassador Bassolé stressed the importance of international solidarity. Supporters of the Burkinabè revolution, he said, should get out the facts of the war to counter the imperialist-inspired propaganda campaign. He also urged them to organize emergency solidarity actions. □

Debtor countries ask for relief

Call for new loans, lower interest rates

By Will Reissner

Meeting in Montevideo, Uruguay, representatives of 11 Latin American countries proposed "emergency measures" to provide relief from the region's US\$360 billion foreign debt and to permit a resumption of economic growth.

The December 16-17 conference brought together foreign and finance ministers from the Cartagena Group — Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela. It was the fourth gathering of the group since it first met in Cartagena, Colombia, in June 1984.

The conference called on international commercial banks to sharply increase their lending to Latin America. It also asked for a 20 percent increase in lending from institutions such as the World Bank and called on the governments of the United States, the West European countries, and Japan to take action to lower interest rates.

The assembled officials also talked about placing a ceiling on the amount of capital leaving their countries through interest and loan repayments. The ceiling would be linked to a percentage of export revenues or to growth rates.

In July the government of Peru limited annual interest and principal payments on its \$14 billion foreign debt to 10 percent of the country's export earnings.

Latin America's three biggest debtors — Brazil, Mexico, and Argentina, which between them owe \$250 billion — have been using an average of about 40 percent of their export earnings just to pay off the interest on their debts. This leaves very little foreign currency to purchase vitally needed imports.

A committee of representatives from Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, and Venezuela was set up to consider "alternative measures" if the conference's suggestions are not implemented by the banks and the governments of the imperialist countries.

The ministers met in Montevideo under the shadow of growing unrest from populations that have endured more than three years of recession and falling living standards.

Brazilian Foreign Minister Olavo Setubal noted that there is a growing sense of despair in the debtor countries because a long-term solution to the debt crisis is no closer now than in 1982, when the crisis broke into the open with Mexico's announcement that it was unable to continue paying the principal on its foreign debt.

The Cartagena Group's proposals were widely viewed as a response to a plan proposed

by U.S. Treasury Secretary James Baker at an October conference of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank.

Baker's proposal contained three elements.

First he called for commercial banks in the United States, Western Europe, and Japan to make \$20 billion in new loans over the next three years to 15 heavily indebted countries (10 of them in Latin America).

He also called on the World Bank to provide \$9 billion in new loans to the 15 countries over the same three years.

To receive the new loans, however, the recipient governments would have to agree to give freer rein to foreign companies, eliminate protection for local industries, and sell off state-run enterprises to private, often foreign, capitalists.

Baker couched his proposals in rhetoric about restoring economic growth in the underdeveloped countries. But the main result of his plan would be to protect the financial balance of the lending banks, since new loans would go to pay interest on old loans, and to provide opportunities for corporations based in the imperialist countries to buy up assets in the semicolonial world at fire-sale prices.

Even if Baker lines up the \$29 billion in loans over a three-year period, during those same years Latin America will pay out \$100 billion in interest alone.

As one Mexican official noted, "The Baker plan addresses Latin America's debt problem by offering us more debt."

Brazilian Finance Minister Dilson Funaro stated that the Baker plan does not deal with the need to reduce Latin America's debt burden or the extraordinarily high interest rates.

Funaro argued that "a reduction of 1.5 percent in interest rates would give Brazil all the funds it needs to modernize."

Each year, the semicolonial countries send far more capital to the imperialist countries, through interest payments and profits by imperialist corporations, than they receive in new loans and foreign investments.

Why debts piled up

"Whatever we produce in Africa," said Zambia's President Kenneth Kaunda, "prices are fixed by others in markets. Where we buy, prices are also fixed by others who sell to us. This is the greatest catastrophe for us."

The problem Kaunda points to is one that faces all the countries oppressed by imperialism.

The prices that the semicolonial countries receive for their raw material and agricultural exports have been in a steady nosedive for a half decade, while the prices they must pay for

manufactured goods from the imperialist countries have risen steadily.

Rubber, sugar, copper, tin, fish meal, cocoa, oil, bauxite — the prices of all these commodities are in a worldwide tailspin. A market basket of raw materials that cost \$100 in 1980 brings in only \$74.30 today.

The present relationship of the prices of raw material exports compared with manufactured exports has fallen to the lowest level since the IMF began charting the relationship in 1957.

The drop in raw material prices has saved the capitalists in the imperialist countries some \$65 billion in one year. This windfall comes at the expense of impoverished Bolivian tin miners, Ghanaian cocoa farmers, Malaysian rubber workers, and Dominican sugar workers.

Sugar prices, to take one example, remain at the extremely depressed price of about 5 cents per pound. As Kelvin Scott of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development notes, "No one, not even the lowest-cost producer, can make money at these prices."

But in addition to the rock-bottom prices, sugar producers in the semicolonial world run up against protectionist policies in the United States and Western Europe that lock them out of those markets in order to protect domestic beet sugar producers.

Faced with the declining prices of commodity exports and the rising prices of manufactured imports, economic planners throughout the semicolonial countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America tried to close the gap by borrowing the money needed to continue to import machinery and technology.

The planners expected that the loans could be repaid when commodity prices rose.

But with commodity prices remaining severely depressed, the semicolonial countries could not earn enough foreign currency to pay their debts.

New loans, at sharply higher interest rates, were taken to repay old loans as they matured. But this simply increased the overall debt burden.

Before they would extend new loans, however, the bankers, through their collection agency, the International Monetary Fund, demanded that the semicolonial countries impose economic austerity policies to limit imports, boost exports, and sharply cut domestic living standards in order to free up maximum resources for repayment of the debt.

But even with every penny squeezed out of the local working class and peasantry, the debt simply cannot be paid.

The case of Jamaica is instructive in this regard. There, the proimperialist regime of Edward Seaga has been the showcase of the

Reagan administration-IMF prescription for solving the debt crisis. Seaga has done everything that the imperialist bankers demanded.

Since 1981 Seaga has been carrying out the very program that Baker now puts forward for the rest of the semicolonial world. Jamaica dismantled import controls, deregulated industries, and encouraged foreign investment.

When Seaga came to power in 1980, Jamaica's foreign debt stood at \$1.5 billion. Today, after a half decade of imperialist-sponsored policies, the debt has jumped to well over \$3 billion.

The Jamaica dollar, which traded at J\$1 to US\$0.56 as late as January 1983, has plummeted to J\$1 to US\$0.16 by the end of 1985.

Unemployment stands at over one-quarter of the active population. Many workers who have found jobs in the Kingston Free Zone, where they make export goods for foreign investors, are paid US\$10-15 per week.

By the end of 1984 the Jamaican gross domestic product was 15 percent below the level of 1974, while per capita GDP had dropped 22 percent over that decade.

However much blame Seaga's policies deserve for the catastrophic situation of the Jamaican economy, blame also lies with the collapse of international bauxite prices. "We lost \$500 million in the slippage of bauxite," Seaga notes.

Peruvian alternative

In a dramatic inaugural address on July 28, 1985, Peruvian President Alan García Pérez announced that for the following 12 months Peru would limit payments on its foreign debt to 10 percent of its export earnings. García pointed out that \$3.7 billion of the Peruvian debt came due in 1985, while the country's total export earnings would only amount to \$3 billion.

García stated that "the foreign debt ... is the result of the unfair exchange of our raw materials for the manufactured goods of the richest countries."

He added that Peru's debt was also due to "overvaluation of the dollar," high interest rates, and growing protectionism in the advanced capitalist countries.

The economic situation in Peru is disastrous. Per capita income has dropped to 1965 levels. Industry is operating at barely 50 percent of capacity. Only one-third of adult males have full-time jobs. Annual inflation is approaching 200 percent.

García's announcement of the 10 percent ceiling in debt payments caused concern among bankers in the imperialist countries. They are not so worried about Peru's 10 percent ceiling — if García actually uses 10 percent of Peru's export earnings to pay the foreign debt, he will be paying more than was paid in the last months of his predecessor's term.

But the bankers fear that the example could spread to other countries in Latin America, which are now allocating an average of 40 percent of their export earnings to cover debt repayments.

The Baker plan, the Cartagena Group's proposals, and the Peruvian 10 percent solution share one basic feature. None provides any solution to the debt crisis.

Castro's proposal

The severity of the situation prompted Cuban President Fidel Castro to launch a campaign early last year around the proposition that Latin America's debt is simply unpayable and should be written off by the banks.

Banks in the United States and Western Europe, Castro points out, could be repaid by their own governments if they cut military spending and diverted that money to the banks.

Castro has further argued that no long-term solution to the foreign debt of the semicolonial countries is possible unless a new international economic order is established. The semicolonial countries, he stresses, must receive a fair price for their products, a price linked to the price of the manufactured goods they import.

Unless a new international economic order is put into place, the Cuban president has noted, even a total write-off of the foreign debt of the semicolonial countries would have only a limited impact. Low export prices would once again start the cycle of having to borrow to cover the cost of vitally needed imports.

In August Castro presented a detailed analysis of why the 10-percent solution cannot solve Latin America's debt crisis when he addressed the final session of the Meeting on the Foreign Debt of Latin America and the Caribbean in

Havana.*

He began by making five optimistic suppositions:

- that all the Latin American countries would limit their debt repayments to 10 percent of export earnings for 20 years;
- that the banks would grant a 20-year grace period on paying back the principal;
- that interest rates would remain at present levels;
- that Latin America's exports would total \$100 billion per year (in 1984 they amounted to \$95 billion);
- that Latin America would receive no new loans during this 20-year period.

Even with all these extremely optimistic suppositions, by the end of 20 years Latin America would have paid out \$200 billion to banks in the advanced capitalist countries. But Latin America's total foreign debt would have increased more than fivefold, from the present \$360 billion to nearly \$2 trillion!

From this analysis, Castro concluded that "the debt is a cancer ... that multiplies, that kills off the organism. It is a cancer that requires a surgical operation. ... [A]ny solution that isn't a surgical one will not solve the problem." □

*The full text of this speech was reprinted in the Oct. 7 and Oct. 21, 1985, issues of *Intercontinental Press*.

Spain protects thief who robbed Cuba

On December 13 the Spanish police arrested a Cuban vice-consul at the Cuban embassy in Madrid and three other embassy employees. The four Cuban officials were expelled from the country the following day.

The Spanish government charged that the Cubans had attempted to kidnap Manuel Sánchez Pérez, a former Cuban official. According to Spanish authorities, he had been granted provisional political asylum in Spain earlier that week.

The Cuban Foreign Ministry immediately issued a statement on the incident, strongly protesting the arrest of the Cuban officials.

It explained that on December 13 "competent officials of the Cuban Embassy in Madrid decided to summon citizen Manuel Sánchez Pérez to the mission. Until now, he had been working as a functionary at the State Committee for Technical Material Supply, and had been in Spain since last November 16 for commercial activities with a visa granted by the Spanish Embassy in Havana.

"The Cuban commercial representatives in Madrid," the statement continued, "evidently found serious financial irregularities in Sánchez Pérez's activities. He was trying to seize \$499,000 that had been deposited at the Transatlantic Commercial Bank" in his personal account.

The Cuban government explained, "Once

Sánchez Pérez apparently agreed to accompany the embassy personnel — who located him outside the Transatlantic Bank after he had unsuccessfully tried to withdraw the above-mentioned sum of money — he was no longer considered a suspect but a prisoner. He then began to try to catch the attention of the pedestrians by creating a disturbance that motivated the intervention of the Spanish authorities."

The Cuban statement noted that "this is not the first time that tendentious and manipulated information has turned a common criminal into an opposition politician."

The Foreign Ministry rejected "the mistaken term 'exile person' given to a vulgar thief who simply tried to seize funds belonging to the Cuban state and whose immoral conduct the Spanish Government would be associating with while offering him its protection."

The Cuban government is demanding the return of the Cuban funds that Sánchez Pérez funneled into his own bank account.

According to the December 21 *New York Times*, Sánchez Pérez told the Spanish daily *El País* that the \$499,000 is the amount of the "commissions" he collected as part of his job as a Cuban purchasing agent. He asserted such commissions are normal in many countries for individuals in the center of large trading deals. However, "not in Cuba," he admitted, "where it is prohibited." □

Meetings celebrate life of Ray Sparrow

SWP leader a 'party man' for nearly six decades

By Michael Baumann

[The following article appeared in the Dec. 27, 1985, issue of the *Militant*, a socialist weekly published in New York City.]

* * *

SAN FRANCISCO — Meetings were held here, in Los Angeles, and in New York City the weekend of Dec. 13–15, 1985, to pay tribute to and celebrate the life of Ray Sparrow. Sparrow, a longtime leader of the Socialist Workers Party, died here of a heart attack November 16 at the age of 70.

Known to many by his pen name, Art Sharon, Ray devoted his entire life to building a revolutionary working-class party in the United States and collaborating with like-minded revolutionists worldwide.

"First and foremost, throughout his lifetime of political activity, Ray was a communist," said Mary-Alice Waters in summing up his life. Waters, a national leader of the Socialist Workers Party and co-editor of the magazine *New Internationalist*, spoke at all three meetings on behalf of the party's Political Committee.

"In his own political life, in the experiences he lived through and the battles he fought throughout 58 years of revolutionary work, there was one constant," Waters said. "Ray took the path of fighting to advance the working class toward realizing its historic task — leading the working people of the world to take power and begin the construction of a new social order.

"That was his continuity, and it's ours too."

Early years

For Ray, like many fighters of his generation, political life began early. He was 13 when he joined the Young Pioneers, the *young young peoples'* organization of the Communist Party. That was in 1927.

Ray Sparrow was first introduced to working-class politics by his family, George Novack told the meeting in New York. Novack, himself a veteran of more than five decades in the SWP, recalled that Ray's parents, both workers, were members of the Communist Party. His youth coincided with the early years of the Russian revolution.

"That political milieu," Novack said, "set an early and enduring stamp upon his world outlook and individual aims." And on the personal side, Novack noted, "Ray's genial personality exhibited the traits of the proletarian environment in which he was most at home."

Ray joined the Communist Party at age 16 and was assigned to help build the Young Communist League (YCL), youth group of the CP. He was soon expelled from high school as

a dangerous antiwar agitator, and only through the intercession of his parents, he related later, was he eventually able to obtain his diploma.

He also passed through the military during these teenage years, but soon found himself discharged with a forfeiture of pay, once again for antiwar agitation. He turned his efforts to organizing the unemployed in Los Angeles and served on the California state executive of the YCL as education director.

Break with CP

The rise to power of Hitler's fascist movement in Germany was a watershed in Ray's early political life. As the Nazi stormtroopers advanced, Ray grew increasingly critical of the Communist Party's ultraleft line in Germany and internationally. The CP refused to form a united front with the German Social Democracy and other antifascist fighters, instead proclaiming, "After Hitler, us."

In 1933 when Hitler took power, Ray broke with the Communist Party and joined the Communist League of America (CLA), as the forerunner of the SWP was called at the time.

"Ray concluded," Novack told the meeting in New York, "from his own personal experience in passing through the gamut of CP organizations, and from what he learned from the criticisms of the Left Opposition, how far Stalinism — the ideology and practice of the Soviet bureaucracy — had diverged from the path of Marx and Lenin." The Left Opposition, led by Russian revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky, fought to maintain the Marxist program.

"Ray turned his back on the Stalinist movement in 1933," Mary-Alice Waters explained, "in order to continue to be a communist, in order to continue to be loyal to what he had learned from Marx and Lenin and remain true to the continuity of the Russian revolution and the early years" of the Communist International.

"He did not hesitate to break with his family, with his friends — with the whole milieu he had been a part of since he was a child — to join the CLA, which at that time was a small and struggling group," she said.

From that time on, Waters continued, "Ray was a supporter of Leon Trotsky because Trotsky represented the continuity of Bolshevism, of Leninism. Like the founders and other early leaders of the CLA, nothing was more alien to Ray than the idea that 'Trotskyism' represented something counterposed to Leninism, or that Trotsky, not Lenin, was the Russian leader who had charted the political course that brought the workers and peasants of the tsarist empire to power. He

never got the relationship between Lenin and Trotsky turned upside down."

The fact that his own political roots were sunk deep in the Russian revolution helped Ray to understand the significance of the Cuban revolution and the role of its leadership today.

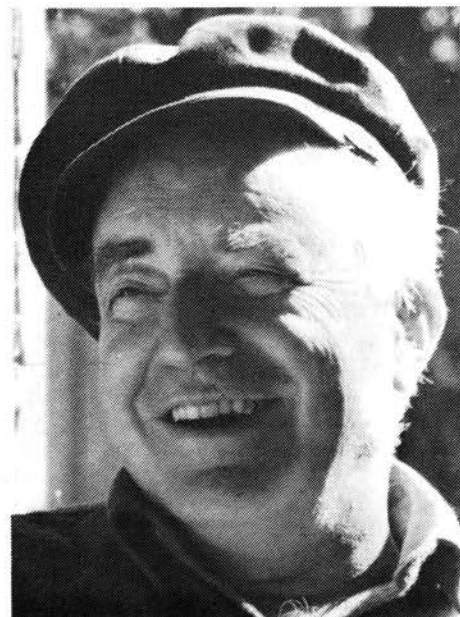
The Cuban revolution opened a new epoch on a world scale, Waters noted, and the 1979 victories in Grenada and Nicaragua confirmed this.

"Ray saw our party as part of this process, as part of these revolutionary forces," Waters continued. "When Fidel spoke at the United Nations in 1979 on behalf of the Nonaligned countries, it was broadcast on TV all over the country. I happened to visit Ray just after he had heard Fidel's speech. He couldn't talk about anything else, he was so politically elated. 'Not since the early years of the Russian revolution has our class had world leaders of this caliber,' Ray told me. 'It's been decades since we had a voice like Fidel's to speak for us.'

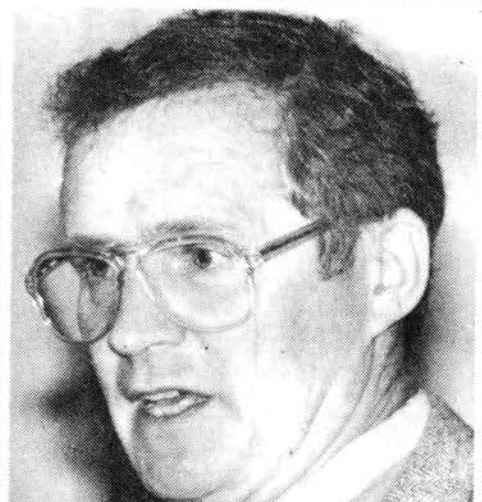
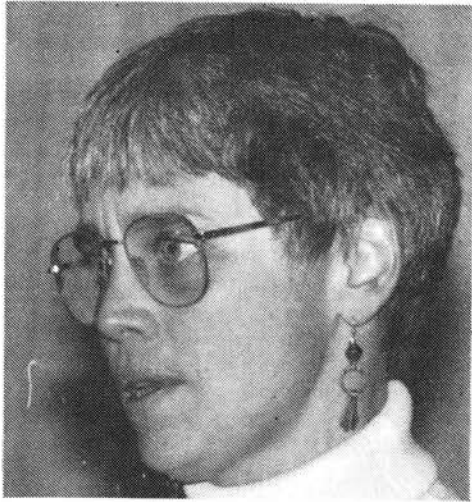
"And later Ray saw immediately and had a similar reaction to the Cuban CP's leadership in the worldwide campaign on the question of the foreign debt of the semicolonial countries."

Years in maritime

In the mid 1930s, "Ray Sparrow was one of the pioneers, one of the first party members to get into maritime," to hire out in the U.S. merchant marine, Oscar Coover told the meetings



RAY SPARROW



IP photos by Osborne Hart

Speakers at New York meeting to celebrate life of Ray Sparrow. From left: Mary-Alice Waters, George Novack, Ernie Tate.

here and in Los Angeles. Coover, himself a veteran leader of the party, joined the movement in 1938 at the age of 18.

For more than a decade Sparrow worked in the maritime industry, participating in and helping to lead the party's fractions in the Sailors' Union of the Pacific, the Seafarers' International Union, and the National Maritime Union. This experience, along with his participation in organizing drives of the Congress of Industrial Organizations in textile and steel in Chicago in 1936 and 1937, gave Sparrow a rich appreciation of the trade union movement and the challenges faced then and today by those like himself who sought to advance the organization of the working class.

As a number of speakers and messages to the meetings noted, Sparrow always placed his trade union activity in the broadest political context. Harry Ring, a staff writer for the *Militant* and a longtime leader of the party, recalled the following about working alongside Ray:

"For a period I had the opportunity to be a shoreside member of our maritime branch. This was a major industrial fraction, including many young seamen recruited during World War II and the immediate postwar period. The comrades were deeply involved in union activity and internal union politics.

"Ray was as thoroughly immersed in this as the others and was a central leader of the work. But I always felt there was a difference in his approach. When comrades are intensively involved in union activity there can be a very strong pressure to slip into, or adapt to, work-erism. But I never got that sense with Ray.

"He always seemed to have the broader political issues — national and international — very much in mind. He never fell victim to approaching union activity as an end in itself. When he spoke you felt you were listening to a rounded revolutionary politician."

Waters, in her remarks, stressed the same point. "The last thing Ray ever was," she said, "was a trade unionist — as opposed to a revolutionary worker who devoted enormous amounts of energy and reserves to the fight to

help the working class forge the instruments of struggle necessary to unite the working class, to defend the working class, to move toward class consciousness, to learn to think socially and act politically."

Waters cited the example of how Sparrow looked back on one of the most important battles in which he had participated and helped to lead the party's fraction. That was the 1949 convention of the National Maritime Union (NUM).

By 1949 the witch-hunt within the unions was in full swing. It was aimed at driving out every communist, socialist, or radical-minded worker and breaking the power of the union movement born in the CIO organizing drives of the 1930s.

"By this time, the Joseph Curran leadership of the NMU, in collaboration with the U.S. government and the shipping companies, was culminating the vicious campaign to blacklist all radicals in the maritime industry and drive them off the ships," Waters explained. "Ray was a delegate to the 1949 convention and the floor leader of our fraction during the proceedings. The convention was a raging battle from start to finish.

"After several attempts, Curran managed to suspend the rules and get a motion on the floor to put every delegate on record, by a roll-call vote, on whether they would defend the United States in a war against the Soviet Union. The intent was clear — to establish a blacklist to be used in purging 'communists and subversives' from the union.

"Our fraction, along with the other delegates of the opposition caucuses, condemned the motion, exposing its purpose," Waters said. But Curran ran roughshod over all opposition. Most of the delegates had been intimidated into silence by his witch-hunting tactics and goon-squad violence.

There was no opportunity for the fraction to caucus to decide how to vote on a motion that everyone knew would cost them their livelihood to oppose. As floor leader, Ray decided to vote against. The fraction followed Ray's lead.

"Afterwards," Waters explained, "many comrades in the fraction felt we had done the wrong thing. That it would have been better tactically to have called on everyone to vote for the motion and thereby defeat its purpose of establishing a blacklist.

"I don't know what Ray thought at the time," she continued, "but later he told me he felt we had done the right thing politically. That it was important to take the long view. It was one of those times when you had to be able to step back and see things in their broad historical framework. No matter what tactical maneuver we had tried on that particular motion, it wouldn't have stopped the witch-hunt in the NMU. Broader class forces were at work.

"Ray concluded that it had been right to take an unambiguous stand. He felt we had gained much more politically from the course we followed than we would have by saving the seaman's papers of a few comrades for a while."

Industrial branches

Another aspect of the party's experiences during this period that Ray often commented on, Waters noted, was the policy of organizing branches that were based on only one industrial fraction.

For a time during the post-World War II period, Ray served as organizer of the branch of the SWP in New York City in the Chelsea area of Manhattan. This was the branch to which all members of the maritime fraction were assigned. This form of party organization was also used in Chicago, which had a steelworkers' branch, and in Flint, Michigan, where an auto branch existed.

In reflecting on these experiences, Waters said, Ray concluded that such one-industry branches fostered too narrow a political perspective on the party's tasks. Like many others in the party leadership, he felt they had been a contributing factor in the party taking more losses than were objectively necessary in the split in the party that took place in 1953. The large majority of those in the auto and steel branches left the party in that split.

Based on his years of experience in the trade

union movement and his broad political understanding of the challenges facing the working class in this country, Ray had nothing but contempt for those radicals who thought that the road to the transformation of the unions was through involvement in the kind of petty union politics that have dominated the labor movement in the United States for the last 35 years.

There too, Waters said, he thought the historical perspective was decisive. He understood that only as powerful forces come into play will the kind of battles begin to occur that will forge a leadership capable of halting the erosion of the organized workers' movement and transforming the unions into instruments of revolutionary struggle.

This was the political perspective that Ray held in common with the rest of the SWP, and it is why he thought the line being followed by the party today in its turn toward the industrial trade unions is politically correct. He rejected the various alternative orientations put forward by other forces on the left, all of which came down to one or another variant of adapting to the trade union bureaucracy that today encrusts the labor movement.

Construction industry

After being witch-hunted out of the maritime unions, Ray served for a time as the organizer of the New York branch of the party.

By 1954, however, his wife, Marie — also a long-time party member — was seriously ill. Medical bills were piling up. With party resources and membership shrinking, he returned to work and eventually found employment in the construction industry.

"Ray, like other comrades, had no financial cushion and no medical coverage," Waters said. After taking whatever construction work he could get, he eventually landed a job as the construction supervisor for a portion of the job of building the Guggenheim Museum in New York City.

George Novack, in his remarks in New York, told how this came about:

"Ray managed to fuse theory and practice in all his endeavors, from politics to craftsmanship. This was characteristically evidenced when he bid to direct a key part of the construction crew that erected the Guggenheim Museum, one of the last structural achievements of Frank Lloyd Wright.

"This project presented novel and difficult problems because it had spiral rather than the usual squared and angular joints. Most contractors and carpenters had no experience with such intricate curved cement forms and shied away from undertaking the work."

Not Ray.

"Ray went to the libraries to study the unusual problems involved in this circular type of cement construction and successfully carried it through. The celebrated museum stands today on Fifth Avenue not only as a monument to the artistry of Frank Lloyd Wright but to the ingenuity of Ray Sparrow.

"That job made him recognized as an expert in the construction field when he decided to resettle in the [San Francisco] Bay Area in 1958.



Della Rossa/IP

Oscar Coover speaking at Los Angeles meeting.

His competence was confirmed over the next 20 years as he supervised some of the largest construction jobs on the West Coast, including the Marin County Civic Center and part of the expansion of the San Francisco Airport."

Ray brought the same competence and skill and professionalism to this work as he did to the tasks of party building, Waters pointed out. But what Ray was most proud of, she said, was the fact that not a single worker had lost his or her life on any project he supervised.

"This was more important to him than anything else," Waters said. "Ray used the contracts we all have to work under not as the bosses do, as a manual of exploitation, but as a means of enforcing safety measures on the job.

"Ray also did what he could to break down the exclusionary hiring practices in the construction trades. He fought for the hiring of Black workers and pushed subcontracting jobs to Black contractors whenever possible.

"And Ray thought it was an important step forward when the rise of the women's liberation movement brought affirmative action victories that forced the hiring of women into the industry. He went out of his way to help them learn the skills they would need to survive."

International leader

The last major leadership assignment Sparrow took on was one of the most important. He was asked by the party in 1965 to go to Europe to serve as a fraternal member of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.

In taking the assignment, Waters said, Ray knew there was a good possibility he might not be able to get back into the construction industry later.

But that wasn't the angle Ray looked at things from. "He said, 'Look. I'm 50 years old. I've got another 10 years at most of really productive activity. If the party needs me to do something, now's the time.'

"Ray didn't look at it as a sacrifice," Waters said, "but as an opportunity."

The importance of Sparrow's work in Europe during the next several years was tes-

tified by messages read at all three meetings from Fourth International leaders Ernest Mandel and Livio Maitan.

Other messages came from a number of comrades, including Alan and Connie Harris and Ernie Tate, with whom Sparrow worked in those years to rebuild the British section of the Fourth International.

Tate, for many years a leader of the Canadian section, told the New York meeting of Ray's important contribution to building the movement in Britain against the Vietnam war, including the demonstration of 100,000 in London in 1968 and the Bertrand Russell War Crimes Tribunal.

But one of the things he remembered best about Ray, Tate said, was the help he gave the fledgling British group in standing up to and politically defending itself against the physical intimidation practiced by Gerry Healy's Socialist Labour League (SLL).

It had become necessary to rebuild the British section after Healy split from the Fourth International in disagreement over the Cuban revolution. Healy considered the 1959 overthrow of the Batista tyranny to have been only a minor episode in the transfer of power from one capitalist government to another.

To prevent any discussion in the ranks of his movement on this and other political questions, Healy used a combination of goon tactics against all opponents inside as well as outside the SLL, and instituted libel suits against anyone who dared tell the truth about his operations.

If you tried to sell your paper at one of Healy's meetings, Tate explained, you were beaten up. If you wrote anything exposing the SLL leadership, you ended up with a costly court case that only Healy had the resources to pursue.

Tate was one of those beaten up by Healy's goon squads, and Ray was instrumental in helping the handful of British comrades organize a response and not just let the matter slide.

"When Ray heard about the attack, he was absolutely livid," Tate recalled. "He immediately saw the full implications of Healy's action. That if it was to continue we would no longer be able to function in Britain. What was involved here, Ray convinced us, was something that could spread like poison."

The British comrades had a problem of resources, Tate said. "We were already deeply involved in the movement against the Vietnam war and in helping to organize the War Crimes Tribunal. And we had only 15 people. But Ray convinced us to take on Healy politically, to make the facts of the beating known far and wide. And he was right.

"When we started the campaign we were defending not only ourselves but everyone on the left who had been victimized by Healy. We won wide support, and the attacks abated. Ray played an absolutely critical role here in showing us how to defend ourselves without getting involved in some draining legal battle."

In later years, Tate noted, Ray never lost interest in British politics. He followed closely

the Labour Party and trade unions, as well as organizations on the left and developments inside the British section.

Sparrow's years of experience as part of the leadership of the Fourth International, Waters remarked, gave him a keen appreciation of the challenge of building an international movement and also of the weaknesses of the Fourth International. He also arrived at an even deeper conviction — that the fight to build the Fourth International is inseparable from the task of building the SWP.

Later years

When Sparrow returned from Europe in 1968 he also returned to San Francisco and to work in the construction industry. He remained an active member of the San Francisco branch, carrying out a variety of political assignments.

"Even in the last year," noted Sam Manuel, the organizer of the San Francisco branch, despite his failing health, "Ray was keenly interested and involved in the work of the party around South Africa and Central America."

When the April 20 coalition was organized last spring to build the demonstration against U.S. intervention in Central America, Manuel said, Ray started going to its meetings and volunteered to help organize the construction of the speakers' platform.

"I always looked forward to a day of political discussion with Ray," Waters said. "He would approach every question, every new development, in its broader social, historical, and political context."

He loved to read, she noted, and after he retired several years ago, that was his greatest enjoyment. He read broadly and was knowledgeable about literature, art, music, and especially history; but he never used this to intimidate others. Rather he used his broad range of interests to encourage others, to stimulate curiosity, to get you reading as well.

"Ray was in many ways what Trotsky called a 'citizen of time,'" Waters said.

Furthermore, he embodied an important political trait of genuine revolutionaries — the ability to continue to be interested in, to have respect for, and to relate to young people, to work with them objectively as comrades.

"Ray would spend hours in discussion with new comrades or party contacts," Waters related. "He was deeply interested in what the Young Socialist Alliance was doing."

"What's happening in the YSA? Where is it recruiting? Why? What are people interested in? These were always some of the first questions when I had a chance to talk with him."

This side of Ray was also referred to by Clifton DeBerry, in his remarks at the San Francisco meeting. DeBerry, for many years a national leader of the SWP, told of how in the early 1950s he had been fired — for the first time in his life — and bounced out of the Communist Party after a run-in with the CP leadership of his union at International Harvester.

Later, when DeBerry was a young cadre participating in the SWP leadership school, "Ray took a real interest and listened to my

story. Not only that," DeBerry noted, "but Ray asked questions that helped me to think, to overcome my anger, and to come to grips with what had happened."

A full and rich life

In the course of 52 years in the party, Ray held nearly every post or political responsibility a comrade could shoulder. He was a member and leader of half a dozen different branches, and a member of the National Committee from 1941 to 1975. He didn't like to write, but when he had to, he wrote well, including for a period a lively column in the *Militant* called "Notes of a Seaman."

In a number of messages and remarks at the three meetings, comrades and friends who had had a chance to know and work with Ray added personal recollections that illustrated varied facets of his character.

A number of speakers noted that Ray's exuberant personality and political enthusiasm earned him the reputation of being a nonstop talker. But the real measure of Sparrow on this

score, Waters pointed out, was that "even though Ray loved to talk, he was also a good listener. And he seldom if ever talked about himself personally, or his role in the events he was describing."

Ray Sparrow, Waters said, was one of the "most objective people I've ever known, inside or outside the party. He was warm, outgoing, and generous. He was also a scientist, a materialist through and through, and had not a touch of the sentimental about him." It was the breadth of his vision, she said, that enabled him to remain what Marx and Engels called a "party man" for nearly six decades.

"Through those six decades," Waters summed up, "Ray learned and trained others in what it took to build a revolutionary party in the bastion of the Yankee enemy of humanity."

"He gave everything he had to that task. His was a notable record, because there are few who have the stamina to stay the course for so many years."

"But Ray knew that no more useful or rewarding life was possible." □

10 AND 20 YEARS AGO



January 12, 1976

The Ford administration is driving ahead with its intervention in the Angolan civil war. In the doublespeak typical of White House statements, Ford declared January 3 that he wanted only to give the Angolans "an opportunity to make the decision for themselves" of who would rule that war-torn country.

But the right of the Angolan peoples to self-determination is the last thing on the minds of the American imperialists. They were the ones who supported Portuguese colonialism to the end.

The administration's determination to continue its intervention in Angola was pointedly reaffirmed by Kissinger December 23, just four days after the Senate passed an amendment to a defense appropriations bill barring any additional funds for the CIA's Angolan operations. He proclaimed that the White House was "going to make a major effort [in Angola], both diplomatically and on the ground. . . ." Complaining that the Senate vote "severely complicated" White House plans, Kissinger said the administration would use \$9 million it had left for military aid to continue backing two of the Angolan nationalist groups.

At the time of the Senate vote, the White House indicated that only about \$4 million remained in the CIA's "contingency fund" for covert operations. An unnamed U.S. official, however, told a reporter for the *New York Times* December 28 that more money had been "found."

According to some reports, part of these

funds will be used to finance an undercover army in Angola reminiscent of the CIA's covert operation in Laos in the 1960s.

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.)

January 8, 1965

In recent months, South Africa's racist *apartheid* government has continued its political witch-hunt trials, condemning a new series of victims to long terms in the country's foul prisons and executing some despite worldwide protests and appeals for clemency.

The use of torture by the police in securing "evidence" in these cases is becoming more and more brazen. Several recent incidents will serve to indicate the situation.

In October two young detainees took the extraordinary measure of suing for damages totalling R6,000 [one rand = \$1.40] because of injuries suffered during torture.

Both of these victims were detained under the infamous law giving the police the right to hold "suspects" for indefinitely renewable periods of ninety days without bringing charges.

The attorney for the two victims said that he had not been permitted to see either of them while they were detained under the 90-day law. They were finally charged with "sabotage" along with three other defendants.

CIA nest uncovered

Washington retaliates with economic sanctions

By Ernest Harsch

U.S. threats and economic blackmail have increased significantly in recent months against the West African country of Ghana. Washington's goal is to destabilize the Ghanaian government and turn back the anti-imperialist, revolutionary upsurge that has been unfolding there for the past four years.

On December 13, the U.S. embassy in Accra, the Ghanaian capital, informed the government of Flight Lt. Jerry Rawlings that Washington was withholding several million dollars in economic aid that had already been pledged for 1986. An official Ghanaian radio broadcast condemned this "economic arm-twisting and coercion."

Washington's cancellation of the economic aid came in retaliation against the Ghanaian government's successful exposure and breaking up of an important CIA network that had been engaged in fomenting counterrevolutionary activities within Ghana.

This direct U.S. move has been accompanied by stepped-up aggression against Ghana from nearby proimperialist regimes. In September, the government of the Ivory Coast, which borders Ghana on the west, encouraged physical attacks against Ghanaians living in that country, forcing thousands to flee. In November, rightist Ghanaian military officers plotted to overthrow the Rawlings government, but their attempt was nipped in the bud; some were arrested and others fled to the Ivory Coast. That same month, troops from Togo, which borders Ghana on the east, carried out several incursions into Ghana and kidnapped some Ghanaian citizens.

U.S. subversion

This imperialist-inspired campaign began shortly after the Dec. 31, 1981, seizure of power by a group of anti-imperialist and left-wing junior military officers and civilian political activists. Washington opposed many of the policies of Rawlings' Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) and feared the massive popular mobilizations that began to sweep the country.

An undeclared U.S. economic embargo was imposed on Ghana for a time. U.S. embassy officials and CIA personnel provided aid and encouragement to a wide range of domestic opponents of the PNDC, including corrupt businessmen, leaders of right-wing professional associations, and senior military, police, and intelligence officers left over from previous regimes. During 1982 and 1983 in particular, there was a series of rightist coup attempts and attacks by groups of armed counterrevolutionaries striking into Ghana from the Ivory Coast and Togo. Indications of direct CIA involvement emerged in a number of

these.

After early 1984, such attacks by U.S.-backed groups eased up for a while. But the CIA continued its clandestine activities.

In May 1985 the CIA's network of agents and informers in Ghana began to unravel. That month an officer in the Ghanaian intelligence service confessed that he had been working for the CIA for some time. As a result of this confession, Richard Griffin, a U.S. embassy official, was identified as the CIA station chief and expelled from the country.

Two months later, on July 10, a Ghanaian citizen and a U.S. citizen were arrested in the United States on charges of "espionage" for allegedly passing on to the Ghanaian government further information about the CIA's operations in Ghana. The U.S. citizen was Sharon Scranage, a CIA clerk posted to the U.S. embassy in Accra from 1983 to early 1985. The Ghanaian was Michael Soussoudis (a cousin of Rawlings), who had met Scranage in Ghana. According to the U.S. indictment, Scranage had given Soussoudis the names of virtually everyone in Ghana who had been working for the CIA.

"It's very bad," one U.S. intelligence official told a reporter. "It broke up all our agents in Ghana."

The arrest and trials of Scranage and Soussoudis were not only an act of retaliation against Ghana's counterintelligence efforts. They were also designed to divert attention from Washington's subversive activities. Ghana, the victim of CIA destabilization actions, was portrayed in the courtroom and in the big-business media as an aggressor intent on subverting U.S. policy interests.

'CIA — No Way!'

Ghana's reaction to the trial was sharp. The Interior Ministry declared that the exposed CIA activities marked "a flagrant interference in the internal affairs of Ghana."

The African Youth Command, a pan-Africanist youth organization, charged that Soussoudis was being "held as a hostage" by the U.S. government in "an act of international terrorism." It said, "The crime of Michael Soussoudis, if any at all, was that he was protecting Ghana's interests in Ghana."

The 460,000-member Trades Union Congress called for the release of both Soussoudis and Scranage, terming the CIA a "dangerous organisation whose interests always run counter to the interests of the working people the world over." The union federation added, "What U.S. imperialism seeks to achieve through the CIA is the establishment of brutal regimes which callously repress their people, deny them of any means of democratic expression and reduce the working people to mere

objects of exploitation by transnational corporations and international finance capital."

Some demonstrations were also held, with protesters carrying banners reading, "CIA — No way!" Others linked Washington's aggression against Ghana with the U.S.-backed mercenary war against revolutionary Nicaragua. "History will absolve the Sandinistas!" a protest sign read.

Workers in the maintenance section of the U.S. embassy also demonstrated, demanding the expulsion from Ghana of an embassy official whom they accused both of espionage and of racist attitudes toward the embassy's Ghanaian employees.

Soon after the arrest of Soussoudis and Scranage, Navy Commodore J.D. Opong, who had served as Ghana's military chief of staff in 1982-83, fled the country, as did a number of officials of the Foreign Ministry. The Ghanaian government froze the assets of both Opong and Samuel Okudzeto, former president of the lawyers' association and a prominent right-wing opponent of the PNDC.

In October, two Ghanaians were brought before a public tribunal in Accra on charges of passing classified information to the CIA. One was a police inspector attached to the Bureau of National Investigations, and the other was a former employee of the Ghanaian police's special branch. A few weeks later a former chief superintendent of police and a communications technician were tried for helping the CIA tap the phones of top Ghanaian officials. The four were found guilty and sentenced to prison terms ranging from 22 years to life.

Meanwhile, in the United States, the trials of Scranage and Soussoudis drew to a close. Scranage was sentenced to five years in prison and was ordered to immediately begin serving her sentence. Soussoudis was given a 20-year sentence, suspended on the condition that he leave the United States within 24 hours.

Soussoudis' release was part of an arrangement between Washington and the Ghanaian government. In return for his freedom, the Ghanaian authorities agreed to release the four Ghanaians convicted of working for the CIA. They and four other Ghanaian nationals were expelled from Ghana and stripped of their Ghanaian citizenship. Washington indicated that it would grant them political asylum, as individuals of "special interest to the U.S."

Soussoudis was greeted as a hero upon his return to Ghana. Thousands of cheering supporters thronged the airport, with placards declaring, "The CIA are parasites" and "One patriot is worth more than ten traitors."

A few days later, the Ghanaian government expelled from Ghana four more U.S. officials accused of engaging in espionage activities.

The Ghanaian government's success in uncovering and expelling these CIA agents is a blow against Washington's efforts to turn back the revolutionary struggle in that country. But as the cancellation of U.S. economic aid, the November coup attempt, and the recent attacks from neighboring regimes show, the imperialists have no intention of ending their aggression against Ghana's working people. □