

INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS

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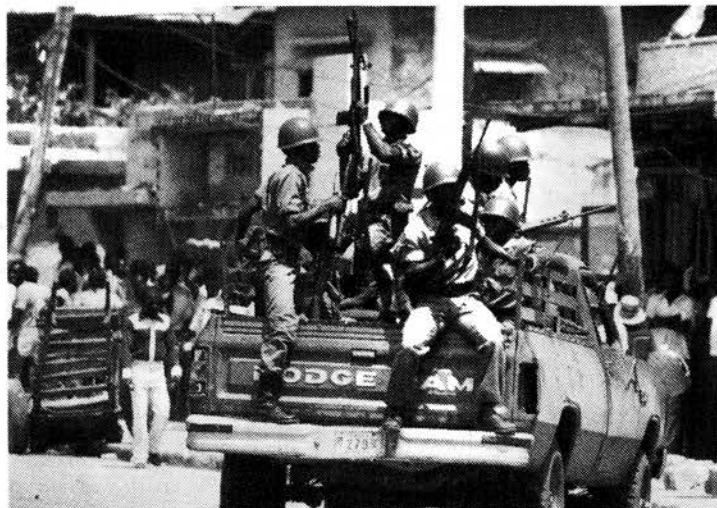
April 7, 1986

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Filipino Masses Deepen Struggle for Democratic Rights

Report From Haiti
**Popular Protests
Demand
Junta's Ouster**



Troops in Haitian capital counter demonstrators.

South African Workers Fight 'Mine Slavery'

Protest U.S. 'contra' aid

By Ernest Harsch

In pursuit of its drive to overturn the Nicaraguan revolution, the Reagan administration has been making big headway in winning support in Congress for providing the Nicaraguan *contras* (counterrevolutionaries) with direct military aid. Congress cut off military aid to the *contras* in 1984, and Reagan is now waging a vociferous campaign to get the legislative body to okay \$70 million in direct military aid and \$30 million in logistical support.

In its first vote on this request, the House of Representatives on March 20 turned it down by 222 to 210, with 16 Republicans joining 206 Democrats to vote against it.

But Reagan vowed to "come back again and again until this battle is won." The White House will next take its campaign for contra aid to the Senate. And then it will return to the House to press a "compromise" aid package.

Some congressmen, including key Democrats who voted against Reagan on March 20, have indicated they will be prepared to vote for military aid to the *contras* the next time it comes around, as long as it is linked with some new (and essentially meaningless) offer by Washington to "negotiate" with the Nicaraguan government.

"Where you'll end up with is some form of compromise," one Democratic congressman said. "The fight will be over how the money is released."

While the Reagan administration went into the House vote with the aim of winning it, it also conducted its campaign in such a way as to create the most favorable framework for whatever compromise might be necessary. By pressing hard and aiming high, Reagan has sought to win as much military aid for the *contras* as possible.

Day after day Reagan and his aides hammered away, extolling the *contra* terrorists as "freedom fighters," proclaiming Nicaragua a threat to U.S. "national security," and accusing the Sandinistas of every conceivable crime.

Not only did the administration demand that tens of millions of dollars worth of guns, ammunition, and sophisticated military hardware be given to the *contras*. It also suggested, in a bolder fashion than before, that U.S. military "advisers" be sent to Honduras to assist the *contra* forces.

A high point of Reagan's propaganda blitz was a March 16 nationally televised speech that was packed with more lies about Nicaragua than any previous declaration by a U.S. official. Reagan accused the Sandinistas of everything from transforming Nicaragua into a Soviet military base and providing a haven for "terrorists" to practicing anti-Semitism and trafficking in drugs.

Some of Reagan's specific lies were promptly disputed. A New York rabbi who

had previously investigated charges of anti-Semitism in Nicaragua stated that such charges were untrue. The government's own Drug Enforcement Administration denied there was any evidence of Sandinista drug trafficking. The Brazilian government rejected Reagan's claim that the Sandinistas were giving military training to Brazilian guerrillas.

Among the U.S. population, the speech aroused a generally negative response. The offices of most congresspeople reported that phone calls ran significantly against the president. This reflects the deeply founded fear that support for the *contras* can lead to direct involvement by U.S. combat troops. "The shadows of Vietnam haven't left us," House Democratic leader Thomas O'Neill warned.

While many congressmen took issue with aspects of Reagan's speech — and with his efforts to red-bait critics of his contra aid proposal — they also agree with the White House's overall political objective of bringing down the Sandinista government. Democratic Senator Jim Sasser, in responding to Reagan's speech, began by declaring his party's agreement with

Reagan's goals in Central America and repeating Reagan's claim that "the Sandinista government has betrayed the promise of its own revolution."

This exemplifies the overall shift to the right in ruling-class discussions on Nicaragua. Liberals, both within and outside Congress, are increasingly condemning the Sandinistas for supposed human rights violations and a drift toward "totalitarianism," thus helping to justify yet greater U.S. intervention.

"The Democrats and Republicans agree that they should give money to kill us," Sandinista leader Omar Cabezas commented. "Some want to kill us one way, others want to kill us another way. They only differ on how or when to give the aid."

As he was speaking, some 2,000 U.S. troops were in neighboring Honduras for a new round of threatening military maneuvers, and *contra* attacks were again increasing in Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast region.

The Sandinistas have vowed to continue resisting such U.S. threats and attacks. But the moves in Washington to step up aid to the *contra* mercenaries underline the importance as well of increased solidarity with the Nicaraguan people. Mobilizations are urgently needed within the United States and throughout the world to protest Washington's escalating aggression against Nicaragua. □

Overturns of Duvalier, Marcos open doors for working people

By Doug Jenness

Within a period of three weeks in February, massive popular mobilizations swept away two of the world's most hated tyrannies. Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines and Jean-Claude Duvalier in Haiti were both whisked out of their countries at the eleventh hour in U.S. government jets. For many years, both had received substantial political and economic backing from Washington.

Not since the Nicaraguan and Iranian people overthrew the Somoza dynasty and Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi in 1979 have such significant victories against despotism been won. Nor have such blows against imperialism been struck.

In both Haiti and the Philippines doors have been pushed open for workers and peasants to actively engage in politics — to press forward the struggle for democratic rights and to use those rights to organize the fight to improve their living standards and social conditions. "We are free again," millions are proclaiming. "Now we can breathe. Now we can speak."

These victories over tyranny are inspiring the exploited and oppressed throughout the world, especially in those countries where bloody dictatorships still reign. Opponents of Gen. Chun Doo Hwan's regime in South Korea are cheering the overturn in the Philip-

pinas, which they say "gave us a good lesson." Those struggling against General Suharto's rule in Indonesia and Gen. Augusto Pinochet in Chile are encouraged by these uprisings. Many are concluding that if it can be done in the Philippines and Haiti, it can be done in their countries too.

Although these overturns differ in many respects, there are some important similarities. In both countries, the masses are now pressing to purge the national, provincial, and local administrations of all the most hated, brutal, and corrupt holdovers from the Marcos and Duvalier dictatorships. These include government officials, military officers, and managers of government and even some private enterprises. In Haiti rooting out and prosecuting the Tontons Macoutes, Duvalier's personal goon squad, has been a major focus of popular mobilizations.

People are also demanding that those guilty of torture, murder, and other abuses of human rights be punished.

These struggles have led to sharp confrontations in both countries. In Haiti, the new ruling junta's refusal to act on these demands has created the biggest political upheaval since Duvalier fled. Five of the six members of the junta installed by Duvalier were top military officers or cabinet members in the old regime.

Even though three of the five have since been removed, mass demonstrations are calling for an end to the military-dominated junta altogether and the establishment of a new provisional government.

In the Philippines, thousands of Marcos supporters also retain their positions. The provincial governors who dominated the countryside under Marcos pose a particularly serious challenge, since many of them command their own private armies.

In response to mounting popular pressure, the new president, Corazon Aquino, dissolved the National Assembly in late March; Marcos supporters had held a majority in that body. Demands continue to be raised that she establish a "revolutionary government" in order to take extraordinary measures to remove Marcos' cronies, root and branch, at all levels of government.

The people of Haiti and the Philippines have already won the release of many political prisoners. But in the Philippines hundreds of political detainees are still being held, especially in provincial jails, and the struggle to free them continues.

Moreover, people are demanding to know the fate of the 500 to 600 who were "disappeared" by Marcos' soldiers and private troops of provincial warlords.

Important democratic rights have been conquered. But the fight goes on to extend and use them — to secure the rights to assemble, publish, organize unions, and to strike. In both countries work stoppages are on the upswing, as workers assert with newfound confidence their demands to raise wages and lower prices on basic necessities.

Every stratum of society is putting forward demands — workers, peasants, students, unemployed, women. In the Philippines the Muslim minority is pushing its demand for autonomy with redoubled vigor, tribal minorities are calling for protection of their rights, and exploited peasants are driving ahead in their long battle for a thoroughgoing land reform.

Many political organizations in the Philippines and Haiti are still illegal, and the struggle continues to win legal status for them. This is part of the effort by the people to participate fully in their countries' decision-making, from which they have been excluded for so long.

In response to the proposal by many officials in the Aquino government to appoint a commission to draft a new constitution, other voices are calling for an elected constitutional commission. Many Filipinos see this as important to their battle on many fronts to exercise and extend the democratic rights already won.

Elections held on the basis of universal, direct suffrage to choose representatives for a constituent assembly — with the right of all political parties to participate — would offer workers' and peasants' organizations an opportunity to present their views on the kind of constitution and government needed by the Filipino people, to debate alternative proposals, and to strengthen the fight for social and economic gains.

Some progressive Haitian forces, including

the New York émigré newspaper *Haiti Progrès*, are also calling for a democratically elected constituent assembly to draft a new constitution for Haiti.

Another element in the struggle in both Haiti and the Philippines is ferreting out every bit of truth about the outlandish extravagance of the Marcos and Duvalier families, exposing it before the entire world, and demanding that the millions of dollars in stolen loot be returned.

But the really big robbery comes from the mammoth debts that the imperialist banks have imposed on Haiti and the Philippines. In a country as poor as Haiti — the poorest in the Americas — this is an especially heavy bur-

den.

Working people around the world, above all in the imperialist countries, should call for an immediate cancellation of Haiti's and the Philippines' foreign debts.

As the struggle continues to unfold in Haiti, the threat of U.S. military intervention to crush it and impose a government that can bring "law and order" is especially grave. Working people should demand that Washington keep its hands off Haiti.

At the same time, we should support the demand of Filipinos that Washington remove its military bases from their country. □

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People mobilize to extend gains

Overthrow of Marcos creates opening to press for economic, social demands

By Russell Johnson

MANILA — One month after the overthrow of Ferdinand Marcos through a massive people's uprising in Manila, popular struggles continue and are spreading across the Philippines.

Inspired by their role in ousting the dictator, workers and farmers are using "people power" mobilizations in their fight to dismantle remaining elements of the Marcos apparatus and advance their own immediate interests against the Marcos cronies and other exploiters.

Mobilizations in the past week have dealt with a broad range of demands:

- A strike began March 21 by 22,000 Filipino workers against pay rates and working conditions at the Subic Bay Naval Station, Clark Air Base, and other U.S. military installations.

On the evening of March 21, six workers were reportedly stabbed and seriously wounded by U.S. military personnel attempting to break the union picket line.

- Five hundred Muslims, mostly students, marched to the presidential palace in Manila March 18 to press President Corazon Aquino for Muslim autonomy on the southern island of Mindanao and to denounce Governor Ali Dimatoro of Lanao del Sur province as a Marcos crony.

- On Mindanao itself, students are reported to be boycotting classes at the Mindanao State University to demand that Dimatoro, who was university president, and his security guards be removed from campus.

- In Davao City, Mindanao, on March 20, 5,000 people were reportedly preparing to march on the capitol building to oust the Marcos-appointed governor and mayor, who have barricaded themselves in the building with 1,000 supporters.

Other reported actions against local government officials include barricades erected at Manila City Hall by market vendors and protest organizations to demand the ouster of Mayor Ramon Bagatsing for corruption.

- A host of strikes and pickets are taking place at private companies, combining demands for the sacking of Marcos appointees and cronies in management, the reinstatement of union activists victimized under the dictatorship, and the lifting of wage restrictions imposed by the old regime.

Such actions have been reported at the Metro Manila Transit Corporation, the Philippines National Railways, the Marcos crony Roberto Benedicto's Holiday Inn and Producers Bank, and other banks.

The March 21 *Malaya* reported an estimated 38 strikes under way nationwide, including

one of the 10,000 employees at the crony-owned Philippines Long Distance Telephone Company, who are defying a return-to-work order by the new minister of labor, Augusto "Bobby" Sanchez.

- Pickets of government departments have taken place in many parts of the Philippines demanding the ouster of corrupt administrators. The National Housing Authority was picketed by Quezon City residents, and the Ministry of Labor and Employment in Bacolod City by the National Federation of Sugar Workers and ministry employees. The Ministry of Social Services in Iloilo City and the National Pollution Control Commission in Manila were also targets of protests.

- A group of squatters has occupied vacant units of high-priced housing projects in Manila believed to have been developed by Imelda Marcos.

Oppressed minorities raise demands

- Peasant organizations on Mindanao have announced plans to occupy and seize land owned by Marcos cronies, politicians, and Philippine officials who illegally amassed wealth during the reign of the deposed dictator, as well as land from which peasants and tribal minorities were driven by the terror squads of the warlords.

These organizations presented a proposal March 18 to the agriculture and food minister

Filipinas protest sexual exploitation

MANILA — International Women's Day was viewed in the Philippines as a day of great celebration. A rally on March 8 was held in Luneta Park here as part of an international women's conference organized by the feminist group GABRIELA. Women from the United States, Canada, Britain, Greece, Germany, Japan, and Australia participated. Many carried placards condemning the "sexploitation" of Filipinas and continued U.S. and Australian military aid and demanding the removal of U.S. bases from the Philippines.

The following day, President Aquino addressed about 2,000 women on the grounds of Malacañang Palace. "Women have been in the forefront of the struggle," Aquino said. "It is a woman who stands before you as the president of a proud, free, and democratic Philippines. I am proud to be a Filipino, but even prouder to be a Filipina," Aquino told the cheering crowd. The new Aquino government includes several women, among them Dr. Mita Pardo de Tavera, a longtime feminist and leader of GABRIELA.

The role of women in Philippine society generally is quite striking. Women are especially prominent among business and professional layers but are also among the most militant unionists. For example, it has been women workers who have led a number of strikes in the Bataan Export Processing Zone, a so-called free trade zone, where multinational companies are offered tax incentives and antiunion laws to ensure superprofits.

At the same time the "sexploitation" of

Filipinas is a major problem. Women are sent as domestic servants to Hong Kong, the Middle East, the United States, and elsewhere to be treated as virtual slaves. In some countries, Filipinas are actually bought and sold as prostitutes, often kept on drugs to keep them placid.

Within the Philippines, prostitution is big business, especially in Ermita, the tourist part of Manila, and in Olongapo, the town near the U.S. naval base at Subic Bay.

The Philippines is frequently promoted for "sex tourism." Child prostitution, both male and female, is rife. The economic crisis in the Philippines, the lack of jobs in the cities, and the driving off of thousands of peasants from their land can only aggravate this problem.

The increasing tendency of Filipinas to assert themselves and their rights is provoking a reaction. Deposed president Marcos ridiculed Aquino's electoral challenge, saying she was "only a housewife."

More recently, one of Marcos' faithful warlords in Mindanao, Ali Dimatoro, who had been the governor of Lanao del Sur, has refused to recognize the authority of the Aquino government. "I for one," he said, "did not believe that a woman could run this country. Why will they get mad at me when this is my personal feeling — that this country cannot be run by a woman?" he said. "Now that she is there she should try to prove to me that I am wrong," he challenged. He dared the military to remove him from his post as governor.

— Deb Shnookal

of the Aquino government including demands for such a land redistribution.

• Representatives of the tribal minorities of the Philippines have presented the new government with a series of demands including demilitarization of the tribal areas, regional autonomy, the return of ancestral lands, and the establishment of a special ministry for tribal affairs.

Meanwhile, an organization called Cory Aquino People's Power has been formed in Manila. The group met with President Aquino March 20 to urge her to abolish the Marcos parliament and constitution and declare her government "revolutionary." Describing itself as a "coalition of workers, farmers, fishermen, urban poor, students, and professionals," the organization grew out of the popular forces that campaigned for Aquino during the February 7 snap election.

The press here has also carried reports of similar organizations being set up in the provinces.

New People's Army still active

Significantly, in the past week the government and the press have dropped the pretense that any sort of cease-fire exists between the peasant guerrillas of the New People's Army (NPA) and the military.

According to the March 23 *Manila Times*, more than 200 soldiers, policemen, and Civilian Home Defense Force members have been killed in 172 "insurgency-related incidents" since Marcos fled February 25.

Most of these incidents have taken place in the central and southern zones of the Visayas island group and Mindanao.

On March 19, for example, 300 NPA fighters were reported to have stormed the municipal hall in Bacungan, Zamboanga Del Norte, on Mindanao, killing four soldiers and capturing a number of high-powered weapons.

Under these blows, the military wing of the government coalition — Defense Minister Juan Enrile and Chief of Staff Gen. Fidel Ramos — have been expressing disgruntlement with Aquino's policy of national reconciliation with the guerrilla movement.

"We respect the call of our president for unity and reconciliation, and we will support it to the fullest extent," Enrile said. "On the other hand, we cannot allow innocent civilians and our soldiers to be butchered by dissident elements without having them account for it," he added.

Human rights violations continue

But the threat to peace in the countryside does not lie with the NPA guerrillas but with the continuing militarization of the countryside. As yet the "people power" struggle in Manila has done little to ease the oppression of the peasant masses. The chairman of the newly appointed Presidential Commission on Human Rights, Jose Diokno, has admitted that although Marcos fled the country, the human rights violations continue.

Some military commanders and local warlords have not halted the abuses that helped

buttress Marcos' regime, he added.

In addition, hundreds of political detainees remain in the custody of the military in the provinces, in violation of President Aquino's amnesty. Furthermore, peasant activists who formerly would have been arrested as "NPA suspects," are instead being arrested by the police on bogus criminal charges to avoid having to release them under the terms of the amnesty.

The March 19 *Manila Times* reported a press conference by a leader of the underground Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), which leads the NPA. The CPP leader said that before cease-fire talks could be held with the government, certain conditions would have to be met. The CPP's Central Committee is demanding the arrest of the provincial warlords and the disbanding of their armies, the immediate pullout of combat troops from the countryside, the release of all political prisoners, and a purge of the military ranks, the

newspaper reported.

This same question was addressed by Father Edicio de la Torre, a recently released political detainee and leader of the CPP-aligned National Democratic Front, at a "Dialogue With the Left" open forum in Manila March 20. He described the "people power" revolution as a "premature baby," which came sooner than expected and was smaller than they had hoped for, but which, with a lot of care from the popular organizations, could grow to full maturity.

The February 22-25 "snap revolution" occurred only in Manila, de la Torre stated. There was no "snap revolution" anywhere else. But this "revolution" could be extended across the country. This would require that the peasants be granted the right to establish their own people's power without harassment from the military, he said. Only as the right to organize in the countryside is won will the need for armed struggle diminish and the basis for national reconciliation be achieved. □

Remnants of tyranny hang on

Mobilizations call for purge of Marcos officials

By Deb Shnookal and Russell Johnson

MANILA — Since the night of February 25 when former president Ferdinand Marcos was forced to flee in the face of a massive popular uprising, the grounds of the deposed dictator's Malacañang Palace have been open to the public. They have been popularly dubbed "Freedom Park."

On March 13 the palace itself was opened to the public. Thousands of poor people were bused in from the slums of Manila for a tour to view the staggering extravagance of the former president and his wife, Imelda Marcos.

President Corazon Aquino herself addressed the first batch of visitors: "While seeing for yourselves the lavish furnishings in the palace, you will be able to understand why the government is in such a predicament."

The palace visitors were stunned and shocked by the almost obscene luxury they found — especially in the Imelda Marcos boudoir, which, apart from the grand piano and the piles of jewelry she did not manage to stash away in her flight bag, included enough racks of dresses, furs, and gowns to stock a department store. Three thousand pairs of imported shoes and 500 bras! Imelda Marcos' bathroom was the *pièce de résistance* with its marble-tiled chair, mirrored walls, and the vast array of imported soaps, perfumes, and other toilet articles.

Such discoveries immediately became the talk of Manila, and so many people flocked to the palace to see for themselves that scuffles broke out among those seeking to join the tours.

Government officials here are already expressing frustration with the U.S. govern-

ment's lack of cooperation in efforts to recover the billions of dollars that Marcos plundered from the Filipino people and hid in the United States and elsewhere.

Presidential Executive Secretary Joker Arroyo has called for "swift and meaningful" action from the U.S. government. "We hope we will not be treated like the Khomeini government in its claim against the property of the shah of Iran," he said. He was referring to the way that the U.S. government and courts blocked the return of the shah's ill-gotten wealth to the people of Iran after that butcher had been overthrown in 1979.

Already a number of Marcos-owned properties have been located in New York City and elsewhere in the United States, as well as casinos in Australia and a Swiss bank account holding US\$800 million.

That the return of the Marcos' stolen billions is not simply a symbolic question has been highlighted by the current visit to Manila by three officials of the International Monetary Fund, the Philippines' largest creditor, to discuss repayment of the estimated \$30 billion foreign debt run up in the Marcos era. This makes the Philippines the fourth most indebted nation in the world, after Brazil, Mexico, and Argentina.

Marcos steals billions

Sources here estimated the Marcos family may have smuggled as much as \$10 billion out of the country over the years, much of it stolen directly from overseas loans. This is in addition to money taken by the "crony capitalists" like Eduardo Cojuangco and Roberto Benedicto, who fled the country with Marcos.

Each day the Manila newspapers report new findings of the commissions established by the

Aquino government to uncover corruption under the Marcos regime. The *Manila Times* of March 15 reported that during January the Marcos-appointed manager of Manila International Airport had pocketed 55 million pesos (almost \$3 million) that was intended for the Philippine National Construction Company. It was reported the same day that five more guest houses in the Philippines, maintained with government money but run by the Marcos family and associates as their own, had been found. This brought the total uncovered to 30.

So far the assets of the Marcos kin and a number of associated businessmen have been declared frozen by the government. These include holdings of Cojuangco (the "Coconut King"), Benedicto (the "Sugar Baron"), and Gen. Fabian Ver. The Aquino government has committed itself to the dismantling of the monopolies of these Marcos cronies.

Meanwhile the *Los Angeles Times* reported March 13 that U.S. Defense Department investigators have subpoenaed General Ver in a federal grand jury investigation of possible kickbacks involving U.S. military aid of more than \$100 million.

These moves against the wealth of Marcos and his cronies are part of the effort to dismantle the Marcos dictatorship. For two decades Marcos had shaped the military, government, constitution, parliament, courts, and local governments as institutions through which he and his associates could plunder and repress the Filipino people with the backing of U.S. imperialism.

But the February uprising to install Corazon Aquino as president, after Marcos attempted to blatantly steal the February 7 election, changed all that. The uprising is commonly referred to here as a "People's Power Revolution." Central to Aquino's popular support was her pledge to restore democratic liberties and end the corruption of the Marcos years.

Marcos cronies hang on

Although the dictator himself fled the country on February 25, most of the Marcos machine remained in place in the parliament, the judiciary, government enterprises, the military, and in provincial and city governments.

Significant purges of Marcos supporters are taking place in the officer corps, the judiciary, diplomatic corps, and government service. However, less has been achieved in the local governments, most of which are still controlled by Marcos' New Society Movement (KBL).

The provincial governors, drawn from wealthy landlords allied with Marcos, are especially powerful. Their private armies were sanctioned by Marcos as the Civilian Home Defense Forces (CHDF). These warlords — the hated foes of the peasants and the biggest recruiters for the New People's Army (NPA) guerrilla forces led by the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) — are resisting surrendering their powers to the government. For instance, Armando Dustilo, the governor of Negros del Norte and a close Marcos ally, is holed up in his fortified bungalow. He refuses

to resign his powers. Dustilo, a local sugar baron, had his CHDF thugs shoot up a demonstration of 2,000 hungry sugar workers in Escalante last September 20, killing more than 20 people.

Another warlord, Ali Dimatoro, the Marcos-appointed governor of Lanao del Sur, has challenged the military and President Aquino to remove him. He has established the "Mindanao People's Democratic Movement" and has vowed to use his own version of "people power" against any attempt to remove him.

The Aquino government faces a gigantic challenge in disarming these warlords. It was through them that Marcos ruled the country as a whole. And he reinforced their traditional role as "conduits of patronage," in the words of the *Manila Times*.

An additional problem for the government is that some 2,000 Marcos supporters in the military — many from the dictator's personal bodyguard of the Presidential Security Command abandoned at Malacañang — have refused to surrender to the new military command. They are reported to be massing in Marcos' home province of Ilocos Norte.

The KBL majority in Marcos' rigged national parliament, which declared the dictator the winner of the February 7 elections, is also bitterly resisting moves by the Aquino government to declare itself a revolutionary govern-

ment outside the framework of the 1973 constitution. Such a move would render the Marcos parliament and local governments defunct, a necessary step to break the Marcos regime.

Some of the KBL politicians openly admit their campaign against the Aquino government is being coordinated by telephone with Marcos from Hawaii. Arturo Tolentino, Marcos' vice-presidential running mate, who still calls himself "vice-president elect" and says that Marcos is the legal president "temporarily out of the country," and other Marcos ministers denounce Aquino as a worse dictator than their master. "People power," said Tolentino, is no legal basis for government.

"There were only about 2 million people assembled in Camp Crame during the military mutiny and [they] were not fully representative of the 54 million Filipinos. There were about 27 million voters in the February 7 election," he said.

Others offer support to Aquino

Other KBL politicians, some of whom looked to Marcos' Defense Minister Juan Enrile, who retains that post in the Aquino cabinet, are offering to declare Aquino president if the new government will maintain the parliament and the Marcos constitution.

In addition there are many patronage politicians and other former supporters of the Mar-

Our reporters in the Philippines, Haiti

This issue of *Intercontinental Press* includes firsthand reports from special *IP* correspondents in Haiti and the Philippines, as well as from our bureau in Nicaragua.

Since 1979 *IP*'s Managua bureau has provided unmatched coverage of the Sandinista revolution. We have maintained and expanded this bureau because of the centrality of the Nicaraguan revolution to world politics today.

As new revolutionary struggles have broken out in other parts of the world, we have tried to send socialist activists to the scene to supply information and analysis to *IP* readers — the kind of reporting you do not get in the big-business press.

On March 15 a team of three U.S. socialist reporters went to Haiti for a one-week visit. They traveled to Port-au-Prince, Gonaïves, and Cap-Haïtien, where they met workers, peasants, students, church leaders, and others. They discussed the overthrow of the Duvalier dictatorship and the struggle that continues in Haiti for basic democratic rights. Their first reports appear in this issue.

Harvey McArthur flew to Port-au-Prince from Managua, where he recently joined our Managua bureau. Working with him in Haiti were Margaret Jayko, managing editor of the New York socialist weekly *Militant*, and Jackie Floyd, national co-chairperson of the

Young Socialist Alliance.

Beginning with our last issue, we have been printing on-the-spot reports called into our New York office from halfway around the world in the Philippines. Correspondents Deb Shnookal and Russell Johnson have talked to a wide range of people and attended debates and other political meetings in Manila. They also visited the island of Negros, where they were able to talk to sugar workers and peasants. We expect to publish a lot more articles, interviews, and documents from them in our next several issues.

Johnson is national secretary of the Socialist Action League, the New Zealand section of the Fourth International, and Shnookal is a member of the Fourth International from Australia. Shnookal also visited the Philippines in 1984. Her interviews with Philippine CP leader Jose Maria Sison and other prisoners of the Marcos regime who have now been released were first carried in *IP*.

The costs involved in these reporting trips are considerable for a small magazine, but we think you'll agree that they have been worth it.

If you can help out in supporting this effort, please send a financial contribution, large or small, to *Intercontinental Press*, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014.

cos dictatorship in government and the military who now declare themselves supporters of Aquino. They are also resisting any thoroughgoing housecleaning of the corridors of power.

There is continuing conflict within the Aquino government coalition on how far — and how — to proceed with dismantling the Marcos regime and to what extent to involve the people themselves in the consolidation of a democratic republic.

This is reflected in the reports in the press. Each day, in each paper — and there are many today — different statements appear from various members of the government. They give a range of views on whether the government will be declared “revolutionary” or “constitutional” or on whether the Marcos constitution will be scrapped and on how and when a new constitution will be drafted.

Those who favor the most sweeping purge of the Marcos supporters tend to advocate President Aquino declaring her government to be “revolutionary” and assuming personal power for a transitional period based on her “people power” mandate. These are, in general, figures associated with her LABAN Party or the “parliament of the streets” and “cause-oriented groups” that have joined her government. These forces, including Aquino herself and Local Government Minister Aquilino Pimentel, are reported to favor the election by popular franchise of a constitutional convention to draft the new constitution.

On the other side stand the old patronage politicians of Vice-president Salvador Laurel’s UNIDO Party and Defense Minister Enrile. They oppose using revolutionary power against the Marcos hangers on and want a commission appointed to draft or redraft the constitution. Ex-KBL members Laurel and Enrile are presently maneuvering to create a new parliamentary majority with former KBL members who have formed themselves into a new parliamentary party, the Philippine Nationalist Party, led by former Marcos Labor Minister Blas Ople.

Workers extend ‘people power’

At the 3-million-strong March 2 “Thanksgiving” Mass and rally in Manila to celebrate the Marcos overthrow, Corazon Aquino warned that Marcos supporters continued to resist her government around the country. She urged the huge crowd to maintain “people power” to combat them.

Sections of working people have begun to take up this call in their own way. On March 11 vendors from the Cradajo Market in Manila marched on Manila Police Station No. 4 to protest the arrest of fellow vendors for refusing to pay “pong” (protection money) to the cops. The marchers chanted “People power! People power!”

According to a report in the *Manila Times* March 11, “The police complained that the vendors had abused ‘People Power’ and were forced to release the vendors they had arrested because they feared that the vendors would attack them.”

A march was also scheduled for Manila’s



Philippine slum. Overturn of Marcos dictatorship opens door to organize struggle against social and economic oppression.

City Hall to demand the ouster of the mayor for protecting the cops.

Employees of the Development Bank of the Philippines began an indefinite walkout March 13 to protest threatened staff layoffs and demand the firing of top bank officials appointed by Marcos, including the DBP chairman, Cezar Zalmea. They also condemned the retention of Jose “Jobo” Fernandez as Central Bank governor. Posters have appeared around Manila urging, “Cory, save us from Jobo.” Fernandez was particularly hated under Marcos as an IMF stooge.

Another protest was held by 500 bank workers on February 28 in Makati, Manila’s business district, demanding his removal.

On March 13, some 150 Ministry of Health employees picketed Health Minister Alfredo Bendzon’s office to demand the removal of several hospital and health agency chiefs. Ten thousand employees of the Philippines Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT), owned by Marcos crony Benedicto, defied a government order to end their two-week strike. Nevertheless, when the government announced March 15 that it was taking over PLDT and a number of other communications companies controlled by Benedicto, the strikers helped the government secure the company by ensuring that no documents or property were removed by management. Documents seized revealed huge amounts of profits being sent to the United States.

Occupation of education institutions

The press has also reported a spate of occupations of educational institutions and marches

on the Education Ministry by students and teachers demanding exposure of corruption, ouster of school heads, and the rollback of tuition fees. Protests have been reported at Rizal Technological College, University of the East, five state-owned colleges and universities, and one public elementary school.

In addition there are reports of labor unrest in the provinces. Labor Minister Augusto “Bobbie” Sanchez, whose appointment was supported by the militant KMU union movement, has said he expects the unrest to spread in the next period.

Efforts have begun to unite several of the labor federations.

Community-based network launched

Activists from the popular organizations that backed Aquino during her election campaign have also announced plans to take up her call to maintain “people power” by launching a network of community-based “Cory Aquino People’s Power” organizations to promote the interests of workers and peasants.

Lorenzo Tañada, known as the “grand old man of the opposition” because of his consistent opposition to the Marcos dictatorship, is reported to have been appointed chairman of a Commission of National Reconciliation. The commission is expected to play a role in trying to negotiate an end to the guerrilla war being waged by the New People’s Army and the Muslim-based Moro National Liberation Front. Tañada is chairman of the anti-Marcos coalition Bayan, which is strongly influenced by the Communist Party of the Philippines.

The appointment of the 81-year-old Tañada, if it is publicly affirmed by Aquino, will be one

of a series of appointments to government positions of figures associated with the so-called "parliament of the streets" opposition to the ousted dictatorship. Along with Labor Minister Sanchez, these include Minister of Social Services Mita Pardo de Tavera, a former head of the GABRIELA women's movement, and her deputy, Kareena David of Kaakbay, which was part of Bayan until June of last year.

Leaders of two of the three major wings of the Moro National Liberation Front have returned from exile in Malaysia and Saudi Arabia to negotiate the terms of a cease-fire with the new government. They have publicly declared support for Aquino and their willingness to end their guerrilla war if the government grants the Muslim areas of Mindanao autonomy based on an agreement reached with the Marcos government in 1976 but never implemented. The Saudi Arabian government has announced its willingness to provide almost \$500 million in aid for development of such an autonomous Muslim region.

The third wing of the liberation front is reportedly holding out for secession.

The press here is highlighting claims from the military of unofficial cease-fire agreements reached with NPA forces in various provinces or of the surrender of NPA or CPP militants to the government. Undoubtedly there is broad sentiment among Filipino peasants to give Corazon Aquino a chance, and this is sure to have some reflection within the peasant ranks of the NPA. But little credibility can be put on most of these reports.

For a start, the peasant movement has been aimed as much at the rural warlords and the Civilian Home Defense Forces as at the military per se, and the CHDF gang has not been disarmed. For instance, in Bohol, one of the provinces where it was claimed that the NPA had agreed to a cease-fire, 10 CHDF militiamen and members of one of the anti-communist "death squads" known as "Tadtad" were reported to have been killed March 13 in a clash with the NPA. Clashes were also reported by the *Manila Sunday Times* in Mindoro Oriental, Pampanga, Negros Occidental, and Misamis Oriental.

An additional point of tension has been the reluctance of the military command in many provincial areas to carry out President Aquino's orders to release all the NPA, CPP, and other political detainees. In Cebu City, for instance, the Task Force Detainees organization is protesting the fact that the army continues to hold 16 detainees on the excuse that military authorities have not yet received an official copy of Aquino's release order. □

Correction

In our last issue, March 24, a line of type was missing from the article from the Philippines, "How mass uprising toppled tyranny." The sentence, on page 164, should have read, "Different elements within this coalition continue to contend for influence over the course of the government behind the mass personal authority of Aquino."

1,500 people pack meeting to hear Sison discuss political situation

By Russell Johnson

MANILA — The founding chairman of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), Jose Maria Sison, presented his view of the Philippine political situation since the overthrow of Ferdinand Marcos to a March 13 forum at the Asian Institute of Management (AIM) in Makati, the financial center of Manila.

Sponsored by the August 21 Movement (named after the date in 1983 when opposition leader Benigno Aquino was gunned down at the Manila airport), the meeting was the first of five weekly "Dialogues With the Left" involving central leaders of the revolutionary movement, who can speak freely to the Filipino people for the first time in more than a decade. For that reason, the meeting itself was an inspiration for all present.

Similar open forums are being held in different parts of Manila almost daily.

It was standing-room only, as up to 1,500 people packed the hall. Workers from Manila's barrios rubbed shoulders with the predominantly young, middle-class audience. From the beginning it was clear that many in the crowd supported the outlawed CPP and for the first time in their political lives were able to assemble in large numbers to hear a speech from their acknowledged leader. They listened intently to every word.

"Joema," as Sison is popularly known in this land of the nickname and acronym, made it clear that since he had been in jail for the last eight and a half years, he no longer speaks officially for the CPP. Nor, he said, had he been able to meet with CPP leaders since his release. He spoke only for himself.

He welcomed the Corazon Aquino government as liberal-democratic and urged Bayan (the New Patriotic Alliance) and other "cause-oriented groups" to become the hard core of "people power," to strengthen the democratic trend in the government, dismantle the "fascist dictatorship," and "forestall the rise of a Napoleon Bonaparte in the military." This was the road to raising the level of "people power," which would open the door to a democratic coalition government involving the left, he said.

Genuine land reform needed

Sison warned that he could see no lasting national reconciliation without establishing true independence, especially removing the U.S. military bases and carrying out a genuine land reform. Another land reform like that of Marcos, which simply transferred land to the big landowning families and to foreign and local corporate ownerships, would drive more and more peasants into armed struggle against the government, he predicted.

The CPP leader called for a program of national industrial development, which he linked to the need to expand economic relations with

the "socialist countries." Sison also called for the "opening up of the political process to everybody," saying that workers and peasants should have a hand in the making of the new constitution and calling for the establishment of a multiparty parliamentary system. Expanding on this idea later, he proposed that Bayan, a broad, legal coalition in which the CPP has considerable influence, transform itself into "a national democratic party" to participate in these developments.

What was good about the situation in the Philippines today, Sison concluded, was that the national democratic forces could put forward their views freely. He had been both quoted and misquoted, praising and criticizing the Aquino government, but he was still free, he said to thunderous applause. But the possibility of a comeback by Marcos or the "stay-behinds" has still not been totally eradicated, he warned.

In response to a question from the floor, Sison gave his assessment of the boycott tactic applied by CPP-led groups like Bayan in the February 7 snap elections. The tactic had been motivated on the grounds that Aquino was not essentially different from Marcos and that the elections would be fraudulent. This is the subject of a raging debate within the "cause oriented" popular organizations and within the CPP itself.

The mass mobilizations that developed around the Aquino candidacy and exploded February 22-25, when Marcos tried to steal the elections, caught CPP-led organizations by surprise. They were left politically disoriented and largely sidelined and unable to significantly influence the course of events at the decisive moment.

As one commentator put it in the March 16 *Manila Sunday Times Magazine*: "They who fought the hardest and contributed the most martyrs to the cause of freedom now contemplate on the callous ironies of history."

Boycott tactics debated

Bayan has clearly not yet been able to draw a collective balance sheet on its boycott tactics, despite a two-day conference in early March. Nevertheless, some Bayan affiliates and individual leaders have made public statements declaring the boycott to have been a mistake.

Bayan leader Baltazar Pinquel, for example, told a forum at the University of the Philippines March 11 that he believed his organization was wrong to have boycotted the elections. "But Bayan has learned its lessons," Pinquel emphasized.

Sison explained that it was not his view that Bayan, which he described as one of the three main political forces in the country, had lost the initiative through its boycott tactic. The

revolutionaries had planted the seed of the antifascist struggle in 1968 (when the CPP was founded), Sison said. Over the years that seed had grown into a tree, which in 1986 bore a bumper crop of fruit. Latecomers got most of the fruit this time, he said, but next will be the turn of the revolutionaries.

However, Sison said he had seen a danger in a tendency in Bayan toward what he called a "maximum boycott," that is, trying to prevent

the election from taking place at all. That is why he wrote an article from prison advocating a "minimum boycott" (see *Intercontinental Press* March 10, 1986). This, he said, meant focusing on exposing the fraudulent character of Marcos' elections without interfering with the popular desire to vote for Corazon Aquino. This position, he explained, was complementary to those progressive forces participating in the Aquino campaign.

Sison also said that Bandilla, the major component of the forces that left Bayan last May and participated in Aquino's campaign, had had a share in the February victory. He called on Bayan to reject any element of conceit or arrogance and to seek areas of convergence to work together with Bandilla to strengthen the democratic trend in the Aquino government and forestall a right-wing coup. □

STATEMENT OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

Huge mobilizations force Marcos out

Solidarity urged for Philippine democratic, anti-imperialist forces

[The following statement was adopted by the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International on March 2.]

* * *

Eighteen days after dictator Jean-Claude Duvalier took flight from Haiti, Ferdinand Marcos had to flee ignominiously from the Philippines. U.S. helicopters had to come and rescue him, together with his entourage, so that he could escape from the presidential palace, surrounded by the insurgent population.

After huge and continual mobilizations, sometimes of a million people, Manila was in fact, and had been for several days, occupied by hundreds of thousands of demonstrators. They were determined not to give up before achieving the departure of him who had thought himself master of the country for 20 years. Growing numbers of soldiers showed no will to break up these mobilizations, and also a readiness to join the crowds themselves.

We owe the overthrow of Marcos in the first place to an extraordinary popular and democratic mobilization. Without this, the moderate opposition would have remained powerless, the White House would not have let its protégé fall, and the officer corps would not have become divided as it did.

For the last few years, important sectors of the U.S. administration, of Philippine big business and the middle class, and of the Catholic hierarchy in the country had sought an orderly transition towards a regime that would more adequately serve its interests.

The political instability of the Marcos regime accelerated after the assassination of opposition leader Benigno Aquino in August 1983. The system of power established by Marcos under martial law was undermined by a deep economic and social crisis. The proimperialist elite in the Philippines was more and more deeply divided. A popular mass movement of workers, urban poor, and peasants came into mounting conflict with the regime. The revolutionary left and the guerrilla forces

led by the Communist Party of the Philippines — the New People's Army — experienced rapid growth.

In the eyes of imperialism, it was vital to reunify the ruling elite and reform the officer corps — corrupt and hated by the population — in order to more effectively combat the upsurge in the democratic and anti-imperialist struggle. It was all the more vital because of the key strategic importance of this Southeast Asian archipelago, which houses the two main U.S. bases abroad — Subic Bay and Clark bases.

This was a policy failure. Marcos rejected any meaningful compromise. The U.S. administration was not able to overcome its internal divisions. The Feb. 7, 1986, elections, which were to finally create the conditions for a restoration of the regime and the start of an orderly transition, led to a face-to-face confrontation between the Marcos regime and the opposition forces. It was thus in a situation of a major, open political crisis that the departure of Marcos came to be seen — in Washington and in Manila — as the only solution.

The overthrow of the dictator is a victory won by the Filipino people. It opens up a new stage of political life there.

But the current government will try to deny the Filipino people the fruits of this victory. Around the charismatic personality of Corazon Aquino, new president of the Philippines, there is a bloc of conservative forces that is reflected in the composition of the new government. Won over at the last minute, Juan Ponce Enrile, who was the moving spirit in the martial law policy, is again minister of defense.

Jaime Ongpin, the new finance minister and president of the Benguet Mining Corporation, is one of the main spokespersons of the business world. Salvador Laurel — vice-president, prime minister, and minister of foreign affairs — was a longtime ally of Marcos and represents UNIDO, a conservative political formation linked to the landowning oligarchy. Many presidential advisers are Jesuit priests, advocates of reform but deeply anticommunist.

As for Gen. Fidel V. Ramos, chief of staff of the armed forces, he is well known for his links with Washington and the Pentagon. The role of a few personalities known for their defense of human rights can only, in these conditions, be seen as marginal. U.S. imperialism, strengthened by the proimperialist character of the new regime and the support of the powerful Catholic hierarchy, will do everything to re-stabilize its domination over the country.

The democratic and anti-imperialist movement is thus going to have to continue to organize and struggle for its aims. The Philippine army is divided.

The policy of President Reagan — which supported Marcos right up to the eleventh hour — has awakened a deep nationalist feeling in the Philippines against the long-standing colonial power. The population has experienced what its strength is when the masses mobilize.

Marginalized during the election period and the weeks which followed the February 7 elections, the popular forces of the left and revolutionaries remain deeply rooted. The economic and social crisis requires a mass struggle independent of the government.

The democratic and anti-imperialist struggle continues.

The Fourth International reaffirms its support for the popular, democratic, anti-imperialist, and revolutionary forces in the Philippines. Alongside the Filipino people, we demand the immediate and unconditional release of all the political prisoners — without any exceptions — who have courageously fought against the dictator Marcos; the repeal of all antistrike laws and decrees; the recognition of independent trade unions; the dismantling of the repressive apparatus and the various landlords' private armies in the countryside; the bringing to justice of those responsible for torture and summary executions; the reestablishment of all democratic freedoms; and the removal of the massive U.S. air and naval bases from the Philippines. □

New wave of antigovernment protests

Demand overturn of junta, formation of new provisional government

By Harvey McArthur

PORT-AU-PRINCE — A wave of antigovernment strikes and demonstrations led to the collapse of the National Council of Government (CNG) here March 21. The army immediately appointed a three-person council to replace the six-member military-civilian junta established by dictator Jean-Claude Duvalier when he fled the country on February 7. The army also imposed an 8:00 p.m.-to-5:00 a.m. curfew in an attempt to dampen protests.

Before leaving, Duvalier turned power over to the army and organized the CNG. Five of the six members were army officers or former members of Duvalier's cabinet. The sixth, Gérard Gourgue, was chairman of the Haitian League for Human Rights. He was an opponent of the Duvalier regime and was added to give the new government some credibility and a chance to defuse the massive protests.

On March 20, Gourgue announced his resignation from the government.

The next day, Gen. Henri Namphy, president of the junta, announced the resignation of Alix Cinéas, Col. Prosper Avril, and Col. Max Vallès.

Namphy explained that "because of the climate of unrest and uncertainty reigning in the country, the armed forces decided to restructure the National Government Council after the resignation of some of its members." The new council includes Namphy and Col. William Regala, the two surviving members of the first junta, and Jacques François, an elderly Haitian diplomat. Namphy and Regala were high-ranking officers under Duvalier.

Army killings spark protests

The latest protests were sparked when army troops killed five civilians in the Martissant neighborhood here in the capital on March 19.

According to radio and press reports, an off-duty army captain driving through Martissant collided with a "tap tap" — the common name for the small, brightly painted trucks widely used for public transportation here. The captain jumped out of his car, insulted and physically attacked the tap tap driver, and tried to arrest him.

Other drivers came to the victim's aid and blocked off the street, forcing the captain to flee. Shortly thereafter, uniformed soldiers appeared and opened fire on the crowd, killing five people and wounding at least 10.

This massacre was widely condemned as a continuation of the kind of bloody repression suffered under the Duvalier dictatorship. Commentators on the Catholic and other radio stations demanded an explanation from the government and called for the arrest of the guilty

officers and soldiers.

In response to the murders, tap tap, taxi, and truck drivers declared a strike in Martissant, blocking the main route from Port-au-Prince south to Carrefour. They barricaded the road and forced other drivers to stop. When the police and army were sent in to open the road, the drivers expanded their strike to include the entire city.

Protests mounted throughout Haiti the day after the killings, as the government took no action against the officer and soldiers responsible. Thousands of students demonstrated in front of the National Palace chanting "No more tricks!" "The government must explain itself!" and "Stop attacking the people!" Students also demonstrated at the National Television and the Catholic church radio station, Radio Soleil, to publicize their opposition to the junta.

That afternoon, thousands gathered at the palace again to welcome Daniel Figolé. Returning after 29 years in exile, Figolé was the popular leader of the Movement of Workers and Peasants (MOP) during the 1940s and 1950s. He was also provisional president of Haiti for 19 days during the turbulent period in 1956 before François Duvalier took power.

"He was a president for the poor," demonstrators said, most of whom were born after Figolé went into exile. "Our parents and our grandparents told us he was the best president we had," they explained. "When he was president, we had food and we had jobs," others added.

The crowd demanded the overthrow of the junta and called for Figolé to become provisional president immediately.

'Down with the CNG!'

Other protests erupted in cities throughout Haiti. Students in Léogane marched to demand a new provisional government. They called for the ouster of the current mayor of that city, whom they denounced as a Duvalier supporter. That night protesters set fire to the central market in Léogane to protest the curfew imposed by the army.

In Cap-Haïtien, the second-largest city in the country, demonstrators massed in front of the city hall to prevent the installation of a new prefect, whom they accused of ties with the Duvalier regime. They also chanted antigovernment slogans. Soldiers were called out to disperse the crowd, which had armed itself with rocks and machetes, according to reports from Radio Voix Ave Maria, the local Catholic church station.

In Gonaïves protesters cried, "Down with the CNG," and demanded the disbanding of the army's elite counterinsurgency unit known as the Léopards. The Léopards are notorious

for the repression they carried out under Duvalier.

Large demonstrations were also reported in Jacmel, an important city on the southern coast.

The governmental crisis deepened late on the afternoon of March 20 when Gourgue announced his resignation.

As minister of justice, Gourgue was nominally responsible for prosecuting officials and Tontons Macoutes who were responsible for corruption and repression against the people. Hundreds of victims of repression and their families had streamed to the ministry to denounce specific officials and Macoutes and to demand justice.

The junta resisted these demands and, in fact, helped some hated Duvalier officials to flee the country. This undercut what little authority the military rulers had to begin with and put more pressure on Gourgue as the one responsible for bringing the criminals to trial.

On March 19, Gourgue went on national television to read a statement assuring the people that the junta really would take measures against the old officials.

That night, the army attacked the crowd in Martissant. Gourgue announced his resignation the next afternoon.

Many people had viewed Gourgue's participation in the junta as a guarantee that it would not return to the repression of the Duvalier years. With his resignation, they were faced with a government made up entirely of old Duvalier supporters.

Fears of repression increased when the government imposed the curfew.

The curfew largely cleared the streets of Port-au-Prince that night, but did not stop the spread of antigovernment demonstrations. Scattered shooting occurred throughout the night, as protesters in some neighborhoods confronted the troops. Local radio stations reported that several demonstrators were injured.

By the morning of March 21, the drivers' strike had spread throughout the capital. Avenue J.J. Dessalines, the main street in Port-au-Prince, is usually packed with tap taps. That day, the streets were practically empty of vehicles. A handful of tap taps and a few trucks moved, but most carried no passengers. Only a few operated along the main road leading to the big industrial park and the airport. This reporter saw one of them forced to stop by a truck driver enforcing the strike.

Thousands of students — most of them from primary and secondary schools — poured into the plaza in front of the National Palace shouting, "Down with the junta!" "We don't need the CNG!" "We don't want the junta!" and

"Down with Namphy!"

Radio stations carried reports of demonstrations and confrontations with government officials in Cap Haïtien, Gonaïves, Jacmel, and other cities.

According to the *New York Times*, four people were killed on March 21, and 25 were injured.

Radio Soleil commented that "the CNG must decide whether it will do what the people want or if it will act the way Duvalier did."

"The people have been patient," Radio Soleil warned, "but they are opening their eyes."

That afternoon, General Namphy announced the resignations of Cinéas, Vallès, and Avril and the organization of the new government council.

The latest round of demonstrations reflects a changed attitude toward the army. During the protests against Duvalier last December and January, many chanted "Long live the army." They saw a distinction between the army and

the hated Tontons Macoutes and hoped the army would support the people.

In this new wave of protests, the demand has been raised to abolish the Léopards, and some protesters have said that the entire army was as bad as the Macoutes. The chant "Long live the army" wasn't heard.

Demonstrators are already challenging the new three-person junta. The *New York Times* reported a march of 5,000 young people in Port-au-Prince, organized by the Committee to Initiate Democracy on March 24. "We want a civilian government" was one of the popular slogans, while other marchers distributed flyers calling for a civilian government headed by Gourgue.

The instability of the military government and its inability to control the protests raises the danger of U.S. military intervention to protect U.S. imperialist economic and political interests in Haiti. □

New organizations formed

Workers, peasants, students fight for social changes

By Harvey McArthur

PORT-AU-PRINCE — The red and blue banner of Haitian independence and liberation from the 29 years of Duvalier dictatorship is being flown everywhere here.

Red and blue were the colors under which, in 1804, Haitians fought to win independence from France and to abolish slavery. In 1957 François Duvalier replaced this flag with a red and black banner. In the course of the Duvalier family's rule, blue and red came to symbolize the struggle to free Haiti, first from the grip of the François "Papa Doc" Duvalier regime and then that of his son — Jean-Claude "Baby Doc."

At any street corner in the busy capital city of Port-au-Prince today one sees blue and red flags painted on storefronts and flying from taxis and "tap taps" — the many small trucks that provide public transportation. Many people proudly wear new T-shirts with the flag and the slogan "Haiti is free — February 7, 1986."

"Haiti is free," we were told over and over again. "Now we can breathe. Now we can speak."

With the overthrow of the repressive Duvalier regime, the Haitian people have won the right to know, to speak, to protest, and to organize. These are vital tools Haitian workers and peasants need to confront the enormous challenges they face in trying to develop their homeland, which U.S. imperialist domination has made the poorest country in the hemisphere.

Along the road from the Port-au-Prince airport, families bathe in muddy puddles in front of modern U.S.-owned factories and banks. Children — many naked, with bellies swollen from malnutrition — beg money at the roadside.

Students, peasants, and workers, having

overthrown Duvalier, are now beginning to form organizations to defend their rights and fight for needed social changes.

The return of political exiles is an important part of this growing political activity. During the nearly three decades of the Duvaliers' rule, more than 1 million Haitians — one-fifth of the population — fled the country. Many were leaders of unions and opposition political parties, journalists, or other opponents of the dictatorship. Due to the bloody repression, the union movement and opposition political groups that did exist were small and weak.

On February 7 the National Council of Government replaced the Duvalier regime. It includes four high-ranking military officers who served under Duvalier and two civilians. The new government said that it would screen exiles who wanted to return and that none could come back without an official visa. This is a requirement the Haitian government has maintained since the 1940s. In recent weeks, many exiles have been given visas to come back.

In the past week, these included Serge Gilles, leader of the Union of Haitian Patriotic and Democratic Forces (IFOPADA); Renée Theodore, secretary-general of the United Haitian Communist Party (PUCH); Col. Octave Cayard, who led an unsuccessful revolt against François Duvalier in 1970; Pierre Clitandre, journalist and editor, expelled along with hundreds of other dissidents in November 1980; and Thomas Desulné, anti-Duvalier businessman and former member of the Haitian Senate. Most of these have held press conferences and appeared on radio and television.

Among the most prominent exiles to return is Father Gerard Jean-Juste, director of the Haitian Refugee Center Inc. in Miami. Jean-Juste was imprisoned by Duvalier in 1971 and

has been in exile for 14 years. He returned to Haiti March 15 for one week with a fact-finding delegation from the Haitian Refugee Center.

At Miami International Airport, Jean-Juste told reporters that many Haitians in Miami asked him to return home to find out "the conditions, the people's demands, to see if liberation is proceeding.

"I am going to return," he said, "not to tell people what to do but to find out what the conditions are."

Jean-Juste took with him checks for \$31,000, money donated by Haitians in Miami to help rebuild schools damaged or destroyed in the uprising against Duvalier.

The delegation also included Leonel Cius, father of Jean-Robert Cius, a youth murdered by Duvalier's troops on Nov. 28, 1985; and Gabriel Augustan, a Haitian Refugee Center board member and prominent activist in Miami. Both had been exiled during the 1970s. Haitians on board the flight from Miami broke into applause and shouts when the first glimpse of their homeland could be seen from the airplane windows.

On March 16, Jean-Juste led a Mass at the Saint Jean Bosco Church in Port-au-Prince. He was introduced by the church's pastor, Father Aristide Bertrand, a prominent opponent of the Duvalier regime.

The more than 600 people attending the service broke into applause when Jean-Juste was introduced, and they gasped with surprise and delight when Aristide announced that Leonel Cius was present.

In an opening prayer, Aristide said that "the people have begun to pose questions. We must continue to work for a better Haiti, with jobs and food for all."

Jean-Juste gave the sermon, explaining how Haitians in Miami had organized demonstrations against Duvalier and to defend Haitian refugees in the United States and the Bahamas from deportations and mistreatment.

He said that he would take a report back to the United States and asked if all the problems were solved now that Duvalier had gone.

"No, no!" people shouted. "We don't have jobs or food. Children can't go to school. We need hospitals."

One woman insisted on speaking and was led to the altar microphone by Aristide as Jean-Juste led the congregation in chanting, "The people are fighting everywhere, they demand freedom."

"There is hunger throughout the country," she said. "The rich don't care if we don't have work, or if they kill us. Duvalier was a thief, a criminal, and an assassin," she declared to enthusiastic applause. Father Jean-Juste pointed out that the most important achievement of the revolution was winning the right to speak freely.

The two-and-a-half-hour service, which was filmed by camera crews from three Miami-based television stations, included the singing of the Haitian national anthem and calls to continue Operation Uproot, the term used to describe the revolution. □

Left loses in Assembly elections

CP's vote down; National Front's vote up

By Will Reissner

The Socialist Party and Communist Party were big losers in France's March 16 parliamentary elections. Between them they took 43 percent of the National Assembly seats, down sharply from their combined total of 67 percent of the seats in the 1981 parliamentary elections.

The SP, which had an absolute majority in the outgoing National Assembly, ended up with 31.5 percent of the vote and 215 seats in the 573-member parliament, while the CP's 9.8 percent of the vote gave it 35 seats.

The Socialist Party remains the biggest single party in the National Assembly.

But the largest bloc of seats was won by a rightist coalition of the Assembly for the Republic (RPR) and the Union for French Democracy (UDF), which took 274 seats between them. With support from the 14 procapitalist independents elected, they form a majority in the new assembly.

As a result, RPR leader Jacques Chirac became France's new prime minister and named a cabinet made up of members of the coalition of capitalist parties. He immediately announced that he was asking the National Assembly for authorization to put nationalized businesses back into private hands.

François Mitterrand of the Socialist Party, however, remains France's president until his term expires in 1988. This marks the first time since the Fifth Republic was established in 1958 that the French president and prime minister are not from the same political formation.

The March 16 election also registered a big gain for the ultraright National Front (FN), led by Jean-Marie Le Pen. The National Front, which leveled attacks against immigrant workers and focused on "law and order" themes, won its first parliamentary representation ever, taking 35 seats with 9.7 percent of the vote.

Le Pen, a millionaire former paratrooper who has been accused of carrying out torture against freedom fighters during Algeria's war of independence from France, described the National Front's results as "a great political victory."

He argued that "the National Front has achieved its primary objective, to beat the CP." Although the CP actually ended up with slightly more votes than the National Front, the closeness of the totals put into sharp relief the decline in CP support in the past decade and a half.

CP's decline

For several decades after World War II, the French Communist Party was the country's

largest political organization, regularly polling one-quarter of the vote.

The election results also clearly reflected a fundamental shift in the relationship of forces within the French workers' movement in the past decade. Until the mid-1970s, the CP's membership, apparatus, strength in the trade union movement, and electoral support far overshadowed that of the rival Socialist Party.

In the 1969 presidential election the SP candidate polled barely 5 percent of the vote nationally, while the CP candidate received four times that percentage.

At its 1971 congress, the Socialist Party made a fundamental strategic turn. The SP dropped its previous policy of functioning as a junior partner in successive center-left capitalist governments, and opted instead for cooperation with the Communist Party.

François Mitterrand was the leading exponent of an alliance with the CP, which was consummated in 1972 with the formation of the Union of the Left and the adoption of a Common Program.

The prospect of a government of the workers' parties aroused great enthusiasm in the French working class. Through the Union of the Left, the SP grew steadily in size and influence, while the CP initially maintained its own traditional strength.

The growth in support for the SP came mainly from new layers of the working class such as technicians and newly urbanized workers in traditionally rural areas that were experiencing significant industrialization for the first time.

But in time, the SP also began to expand its influence in the traditional CP-dominated industrial working-class strongholds.

The CP leadership, fearing that the SP was reaping the lion's share of benefits from the Union of the Left, torpedoed the alliance in 1977, shortly before the 1978 legislative elections. The Union of the Left had been expected to win a victory in those elections.

The break-up of the Union of the Left extended beyond the electoral arena. In the trade unions and on the factory floor, cooperation between the two parties and the unions they influenced broke down.

The CP's hope of turning the clock back to 1971 and reestablishing itself as the unchallenged party of the French workers, however, was dashed. In the 1978 legislative elections, the SP's vote surpassed that of the CP for the first time in decades — 22.8 percent to 20.6 percent.

CP leader Georges Marchais' response was to step up his attacks on the SP. But the change in CP tactics did not stem the drop in CP sup-

port or the growth in support for the SP.

In the first round of the 1981 presidential election,* Marchais got only 15.3 percent of the vote as the CP's candidate, far below the party's traditional minimum of 20 percent.

Meanwhile SP candidate Mitterrand received 25.8 percent.

The decline was confirmed in the first round of the 1981 parliamentary elections a month later, in which the CP barely topped 16 percent and the SP got 37.8 percent of the total.

Stress left unity

Following the poor results in the first round of the 1981 presidential election, the CP leadership backed away from its policy of focusing most of its fire on the SP and again stressed left unity.

When Mitterrand named his first cabinet in June 1981, four of its 44 members were from the Communist Party.

The election of the SP government in 1981 was greeted with an outpouring of joy in the French workers' movement. There were huge celebrations and dancing in the streets as the vote totals were announced.

Immediately after taking office, Mitterrand's government enacted a series of measures that consolidated its popular support. These included a 10 percent raise in the minimum wage, a 25 percent increase in state benefits for low-income families, raises in old-age benefits and rent subsidies, and a fifth week's annual paid vacation for French workers.

The Mitterrand government also nationalized a number of leading companies and banks.

After carrying out its initial reforms, the SP-CP government made a sharp U-turn in economic policy in 1983. Under the continuing pressure of the 1981-82 worldwide capitalist economic downturn, the SP-CP government implemented austerity policies leading to higher unemployment and lower living standards for French workers and farmers.

These attacks, carried out by "their" government, led to confusion, demoralization, and demobilization in the French workers' move-

*The March 16, 1986, elections were the first to be held under a one-round system of proportional representation. Previously, elections took place in two rounds. If no candidate received a majority in the first round, a runoff was held, in which any candidate receiving at least 12.5 percent of the vote was eligible to take part.

Prime Minister Chirac is asking the National Assembly to abolish the new proportional representation system and return to a majority method of vote-counting.

ment.

At the same time, many of the professionals and middle-class voters who had been drawn to the SP in 1981 began returning to the capitalist opposition parties as Mitterrand carried out economic policies very similar to those of his predecessor in the presidential palace.

Mitterrand's decision to implement traditional belt-tightening policies — focusing on budget cuts and reduced social spending — combined with the demoralization in the workers' movement and the defection of many middle-class elements, pushed the framework of political discussion in France to the right.

This shift was given further impetus by Mitterrand's reactionary foreign policy, marked by enthusiastic endorsement of Ronald Reagan's anti-Soviet propaganda, support for deployment of U.S. nuclear missiles in Western Europe, and French military interventions in Chad, Lebanon, and New Caledonia.

Setback in 1984 elections

The Socialist and Communist parties suffered a big setback in the June 17, 1984, elections to the European parliament, as French voters expressed their dissatisfaction with the government's record. The Socialist Party's 20.9 percent of the vote marked its worst showing since 1973. The Communist Party's 11.2 percent was its lowest score since 1928.

The 1984 European parliament elections also registered a sharp rise in support for the rightist National Front, which took 10.9 percent of the vote. The National Front, running a demagogic, racist campaign that blamed immigrant workers for rising unemployment, won 2.21 million votes, only slightly less than the 2.26 million for the long-established CP, with its four cabinet members.

The right-wing forces in France felt the wind in their sails after the European elections and immediately stepped up their pressure.

One week after the voting nearly 1 million people marched through Paris to oppose a Socialist Party-sponsored bill to increase government control over state-subsidized private schools, most of which are run by the Catholic church.

This demonstration took on the character of a gigantic antigovernment rally, as major capitalist politicians led the crowd through the streets of the capital.

The CP's low vote in the European elections jolted the party's leadership. The loss of half its electorate between the March 1978 legislative elections and the June 1984 European elections led the CP to step up its criticism of Mitterrand's antilabor policies. On July 19, 1984, the CP withdrew its members from the cabinet.

But the March 16, 1986, elections showed this shift did not halt the decline in the CP's electoral support. The elections also highlighted the SP's present dominance within the left, with that party attracting more than three times as many votes as the CP.

The CP's decline took place across the board geographically. In 1978 the CP won

The 'far left' in the elections

"We are being presented with a choice between a continuation of the austerity policy with a left government or a stepped-up austerity policy under a government of the right," noted Alain Krivine before the March 16 National Assembly elections.

Krivine, a leader of the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), the French section of the Fourth International, added that "the LCR wants to offer the workers another choice — to reject such austerity policy in general, no matter whether by a left or right government."

To that end, the LCR made a unity proposal to other forces to the left of the Socialist and Communist parties for a joint slate to contest the parliamentary elections as a "united anticapitalist force."

Such a coalition, the LCR proposed, could campaign around key issues all agreed on, within the context of opposition to the return of the right-wing parties to power and to the class-collaborationist and austerity policies of the Socialist and Communist parties.

Other forces on what is called the "far left" in French political vocabulary, however, were unwilling to put aside their differences and set up a united slate.

Workers Struggle (LO), which had run joint slates with the LCR many times in the past, was unwilling to do so this time.

The Internationalist Communist Party (PCI) had launched what it grandiosely described as the Movement for a Workers Party (MPPT), which put forward its own candidates.

The Federation for a Left Alternative (FGA), the Party for a Communist Alternative (PAC), and the United Socialist Party (PSU) all oriented toward an alliance with the petty-bourgeois Green Party and were unwilling to discuss a joint slate with the LCR.

In the March 10 issue of *International Viewpoint*, Francis Sitel wrote that "in March 1986, the far left, therefore, is going to offer a lamentable spectacle of greater than ever division, which will be totally incomprehensible for the great majority of workers. When the workers are drawing the balance sheet of the failure of the left government, they are going to have to sort out appeals for votes from competing slates put up by LO, the LCR, the MPPT, the Greens or various 'alternative' slates."

Sitel maintained that "such a situation cannot be explained only by the sectarianism or irresponsibility of various forces. It is the result of a general crisis of orientation which has not — far from it — spared the far left."

Together, the various "far left" slates received 1.5 percent of the vote on March 16.

more than 20 percent of the vote in 45 of France's 96 departments, and in only 9 departments did it get less than 10 percent of the vote.

By contrast, in the most recent voting the party took more than 20 percent of the vote in only three departments, while it got less than 10 percent of the vote in 58 others.

Vote drops in traditional strongholds

Some of the steepest drops occurred in historic CP strongholds. In the department of Seine-Saint-Denis, in what has traditionally been known as Paris' "red belt," the CP's share of the vote has dropped by almost one-half in the past five years: from 36.3 percent in the 1981 legislative election to 18.7 percent this year.

In that traditional CP "bastion," the National Front's share of the vote, 14.5 percent, came within 4 percentage points of the CP's.

In a statement after the voting, CP Chairman Marchais blamed his party's poor showing on the policies the Mitterrand government has carried out since 1981.

The SP, said Marchais, "had been elected to carry out a new policy." Instead, "the leaders of that party did the opposite of what they had promised. They adopted the worst prescriptions of the right by carrying out a harsh policy of austerity, which weakened France, in-

creased unemployment, and built up all the social inequalities."

Marchais added, "In this way they opened the door for the right." The success of the RPR and UDF, he said, flowed from "the pernicious orientation of the government's policy" and "the profound disillusionment and justified discontent that it engendered."

The CP leader warned that "the forces of capital are now going to take advantage of the situation created to try to deal new blows to the workers."

Leaders of the Socialist Party, while not happy about losing control over the National Assembly, expressed satisfaction that the SP is still the single largest party in the assembly.

Many SP leaders, including Mitterrand himself, make no secret of their hope that the CP will wither away into insignificance, leaving the SP as the uncontested alternative to the right-wing parties.

They foresee a situation in which a "responsible" SP will regularly alternate in power with the right-wing parties, as social democratic parties in some other West European countries regularly do.

Jean-Louis Bianco, Mitterrand's chief of staff, would even drop any formal identification with the workers' movement. Bianco points to the Democratic Party in the United States as a model for a revamped SP. □

Loyalists stage protest

Mark opposition to British-Irish pact

By Will Reissner

Pro-British forces in Northern Ireland staged a one-day general strike March 3 to protest a Nov. 15, 1985, agreement between the British and Irish governments on the status of British-ruled Northern Ireland.

The agreement confirmed British rule in the six counties of Northern Ireland, while granting the Irish government a consultative voice in the affairs of the north.

The work stoppage by Loyalist, largely Protestant, forces in Northern Ireland was called as a show of strength against any change in the status of the British-ruled enclave.

In many parts of the six counties, electricity was shut off, trains stopped running, and stores and factories were closed.

Loyalist protesters physically blocked roads, preventing opponents of the action from reaching their jobs. In some places, people who refused to turn back at Loyalist roadblocks were physically removed from their cars, which were burned.

The largely Protestant police force often stood aside as Loyalist protesters blocked roads with trees, tractors, and telephone poles.

In Belfast, where Catholics have been systematically excluded from most industrial jobs, large companies reported that fewer than 15 percent of the workers were on the job during the protest.

In areas with a heavily Catholic, Irish nationalist population, however, most factories and stores functioned normally.

The Loyalist protest reflected widespread fears among Northern Ireland's Protestants that any change in the six counties' political status could mark the beginning of the end of the far-reaching privileges that Protestants have gained there by serving as a bulwark in defense of British rule and against Ireland's reunification.

The Loyalist population of Northern Ireland outnumbers the nationalist, mainly Catholic, population by about 3 to 2.

The rump state of Northern Ireland was established by the British in 1921, when London determined it could no longer maintain its rule over all of Ireland.

The pro-British population had been settled in northeastern Ireland in the early 17th century to control the rebellious native Irish.

On January 23, in what Loyalists described as a referendum on the British-Irish accord, supporters of continued union with Britain won 14 of 15 open seats in the British Parliament from Northern Ireland. The election had been triggered by the simultaneous resignation of 15 "unionist" members of the British Parliament to protest the November 15 agreement between London and Dublin.

Although unionist candidates won almost all

the seats at stake, the greatest interest focused on the voting patterns among the nationalists.

While the election registered the hostility of the Loyalists to the London-Dublin accord, it also showed that there are strong illusions in the agreement within the nationalist community.

Sinn Féin, the party that supports armed struggle to end British rule and reunify Ireland, saw its vote slip significantly from the results it obtained in the 1983 elections.

At the same time, there was a significant increase in the vote for the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), a nationalist party that opposes armed struggle to achieve Irish reunification.

In the four constituencies where Sinn Féin ran candidates, the party's vote dropped by 18,231 compared with 1983, while the SDLP's total was up 11,371. Seamus Mallon, a prominent SDLP leader, won the seat for Newry/Armagh.

In recent years Sinn Féin has greatly expanded its influence among supporters of nationalism in Northern Ireland, largely at the expense of the SDLP. In elections for the

Northern Ireland Assembly in 1983, Sinn Féin won 42 percent of the nationalist vote.

In an attempt to bolster the sagging fortunes of the SDLP, the British and Irish governments have both tried to demonstrate that the SDLP's legalistic approach could lead to improvements for the oppressed nationalist population.

The November British-Irish governmental agreement was a centerpiece in that strategy. Although the pact codified the British insistence that the Loyalist population can veto any change in Northern Ireland's status, it included the vague promise that "the United Kingdom Government accept that the Irish Government will put forward views and proposals on matters relating to Northern Ireland."

The British government, however, is under no obligation to accept such proposals from Dublin.

The drop in Sinn Féin's vote and the rise in the vote for the SDLP indicate that the London-Dublin public relations campaign depicting the agreement as an advance for the nationalist population has had an impact.

As the January 30 issue of Sinn Féin's weekly newspaper *An Phoblacht/Republican News* pointed out, "the SDLP still benefit from the promises of concessions to nationalists which were made" in the November 15 pact.

"The agreement," the newspaper added, "has not yet been shown clearly for what it is — an attempt to curb republican resistance and stabilise the North with Dublin's collaboration." The term "republican" refers to those favoring a united Irish republic. □

25,000 in U.S. abortion rights march

By Patti Iiyama

Over 25,000 supporters of abortion rights marched down the streets of Los Angeles, California, on March 16. In spite of a torrential downpour, the demonstration was the largest action for women's rights ever held on the West Coast.

Together with the previous week's march of 100,000 in Washington, D.C., the "March for Women's Lives" may well have been the biggest demonstration for women's rights in U.S. history.

Both marches were initiated by the National Organization for Women (NOW), the largest women's rights group in the country, in response to growing attacks on women's right to obtain abortions. Since 1973, when the U.S. Supreme Court legalized abortion, this fundamental right has been under attack.

In 1977 Congress cut off federal funding for abortion, hitting hardest at the poor and at Black women, Latinas, and other victims of racist discrimination. Right-wing terrorists have been bombing abortion clinics around the country with impunity. The Reagan administration, backed by the Catholic church hierarchy, has been pushing for a constitutional amendment to outlaw abortion.

A majority of people in the United States, however, support a woman's right to choose abortion.

Students made up a large part of the Los Angeles demonstration, with delegations from over 50 California colleges and universities. Many unions also participated, including the International Association of Machinists and the Service Employees International Union. Fourteen West Coast labor organizations had endorsed the March 16 action.

Two Iowa meatpackers who were fired for refusing to cross picket lines in support of Hormel workers on strike in Austin, Minnesota, received a warm welcome on the march. Many people wore their union's button, "Local 431, Ottumwa, Iowa. 1986 — the year of union solidarity."

Some 30 striking TWA flight attendants made up one of the most militant contingents. TWA President Carl Icahn has said the attendants do not need as much money as other workers at TWA because 85 percent of them are women, who supposedly are not breadwinners. In response, the strikers carried picket signs proclaiming "I am a breadwinner" and "TWA is antiunion and antifemale."

Speakers at the rally included Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley, other elected officials, women's rights leaders, "prochoice" Catholics, and entertainment figures such as Jane Fonda and Ed Asner, former president of the Screen Actors Guild. □

SP regime wins pro-NATO vote

But opponents plan new antimilitary actions

By Ernest Harsch

After weeks of strenuous campaigning, the Socialist Party government of Prime Minister Felipe González succeeded in convincing a majority of Spanish voters to keep the country within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

In the March 12 referendum on whether Spain should remain a NATO member, 53 percent voted "yes" and 40 percent "no." (The remaining 7 percent cast either blank or spoiled ballots.) About 60 percent of the electorate turned out for the vote.

González maintained that the results were a "triumph for the Spanish people" that "strengthens the path of democracy and progress which Spain has undertaken."

In fact, by tying Spain more closely into the central imperialist military alliance, the decision to remain within NATO is a setback to the working people of Spain. It will spur even further Spain's own military spending, which has soared in recent years. Meanwhile, education and other social services are being cut.

González's "triumph" is also a setback to working people in the rest of the world. It bolsters imperialist aggression against the revolutions in Central America, Africa, and Asia, and it strengthens NATO's efforts to militarily blackmail the Soviet Union and other workers' states.

González's allies in Washington and other NATO capitals were quick to congratulate him. "Fantastic," U.S. President Ronald Reagan's press spokesman declared of the referendum results. "A great day for the Western alliance," proclaimed West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher.

These sighs of relief came after a particularly close fight on the NATO membership issue. On the very eve of the referendum some public opinion polls were still predicting a majority "no" vote.

González's about-face

Opposition to NATO runs deep among the working people of Spain. For many, NATO is identified with the military agreement that the late dictator Francisco Franco signed with Washington in 1953. That agreement helped prop up Franco's repressive system, and it gave Washington an opportunity to set up four U.S. military bases in Spain, which are currently staffed by some 12,500 U.S. troops.

Despite these close U.S. military ties, Spain remained outside of NATO throughout the period of Franco's rule and for some years after his death in 1975. Then in mid-1982 the conservative government of Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo abruptly brought Spain into the alliance. This aroused considerable resistance within Spain. González's Socialist Party, then in opposition, campaigned against NATO

membership. During the election campaign later that year, González promised that an SP government would hold a referendum on Spain's withdrawal from NATO.

It was in part thanks to the SP's anti-NATO stance that it swept those elections and González became the new prime minister. But once in office, the SP leadership's position on NATO shifted dramatically. Although it claimed to halt further military integration into NATO, the González government participated in numerous NATO bodies.

It also increased arms spending. According to a report in the March 9 *New York Times*, "A 1983 law permits arms expenditures to grow faster than the rest of the Spanish budget, and the emphasis has been on air and naval forces, which dovetails with NATO's own aims. An American-designed, Spanish-built light aircraft carrier, the 'Principe de Asturias,' will join the navy's eight submarines and 25 destroyers, frigates and corvettes this year. The air force has contracted to buy 72 American F-18s for \$2.5 billion, and the army is to get new tanks."

The SP government's military policies were in line with its other efforts to administer the Spanish state more "efficiently" in the interests of the capitalists and big landlords. Austerity policies were imposed, leading to reduced government spending on essential social needs and to an even higher level of unemployment, which has reached about 20 percent.

Part of the government's economic strategy included joining the European Economic Community (EEC). Other Western European governments made it clear that Spain's price of admission involved continued NATO membership. González dutifully reshuffled his cabinet in mid-1985, dumping Foreign Minister Fernando Morán, an outspoken opponent of NATO membership. Then an SP congress in December — just a few weeks before Spain was formally admitted to the EEC — voted overwhelmingly to remain in NATO.

In January 1986, Gonzalez announced the date for the promised referendum on NATO membership, and urged a "yes" vote.

'NATO no! Bases out!'

This campaign, however, met massive opposition. Many trade unionists, peace groups, left-wing parties, and rank-and-file members of the Socialist Party itself came out in favor of a "no" vote.

On February 23 hundreds of thousands of demonstrators from throughout the country joined a "march on Madrid" to express their opposition to NATO membership. Two weeks later, on March 9, another large anti-NATO rally, estimated at up to 500,000, took place in the capital. Smaller demonstrations occurred

virtually every day.

Opposition to NATO became intertwined with opposition to the government's other policies. "This is a referendum on González," one leader of the anti-NATO campaign stated. "It is a vote against his Thatcher economics, his Reagan politics, and his Mitterrand militarism."

At first, opinion polls put opponents of continued NATO membership well ahead. This caused alarm in other NATO capitals, where concern spread that a defeat for NATO in Spain would encourage antiwar forces in other countries as well.

These governments, as well as right-wing forces within Spain, also opposed the actual holding of the referendum, arguing that such matters should not even be put to a public vote. "You don't do this sort of thing," one U.S. diplomat in Madrid said. "If America held a referendum on NATO, I'm sure NATO would lose."

González, using the full power of the government-controlled mass media, waged a major campaign to garner enough votes. In an effort to make a "yes" vote more palatable, three "conditions" were attached to Spanish membership in NATO: maintenance of the Spanish military outside NATO's command structure, a continued ban on nuclear weapons in Spain, and a cutback in the number of U.S. troops stationed there.

González also warned of dire consequences should Spain pull out of NATO, including an end to access to NATO technology to aid Spain's economic modernization and a reduction in Western European markets and other economic ties. Finally, he hinted that he would resign if NATO membership were defeated.

This "scare" campaign — as the anti-NATO forces called it — succeeded in scraping together a bare majority of "yes" votes. But the results were uneven. Voters in the oppressed Basque and Catalan regions overwhelmingly rejected NATO. And young people voted against NATO in much larger numbers than the population as a whole.

Based on such widespread sentiments, opponents of NATO have vowed to organize new public protests. "We will continue to go forward, against the [U.S.] bases and against military spending," the leader of one coalition of peace groups stated.

On the very day of the referendum, after the results had already been announced, thousands of demonstrators poured into Madrid's Plaza del Sol, chanting "NATO no! Bases out!" □

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Indian leaders sign cease-fire with FSLN

Government's autonomy plan winning Miskitos away from counterrevolution

By Cindy Jaquith

MANAGUA — A stepped-up drive by Washington to reignite full-scale war on Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast is being rebuffed by Miskito Indian communities.

On February 27 in the city of Puerto Cabezas, the main population center in Northern Zelaya Province, the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) announced that it had signed a joint military pact with two leaders of the organization KISAN. KISAN is made up of various Miskito groups that have been engaged in armed attacks on Nicaragua.

Brigade Commander Francisco Rivera of the FSLN made the announcement at a celebration of the sixth anniversary of the founding of the Sandinista People's Militias. Rivera reported that an Act for Unity and Distribution of Areas of Protection had been signed by the FSLN and KISAN leaders Juan Salgado and Larry Wilson. The accord calls for "uniting our forces," said Rivera, to defend Northern Zelaya "from those who do not want peace."

Present at the celebration were a battalion of Sandinista militia members from the area, a group of young draftees being demobilized from the Sandinista army, and local youths who were entering the army for the first time.

The joint accord between the FSLN and the two KISAN leaders represents further progress in establishing peace and stability on the Atlantic Coast and isolating those U.S.-financed and -organized mercenary groups that continue to carry out military attacks on civilians and government personnel in the area.

Deepening support for revolution

The progress on the military front is a product of the political advances the revolution is making on the Coast, particularly the project to establish regional government autonomy there. Last fall, thousands of *costeños* (residents of the Coast) participated in assemblies to discuss a proposal drafted by a national autonomy commission made up of the various racial groups on the Coast — Miskito, Sumo, and Rama Indians; Creoles and Garifonas, both descendants of African slaves; and mestizos, who speak Spanish.

The autonomy proposal is aimed at overcoming the legacy of racial discrimination, isolation, and backwardness imposed on the Coast by British and U.S. imperialism and the dictatorship of Anastasio Somoza. It is also designed to deepen the participation of *costeños* in the Sandinista revolution, cementing a firm alliance between the working people of the Atlantic and the Pacific coasts.

The project envisions establishing two re-

gional governments — one in Northern Zelaya and one in Southern Zelaya — with representation of the area's six racial groups. The governments will have special powers to implement the national policies of Nicaragua's workers' and farmers' government in accordance with the historical needs and problems of the Coast. They will carry out projects to develop the region's economy and social services and to promote the cultures, languages, and traditions of *costeños*, which were suppressed under Somoza.

The strong pressure by Miskitos and other *costeños* for autonomy and an end to the U.S.-sponsored war is reflected not only in the eased military situation but also in a recent decision of the Moravian Church, which has significant influence among Miskitos. At its Seventh Triennial Synod, held in February, the Nicaraguan Moravian Church came out for autonomy and against the mercenary war.

The war, said a statement released by the synod, "serves only to destroy, not to build. We demand that all external forces immediately cease their support to violence and use their influence to promote peace."

It called on "our people and all Nicaraguan citizens of the Coast to actively participate" in the autonomy discussion, in order to "achieve a real autonomy in the spirit of unity of the Nicaraguan nation."

Background to current situation

Since May 1985, Sandinista authorities have established *de facto* cease-fires with most of the armed Miskito groups inside Nicaragua that had been part of Washington's mercenary war. These include many armed units of both MISURA and MISURASATA.

MISURA was originally led by Steadman Fagoth, a proven agent of Somoza. It functions under the command of the Honduran-based mercenary army called the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN). The FDN is headed by ex-officers of Somoza's National Guard and is the largest CIA-organized mercenary group.

MISURASATA was originally led by Brooklyn Rivera and associated with the Costa Rican-based mercenary group called the Democratic Revolutionary Alliance (ARDE) headed by Edén Pastora.

Over the past two years, MISURA and MISURASATA have both fractured into various factions under the pressure of the growing demands of the majority of Miskitos for an end to the fighting on the Atlantic Coast. The experience of witnessing the *contra* groups destroying schools, clinics, and housing, as well as massacring Indians, combined with the project

to establish regional government autonomy, has increasingly alienated Miskitos from the *contra* war and its CIA sponsors.

Last summer, in a U.S. government effort to reunite the area's MISURA and MISURASATA factions and continue the war, KISAN was formed in Honduras. Some KISAN groups have continued carrying out terrorist actions, rejecting the Nicaraguan government's offer of dialogue and cease-fire. Some MISURA and MISURASATA units independent of KISAN have also tried to keep the fighting going. But the majority of armed Miskito groups inside Nicaragua, both in Northern and Southern Zelaya, are observing the cease-fire.

Those Miskitos taking part in the cease-fire have not laid down their arms, but many have returned to their communities on the Coast and begun to participate in society. In some cases, they have engaged in combat against the CIA-run mercenary groups. Some have also begun to participate in public meetings held to discuss the autonomy project.

'Face the People' meeting

An example of the process taking place was a "Face the People" meeting held between Sandinista representatives and Miskito residents of the Northern Zelaya community of Sutkapín in early February. Several leaders of Miskito armed groups taking part in the cease-fire participated.

The residents of Sutkapín, a village of 100 families, called on the government to help repair roads, build a school, and fix up the local church. It was agreed that the government would send a medical brigade to Sutkapín once a month and that three local youths would be sent to Puerto Cabezas for training as teachers. Government representatives agreed to discuss the possibility of sending heavy equipment to repair the roads in the near future.

Several speakers, including some MISURA leaders, pointed out that the lack of resources in Sutkapín was exacerbated by the destruction caused by mercenary attacks on the town. Achieving total peace in the area, it was pointed out, would allow development projects to proceed and permit Miskitos to complete the autonomy project.

Reynaldo Reyes, leader of a MISURA group observing the cease-fire, said, "It's the counterrevolutionary bands that want the autonomy process to fail. They're the ones who are attacking us."

"They're the ones we have to struggle against," agreed Martin Hodgson, also from a group observing the cease-fire. The mer-

cenaries backed by the U.S. government want to return Miskitos to the past of exploitation, he said.

Washington trying to regain initiative

Faced with the disintegration of its war on the Coast, Washington is desperately trying to blow up the dialogue between armed Miskito groups and the Sandinistas. The U.S. goal is to engulf the region in fighting once again, preventing the consolidation of autonomy and the recuperation of the region's economy.

In early February, José González, delegate of the Ministry of the Interior in Northern Zelaya, warned of an escalation of U.S.-sponsored terror in the region. He reported that Washington had sent several hundred FDN mercenaries into the province and armed them heavily.

González, who has since become coordinator of the FSLN in Northern Zelaya, said the mercenaries would try to assassinate Miskito leaders who have deserted the CIA and are involved in peace talks with the Sandinistas. Another goal is to block the continued return of Miskitos from Honduras, where many had been forcibly moved by the contras. González also reported that mercenaries had recently attacked a boat carrying food to the Río Coco. The Miskitos used to live along the river and are now returning home.

Those Miskitos who have returned to the

Río Coco have been a constant target of the mercenaries, who have consistently worked to block the transport of desperately needed food and other supplies to the river communities being rebuilt. The communities are operating with extremely primitive living conditions and severe shortages.

Washington's most publicized war move was to help MISURASATA leader Brooklyn Rivera infiltrate Northern Zelaya in January. He was accompanied by 200 other mercenaries, including Russell Means, a former figure in the American Indian Movement of the United States, and Canadian Clem Charrier, president of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples.

The counterrevolutionaries reached the Miskito community of Layasiksa, south of Puerto Cabezas. Many of the town's residents fled. By early February, troops of the Sandinista army, Ministry of the Interior, and air force had driven the terrorists out of Layasiksa.

Responding to slanders in the U.S. big-business media that the Sandinistas had indiscriminately bombed Miskito villages searching for Rivera and his U.S. allies, the Nicaraguan government invited a fact-finding commission to visit Layasiksa and interview the Miskitos who lived there. The commission included representatives of the Red Cross, various churches, and the government.

Many of the residents told the commission

they had fled the town out of fear of the military conflict they knew was coming once Rivera entered the village. Most had returned to their homes at the time of the fact-finding visit. They were receiving medical treatment from the Ministry of the Interior and army, as well as food provisions.

One member of the commission, Bishop Hedley Wilson of the Moravian Church, said he had expected to find the village wiped off the map. "We're pleased to find that everything's okay," he told the FSLN daily *Barricada*.

Rivera's political line

The goal of Rivera's ill-fated entry into Nicaragua was to provoke a bloody international incident that could be used to bolster the CIA slander that the Sandinistas repress Indians. The participation of Means and other Indians from North America was aimed at influencing U.S. and Canadian public opinion in particular.

Ideologically, Rivera is trying to counterpose to the popular autonomy proposal a separatist schema that pits Miskitos against all the other working people in Nicaragua and against the Sandinista revolution.

Churning out the political arguments for Rivera are the World Council of Indigenous Peoples and the Indian Law Resource Center, which is based in Washington, D.C. According to the Resource Center, Indians are members of a "Fourth World." Their struggle for liberation has nothing to do with that of other peoples in nations oppressed by imperialism or with the class struggle of workers and peasants in general.

The purpose of this political line, as *Barricada* recently explained, "is to drive Indian groups away from the rural and urban movements of peoples who identify with progressive ideas. In other words, its ideological axis is to convince Indians that they have nothing in common with other sectors, such as farm workers, peasants, artisans, or industrial workers."

More and more Miskitos, however, are beginning to reject Rivera's line and — within the framework of autonomy — are beginning to overcome the racism, exploitation, and backwardness they have suffered historically. This, in turn, is pushing those Miskitos still in arms toward cease-fire and reincorporation into Nicaraguan society.

In mid-February, two leaders of MISURA units granted an interview to Sandinista television, which broadcast it nationally. The MISURA leaders announced that they wanted to be added to Nicaragua's autonomy commission. Said one, "Some people say if we do this we're surrendering. We don't consider it surrender." □

The war's toll in Nicaragua

[The following excerpts from Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega's February 21 speech to the National Assembly were printed as an editorial in the February 27 issue of *Barricada Internacional*, an English-language weekly published by the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) in Managua.]

* * *

- In 1985, aggression increased Nicaragua's balance of payment deficit by US\$108 million: the trade deficit rose by US\$89 million and the capital deficit by US\$19 million.

- A total of 120,324 people have been displaced from their lands by the war; of these, 33,000 have been relocated to 55 urban and rural settlements.

- Health services to 250,000 people have been impaired due to the damages incurred to 55 health units, including one hospital and four health centers.

- The terrorists have destroyed 48 schools, and 502 other education centers can no longer operate because they are located in war zones; as a result, a total of 60,240 elementary and 30,120 adult education students no longer receive classes.

- In the area of social services, the mercenaries have destroyed four rural child-

care centers, three nutrition centers for children, and two offices of the Nicaraguan Social Security Institute. This has directly affected services to 2,222 children and elderly people.

- In 1985, there were 4,770 victims of the war:

- 1,852 wounded

- 1,463 dead

- 1,455 kidnapped

- Between January 1980 and January 1986 there were a total of 12,332 war victims:

- 3,999 dead

- 4,542 wounded

- 3,791 kidnapped

- Of these:

- 911 were children

- 2,194 were young people

- 9,227 were adults and elderly people

- If one includes the counterrevolutionaries who have been killed in the armed conflict, also victims of U.S. aggression, the number of casualties totals 23,822 persons, including 13,930 dead.

- The total number of people killed as a result of the U.S. policy of terrorism in Nicaragua would be equivalent to some 1,030,000 dead for a country with the population of the United States.

**Don't you know someone
who should be reading
Intercontinental Press?**

Debate on the Fourth International

'Workers Press' must face up to lessons of Cuban revolution

By Doug Jenness

Leaders of the Workers Revolutionary Party in Britain who broke last October with longtime WRP cult figure Gerry Healy have opened a public discussion on the political and organizational degeneration of their party and on the history of the Fourth International and its place in the international workers' movement today.¹

This public discussion was initiated with the publication of two articles in the February 7 and 15 issues of *Workers Press*, a weekly published in London by the wing of the WRP that broke with Healy. The February 7 article, by WRP National Secretary Michael Banda, was titled, "Twenty-seven reasons why the International Committee should be buried forthwith and the Fourth International built."

Bill Hunter, a veteran WRP leader, headlined his response in the following issue of *Workers Press*, "Mike Banda and the bad men theory of history." Both articles were reprinted in the March 24 issue of *Intercontinental Press*.

Banda's article appeared in the same issue of *Workers Press* that contained an explicit repudiation of the 10-year agent-baiting campaign conducted by the WRP and its U.S. satellite, the Workers League, against the U.S. Socialist Workers Party and the Fourth International. In this smear job, the WRP and WL had charged leaders of the SWP and the Fourth International with being agents of the FBI and CIA, as well as of the GPU, the Soviet Union's secret police.²

The wholesale denunciation of the Healyite slander campaign by the *Workers Press* wing of the WRP included a condemnation of a disruption effort against the SWP in the United States that has been relentlessly promoted by the Workers League and WRP since 1979. This involved a lawsuit against the SWP filed by Alan Gelfand, a lawyer for Los Angeles County in California. This court action remains a central part of the international harassment operation against the SWP and the Fourth International.

By renouncing the Healyite agent-baiting campaign, the WRP leaders who produce *Workers Press* have taken the first, necessary step toward having their views taken seriously as a legitimate part of the political debates that

are occurring among revolutionists today.

The issues that Banda and Hunter address in relation to the history of the Fourth International are, in fact, part of a broader discussion taking place among those currently in the Fourth International, as well as those who were once part of it, consider it part of their continuity, and state that building it is part of their historic perspective. This discussion centers on the most fundamental questions about what the Fourth International is and what its relationship to other revolutionary currents should be.

'Proclaimed, but never built'

In his version of the history of the Fourth International, Banda does not just deal with the period since 1963 when the Healy-led Socialist Labour League (SLL), the WRP's predecessor, broke from the International. Following that break, the SLL/WRP functioned in a rump body called the International Committee of the Fourth International.

Banda's article goes back to the founding of the Fourth International in 1938 to relate what he calls a "sorry and lugubrious tale." "It must be stated emphatically, nay, categorically," he exclaims, "that the FI was proclaimed but never built. Not even in Trotsky's time was there a cadre capable of sustaining his monumental work."

Since the assassination of Russian revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky in 1940, Banda maintains, the leaders of the International have been a pack of "cowards," "capitulators," "charlatans," "petty-bourgeois dilettantes," and "fantasists." Moreover, he asserts, they were "confused."

Banda recounts one disastrous position after another allegedly taken by the leading bodies of the Fourth International, an organization "characterised by a total lack of strategy and perspective."

By the time the reader gets to the end of Banda's tortured discourse, it is far from clear why he still calls for building the Fourth International at all. He certainly doesn't seem to have his heart in it.

Banda also falsifies important chapters in the history of the SWP and the Fourth International. Although his stated goal is to refute the policies of the WRP under Healy's stewardship, he actually repeats much of the Healyite mythology about these two organizations. In order to get right into the most important political questions, however, let's set aside the correction of these distortions for a future article.

Hunter objects to Banda's "parade of despicable characters." He argues that "an immediate question must be asked: If Trotsky's programme could only attract this sorry band

of adventurers, manoeuvrers and repellent individuals, what is to be said for that programme?" Hunter urges that fundamental questions before the WRP be given "serious analysis and not the invective which so recently reigned in discussion in the Party."

With this suggestion on approach and tone in mind, let's enter the discussion.

To begin with, it is useful to summarize where the Fourth International came from. Neither Banda nor Hunter does this. Without taking up the International's origins, however, it is impossible to understand what it is, what its perspectives should be, and what its current challenges are.

Origins of the Fourth International

The Fourth International was founded in the 1930s by Marxist fighters from the Communist International who continued to carry out the revolutionary working-class activity that they had been engaged in since they became communists.

The Comintern had been founded in 1919 under the impetus of the October 1917 Russian revolution. It drew together the advanced detachments of the working class from many countries. Generalizing from the experiences of the Russian workers and peasants, as well as other revolutionary struggles of the time, the early congresses of the Comintern charted a course forward for working people.

After Lenin's death at the beginning of 1924, however, the Comintern increasingly came under the domination of a parasitic bureaucratic layer in the Soviet state and party apparatus, headed by Joseph Stalin. Its communist perspectives eroded throughout the rest of the decade, and by the 1930s this parasitic caste had destroyed the Comintern as an instrument of revolutionary struggle by the workers and peasants of the world.

This degeneration met stiff resistance from revolutionary fighters in the Soviet Union and many other countries. They insisted on continuing to carry out the program that had been developed in the first five years of the Comintern under Lenin's leadership. Soviet CP and Comintern leader Leon Trotsky emerged as a central figure in this fight to maintain a revolutionary internationalist course.

Tens of thousands of communists in the Soviet Union were jailed, exiled, or murdered. Internationally thousands were purged from the Communist Parties and from the International.

Finding themselves outside the International against their will, these communists continued to struggle, organizing themselves to do so on a national and international level. For those who refused to abandon the international

1. For an account of this split, see "Shattering of a British sect: the politics behind the Workers Revolutionary Party's degeneration," by Doug Jenness, in *Intercontinental Press*, Dec. 2, 1985.

2. Articles and documents on this repudiation from *Workers Press* were reprinted in the March 10 issue of *IP*, along with an article, "Giant blow to agent-baiting campaign: 'Workers Press' repudiates Healy's big lie," by Doug Jenness.

working-class struggle, there was no other choice.

At first the orientation of these communists was to reform the International, fighting to salvage it from the Stalinist bureaucrats who had usurped leadership of their organization.

When events in the early 1930s proved that the International could no longer be reformed and was dead as a revolutionary organization, these working-class fighters continued along a communist course.

They actively participated in the class struggle and strove to build revolutionary workers' parties in their countries.

Fourth International 'exists and fights'

The revolutionists who fought for the continuity of Leninism had, in fact, become the Fourth International a good number of years before there was an organization with that name. Contrary to Banda's "emphatic" and "categorical" assertion, the Fourth International was not "proclaimed."

"The Fourth International . . . has no need of being 'proclaimed.' It exists and fights." That was the judgment of the principal document adopted by the 1938 founding congress of the International, "The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International" (the "Transitional Program").³

The communist fighters expelled from the Comintern by Stalin and his supporters had not started out with the idea of forming a new International. Nor were they out to establish a "Trotskyist" current against the world Stalinist movement. The Fourth International was formed out of the struggle to continue communist practice and strategy. The "Trotskyist" label was placed on these communists by the Stalinists.

What, then, of Banda's complaint that none of the founding leaders of the Fourth International were "capable of sustaining [Trotsky's] monumental work"?

Perhaps the members of the International at that time and in subsequent years don't measure up to Banda's lofty standards. The fact remains, however, that these were the vanguard workers who refused to abandon the Bolshevik-Leninist program and continued to chart a revolutionary course for the working class.

Their ranks were not numerous. But, as the "Transitional Program" put it, "these cadres are pledges for the future. Outside of these cadres there does not exist a single revolutionary current on this planet really meriting the name."⁴ With the Stalinist degeneration of the Communist International, that was the accurate assessment of the world workers' movement in 1938.

Has the Fourth International since its origins continued to be true to the line of march of the working-class vanguard, which, as Marx and Engels explained in the *Communist Manifesto*,

has "no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole"? That is the decisive test for judging any working-class political organization. The Fourth International has clearly passed this test.

It offered a class-struggle alternative to the disastrous course carried out by the Social Democrats and Stalinists — a course that demobilized the working class and led to the Nazi takeover in Germany; that was responsible for the defeat of the revolution in Spain; that blocked the emergence of an independent labor party in the United States; and that subordinated the struggles of the oppressed peoples in the colonial and semicolonial countries to maneuvers in the framework of capitalist politics.

Turn to working men and women

After the Fourth International was established as an organization in 1938, it immediately faced the challenge of the second worldwide imperialist war. Both in word and deed, the Fourth Internationalists refused to subordinate the struggles of the working class and oppressed peoples to the war aims of the imperialist ruling classes.

In a manifesto issued in May 1940, the Fourth International declared that it "turns not to the governments who have dragooned the peoples into the slaughter, nor to the bourgeois politicians who bear the responsibility for these governments, nor to the labor bureaucracy which supports the warring bourgeoisie. The Fourth International turns to the working men and women, the soldiers and sailors, the ruined peasants and the enslaved colonial peoples."⁵

This policy guided the activities of the Fourth International and its sections during the war. Banda charges that the members of the International were disoriented during the war, but he offers not a scrap of evidence to prove this contention.

The facts show that in Europe Fourth Internationalists actively participated in the resistance movement against Nazi occupation as proletarian internationalists. In occupied France, for example, Fourth Internationalists collaborated with fellow revolutionists from Germany to publish *Worker and Soldier*, a journal directed to German workers in uniform.

Many Fourth International militants in Europe were executed or imprisoned in concentration camps for their political activities during the war.

In the United States, working-class leaders of the SWP were jailed for refusing to abandon their class-struggle opposition to the war aims of Wall Street and Washington.

In the colonial world, most notably in Indochina and India, revolutionary Marxists refused to subordinate the struggle for independence to the war policies of their colonial masters, as the Stalinists and Social Democrats did.

Banda chose badly in selecting the Fourth

International's conduct during World War II to find fault with its record. This, in fact, was one of the proudest chapters in the International's history.

Hunter too recognizes that "any criticism of the Trotskyist movement during the war based on a serious objective survey must accept that, generally, the Trotskyist movement conducted a struggle against imperialist war and upheld the principles of the Fourth International."

Hunter poses an alternative explanation to Banda's of the historical development of the Fourth International. He argues that "the biggest weakness in the Fourth International was that it was not able to develop theory in relationship with a mass movement." This factor, he contends, helps explain the International's failure to win mass influence.

It is true that no section of the Fourth International has yet become a mass revolutionary workers' party or developed mass influence in the workers' movement in any country. It is inaccurate, however, to say that the political development of the International has therefore been divorced from a "relationship with the mass movement."

Since the end of World War II there have been titanic struggles of the working class and oppressed peoples that have weakened imperialism and resulted in historic new conquests for the world socialist revolution. The Fourth International has been challenged to learn from the unfolding struggles, to test previous theories against the living reality, and to draw new generalizations and lessons from the experience of workers and peasants around the world.

The Fourth International did not stand aside from these revolutionary battles. It actively followed and supported them, and its cadres participated in these battles where they could.

The communist fighters of the Fourth International should be judged on how well they have understood and advanced along the historic line of march of the working class in these struggles and further clarified its strategic course toward political power.

Let's take a brief look at the record.

Historic turning point

The Soviet victory at Stalingrad in 1943 marked a historic turning point for the working people of the world. It signified the beginning of a shift in the world relationship of class forces in favor of the exploited and oppressed against the capitalist rulers — an overall shift that has continued to this day.

The postwar overturn of capitalism in Eastern Europe was a direct consequence of the victory of the Soviet Union over German imperialism.

The Soviet victory was decisive in inspiring Yugoslav workers and peasants to carry their hard-fought struggle against German occupation and the profascist puppet regime in Croatia to a successful conclusion. They established their own government, which by 1947 had expropriated the capitalist class and established a workers' state. The Yugoslav revolution was the first successful workers' and peas-

3. Leon Trotsky, *The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1977), p. 151.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 152.

5. *Writings of Leon Trotsky: 1939-40* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1973), p. 183.

ants' revolution since the Russian revolution.

In other East European countries and in the northern part of the Korean Peninsula the advance of the Soviet army led to the collapse of capitalist governments and their replacement with Stalinist-led governments. By the end of 1948, the capitalist classes had been expropriated in these countries.

Contrary to Banda's assertion that the Fourth International failed to appreciate these developments, it considered them to be of the utmost importance. The International followed closely the unfolding experiences of working people in these countries.

This extension of the socialist revolution had not occurred in the manner anticipated by the International, and thus challenged its cadres to work their way through to a clear understanding of these events.

At first there were different evaluations of these changes and some false starts in explaining them. Through collective discussion, however, a generally common view was reached. Recognition of the facts prevailed over preconceptions and abstract schemas. The facts showed that workers' states, albeit bureaucratically deformed, had been established.⁶

The revolutionary communists in the Fourth International recognized these as conquests of the international working class and have consistently defended these workers' states against imperialism, in the same way that they defend the Soviet Union.

Because of the leading role of the Soviet bureaucracy and Stalinist parties in these social overturns, however, none of them brought forward new forces for expanding the revolutionary vanguard internationally. In fact, these victories temporarily strengthened the Stalinist bureaucracy and the influence of Stalinism.

When the Yugoslav Communist Party, headed by Josip Broz Tito, broke with Moscow in 1948, the Fourth International responded on the basis that the Yugoslav party or a section of it might be headed on a revolutionary course away from Stalinism. The International recognized the great importance that such a development would have for the working-class vanguard internationally and defended the Tito current against Stalin. The Fourth International did not stand passively by, but actively attempted to influence Yugoslav communists toward revolutionary internationalism.

By 1950 the Titoists' refusal to clearly oppose U.S. military intervention in Korea, adopting instead a stand of "neutrality," showed that they were not headed in a progressive direction but remained mired in the nationalist, class-collaborationist outlook in which they had been trained in the Stalinist-led Comintern.

The break of the Yugoslav CP with Moscow, however, was a preview of the fissures in



Cuban troops in Angola. "The Cuban communists have shown in practice their commitment to proletarian internationalism."

the Stalinist monolith that would widen in the following decade, undermining its position.

China and Indochina

Following World War II there was also an unprecedented rise of the colonial masses against their imperialist masters. Colony after colony won its political independence. By the mid-1950s the workers and peasants in China and the northern part of Vietnam had not only thrown off imperialist domination, but swept away capitalist rule.

Here again Banda erroneously claims that the Fourth International "totally" failed to appreciate "the world-historic significance" of these revolutions.

A resolution adopted by the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International in 1952 — after the Chinese workers and peasants had taken political power but before they had expropriated the capitalist class — stated: "Having fully assimilated the decisive historical importance of the outbreak of the Third Chinese Revolution, the Fourth International defends it unconditionally against all its class enemies. It denounces the maneuvers and the economic, political and military pressures of imperialism aiming to prevent the stabilization of Mao's power and in fact preparing the counter-revolutionary war of intervention in China."

The resolution urged "the Chinese militants of the Fourth International [to] integrate themselves completely in the mass movement of their country. . . ."⁷

The overturn in Vietnam and China occurred in countries whose economic development had been severely stunted by imperialist domination. Revolutionary armies based

primarily on insurgent peasants played a major role in these revolutionary victories. In both cases the revolutionary mass movement was headed by Stalinist parties.

The way in which these revolutions occurred posed new questions for the Fourth International. And like the discussion on Eastern Europe, some preconceived ideas and false starts had to be worked through and overcome.

Although clarity and full agreement were not reached on the issues revolving around the transition in China from the establishment of the revolutionary government in 1949 to the expropriation of the capitalist class in 1952–53, there was overwhelming agreement throughout the International by the mid-1950s that a workers' state had been established.

In spite of the historic importance of the Chinese and Vietnamese revolutions, they did not lead to an expansion of the revolutionary Marxist forces on an international scale that could help resolve the historic crisis of leadership of the working class. The leaderships of the Chinese and Vietnamese Communist Parties did not chart a proletarian internationalist course.

Nonetheless, when the conflict erupted between the Soviet and Chinese CP leaderships in the early 1960s, the Fourth International placed the blame for the rupture on Moscow. And we explained that the Chinese leadership's criticisms of Soviet policies could have a positive effect on forces influenced by the Chinese revolution. As long as this possibility existed, the International defended the Chinese CP in the dispute with Moscow.

Split in Fourth International

Banda repeatedly refers to the split in the Fourth International in 1953, which led to two public wings — the International Committee and the International Secretariat.

6. For documents on this discussion, see "Class, Party, and State and Eastern European Revolution," an Education for Socialists Publication available from Pathfinder Press.

7. "The Third Chinese Revolution," *Fourth International*, July–August 1952, p. 113.

The issues in this rupture involved differing estimates of the probable evolution of the Soviet bureaucracy, conflicting views on the tactics to be followed by Fourth Internationalists in relation to the Stalinist and Social Democratic parties, and sharp divergences over internal practices in the Fourth International.

These issues were very important and merit serious study, but it would be a diversion to go into them here. They are not decisive in judging whether or not the Fourth International has become the sorry mess claimed by Banda.⁸ (Besides, Banda contends that by 1951, two years before the split, the International was already "completely emasculated.")

The key political issues in the split had receded by 1956, and discussions began shortly afterward to reunify the International. But it was another advance for the world revolution — this time in Cuba — that was decisive in showing that the International Committee and the International Secretariat stood on common political positions and that further resistance to reunification was unprincipled and politically unjustified.

The majority on both sides welcomed the overthrow of the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship and defended the new revolutionary government against imperialist attack and international counterrevolution. Moreover, there was agreement that, as an outcome of the Cuban revolution, a workers' state had been established by the end of 1960.

The big majority of forces in the Fourth International recognized the significance of the emergence of the Cuban leadership, as well. They recognized that this confirmed the most fundamental perspective of the Fourth International: that the irrepressible struggles of workers and peasants would give rise to revolutionary currents independent of Stalinist and Social Democratic organizations.

The struggle to construct a new revolutionary world movement in continuity with the internationalist program and strategy of the Communist International in Lenin's time took a giant leap forward with the arrival of the Cuban leadership on the scene.

Joseph Hansen, a leader of the U.S. SWP and of the Fourth International, pointed to the significance of this development in 1962. "The extension of the October 1917 revolution into the Western Hemisphere," Hansen observed, "is a *revolutionary action* far more decisive in the scales than the weight of Cuba's economy in North and South America. This revolution has something *qualitative* about it as a culmination of the overturns that began in Eastern Europe. With its signal that the stage is now opening for non-Stalinist revolutionary leaderships, it even appears as a major turning point in the whole postwar period."⁹

8. A documentary record of this split can be found in a series of Education for Socialists Publications, "Towards a History of the Fourth International," distributed by Pathfinder Press.

9. Joseph Hansen, *Dynamics of the Cuban Revolution* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1978), p. 157.

The Cuban leadership has pursued a proletarian internationalist course and deepened its communist understanding in the quarter century since that time. And the victories of the Grenadian and Nicaraguan revolutions, and the course charted by the Sandinista leadership since 1979, give us every reason to reaffirm Hansen's judgment today.

Silent on Cuba

There is a deadening silence about the Cuban revolution and its significance in both Banda's and Hunter's articles. If they are going to make a serious effort to reexamine the history and place of the Fourth International, however, they cannot keep their heads buried in the sand on this decisive issue. If they do, any progress toward political clarity will prove impossible.

It was precisely around this question that the WRP's predecessor, the Socialist Labour League, refused to participate in the 1963 reunification of the International.

The SLL contended that Cuba remained capitalist. It branded the Castro leadership "bonapartist" and likened it to bourgeois-nationalist figures of the time such as Chiang Kai-shek, Gamal Abdel Nasser, Juan Perón, and Jawaharlal Nehru.

"In our opinion," the SLL National Committee stated in a 1962 resolution, "the Castro regime is and remains a bonapartist regime resting on capitalist state foundations. Its bonapartist nature is determined by the fact that the working class, because of the Stalinist misleadership, is unable to take and wield state power — while on the other hand the big comprador-bourgeoisie which supported Batista is too weak and decimated to retake the power in the past period." They also made the amazing assertion that the new regime "did not create a qualitatively new and different type of state from the Batista regime."¹⁰

For the Healyites the expropriation of capitalist property by mass working-class action bore "a close analogy with Nasser's Egypt," where the petty-bourgeois nationalist leadership of that capitalist government carried out extensive nationalizations between 1956 and 1963.

No major current emerging from the SLL/WRP has ever repudiated this politically disastrous error. As recently as August 1983, the WRP affirmed that the Cuban and Nicaraguan governments "are Bonapartist regimes where a section of the bourgeoisie leans upon the working class and peasantry in order to carry out certain economic reforms but, at the same time, makes absolutely sure that the working class cannot politically organise itself independently of the bourgeois state apparatus."

Imposed schemas

Instead of examining the facts — which was how the Fourth International that Banda and Hunter were once part of approached the East European, Chinese, and Yugoslav overturns,

10. *Trotskyism Versus Revisionism*, Vol. 3 (London: New Park Publications, 1974), p. 258.

and how the big majority of the International responded to the Cuban revolution — the Healyites imposed their preconceived schemas onto the living class reality.

The Cuban revolution did not develop in the way that the Fourth International had anticipated — that is, as its cadres had been educated to expect on the basis of its theory of "permanent revolution." Nonetheless, the majority of forces who considered themselves part of the Fourth International wholeheartedly embraced the revolution and began to adjust their theory to take account of the way the class struggle was actually unfolding.

The lessons of the Cuban experience helped us take a new look at the overturn of capitalist rule in Eastern Europe, China, and Vietnam and to see more clearly than we had at the time the process by which workers' states were established in those countries. It also helped us better understand the Algerian revolution between 1962 and 1965, where the Fourth International recognized that a workers' and farmers' government had been established.

This political reorientation helped us to better understand and orient toward the Nicaraguan and Grenadian revolutions, as well. Moreover, these two most recent anticapitalist revolutions, both led by revolutionary leaderships, further clarified our understanding of the revolutionary process and deepened our political reorientation, which continues today.¹¹

Healy and his followers, on the contrary, elevated the theory of "permanent revolution" to the level of dogma. From this position, they concluded that since the Cuban revolution was not led by a Trotskyist party, there had been no socialist revolution.

In a National Committee statement adopted in March 1963, the SLL argued that "only a course of the construction of independent working-class parties aiming at workers' power, based on the programme of Permanent Revolution, can prevent each national revolution from turning into a new stabilization for world imperialism."¹²

Twenty years later the WRP still clung to this fetish. In a resolution entitled "Trotsky's Theory of the Permanent Revolution Today," the WRP declared that the Cuban and Nicaraguan revolutions point irrefutably "towards the building of independent revolutionary parties of the International Committee of the Fourth International based not on bourgeois

11. A discussion of some of these lessons by Socialist Workers Party leader Jack Barnes appears in two documents.

The first is the report, "For a workers' and farmers' government in the United States," which was adopted by the SWP national convention in August 1984. It appears in an Education for Socialists Publication with the same title and is distributed by Pathfinder Press.

The second is "Their Trotsky and Ours: Communist Continuity Today," which appeared in *New International* (Fall 1983).

12. *Trotskyism Versus Revisionism*, Vol. 4 (London: New Park Publications, 1974), p. 83.

nationalism — but on international socialism and, with it, an irreconcilable struggle against Stalinism and revisionism.”

When the facts did not conform to Healy's doctrine, this did not mean that the doctrine needed to be looked at afresh and adjusted. Rather the facts had to be disregarded or twisted to fit the doctrine.

Now that the *Workers Press* wing of the WRP has announced that it is conducting a wholesale review of Healyite policies, it should put the Cuban question at the top of its list.

Twenty-seven years after the Cuban workers and peasants took power, can supporters of *Workers Press* still defend the view that Cuba is a capitalist country? Can they point to a capitalist class in Cuba? Can they still say that the Cuban workers' expropriation of the capitalist class is analogous to Nasser's nationalizations?

In the 1970s Egypt's President Anwar el-Sadat began denationalizing state holdings and turning them over to capitalists. He also started letting imperialist profiteers back into the country.

Do Hunter, Banda, and other WRP members think this could happen in Cuba short of an imperialist invasion and a bloody counter-revolution?

Most important, how do they explain the huge advances in education, medical care, and living standards achieved by Cuba's workers and peasants? What accounts for the poverty, illiteracy, and disease that afflict working people in capitalist Egypt?

Have working people in *any* capitalist country oppressed by imperialism made the significant social and economic progress that has been achieved in Cuba? Have they been able to sustain the same rate of economic growth as in Cuba, especially during the current stagnation of the world capitalist system and gigantic foreign debts of most Third World countries?

Has the government of any capitalist state exhibited the internationalism shown by the Cuban leadership in sending volunteers to aid the Angolan people in their fight against a South African invasion? In sending doctors, teachers, and technicians around the world to aid peoples in the semicolonial world? In taking the leadership of an international campaign to cancel the enormous debt that is crushing the nations of Asia, Africa, and Latin America?

If Cuba were indeed capitalist, it would be unique. Such an oddity would force us to take a second look at the progressive possibilities for capitalism in our epoch.

Cuba's revolutionary leadership

If the WRP were to finally recognize the historic social transformation that has occurred in Cuba, that would be a giant step toward politically getting its feet back on the ground. Then it would face the challenge of closely considering the evolution and character of Cuba's revolutionary leadership.

It is this question of proletarian leadership, above all, that is central to the discussion about the place of the Fourth International in the

world revolutionary movement today.

In the last 25 years, the WRP and the SLL have never offered a satisfactory answer to the question: If the Stalinist leaderships in Yugoslavia and China could lead the workers and peasants to power and to the establishment of workers' states, why is it excluded that a revolutionary non-Stalinist leadership could do likewise?

The Cuban revolutionaries showed in practice that it could be done, and the Sandinistas are charting a revolutionary course as well.

The revolutionary democrats of the July 26 Movement who led the Cuban revolution had no interests separate and apart from the exploited toilers. This led them to go all the way with the workers and peasants as the class struggle deepened in Cuba. During this revolutionary process, the consistent democrats became proletarian communists.

In the past quarter century the Cuban leadership has become more proletarian and more Marxist as it has learned and generalized from the world class struggle and from the advances of Cuban working people.

The recent congress of the Cuban Communist Party, for example, registered further gains in bringing more workers, women, Blacks, and internationalist volunteers into the party. The congress took special steps to help advance Blacks and women into leadership positions.

The Cuban communists have shown in practice their commitment to proletarian internationalism. This includes sending thousands of internationalist volunteers to help in many capacities in other countries and extending full support to revolutionary struggles.

Fidel Castro, in reporting on the party's founding program at its first congress in 1975, said that "the starting point of Cuba's foreign policy . . . is the subordination of Cuban positions to the internationalist needs of the struggle for socialism and for the national liberation of the peoples."

This was the position the Bolshevik leaders in the Comintern held, and it was the perspective that communist fighters in the Soviet Union continued to fight for when their party and the Comintern degenerated.

The Cuban leadership — and later the Nicaraguan Sandinistas and the Maurice Bishop leadership in Grenada before it was defeated — represent the revival of Marxism on the level of political parties leading the toilers in the exercise of state power. Not since the 1917–23 period in Russia has this occurred.

Political convergence

Since 1959 *revolutionary* currents have emerged outside of the Fourth International that *do* merit that name. There is a political convergence of revolutionary forces, of communists originating from different experiences and heritages. These forces are committed to making and defending the socialist revolution and subordinating all other considerations to extending that revolution.

The Fourth International today has the greatest opportunity in its history to be part of ad-

vancing the perspective it has advocated for half a century: the construction of a mass, communist International.

Our long struggle to defend the revolutionary continuity of Bolshevik-Leninism not only puts us in an especially good position to respond to this opening, but is what makes it possible to do so.

Some in the revolutionary movement have mistakenly concluded that the emergence of genuine revolutionary currents outside of the Fourth International proves the historic bankruptcy of the International. They have chosen to jump ship, abandoning Marxism altogether.

But the exact opposite is the case. The rise of new revolutionary leaderships presents all forces who have the perspective of building the Fourth International with the biggest challenge since it was founded. If they meet this challenge, the International can make an irreplaceable contribution to the process of political convergence.

We are communists who bring a rich tradition of the 60-year fight to continue the Bolshevik-Leninist program of the Comintern. We bring the political and strategic lessons that have been learned during that time. We bring fighters who are working right now to build revolutionary workers' parties in many countries.

The *Workers Press* supporters, if they are serious about their stated goal of building the Fourth International, must come to grips with this political convergence. They cannot ignore it. It cannot be dismissed as inconsequential or irrelevant. To refuse to meet this challenge would mean turning their backs on what the communist fighters who founded the Fourth International, and those who have come after them, were striving to accomplish. It would mean severing all links with the revolutionary continuity of communism. In short, it would mean abandoning the perspective of building the Fourth International.

The WRP has just suffered a shattering split, and Banda, Hunter, and others in their wing of the party are now reviewing their entire past course. If in this process they fail to take a fresh look at their stand on the Cuban revolution and its leadership, they will be unable to break out of the dead-end sectarianism they have been part of for more than 25 years. □

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South African trade ban expected

Union action spurs government boycott of coal imports

By Åge Skovrind

COPENHAGEN — The Danish government will introduce legislation before April 1 to stop all coal imports from South Africa within six months. If adopted, which is very likely, it will be perhaps the most far-reaching sanction against the apartheid regime taken by any major capitalist country to date.

In the last 10 years, imports of South African coal have increased 20 times and now represent approximately 90 percent of all imports from that country.

The coal ban will be proposed along with another measure calling for a total halt to all trade with South Africa as soon as possible. The general line of this total trade boycott was already approved by parliament in December 1985.

Parliament's discussion of this issue comes after a period of actions in solidarity with the South African freedom struggle. Most important of these was a trade union boycott initiated by the dockworkers several months ago.

The dockers, whose union, the Danish Union of General and Semiskilled Workers (SiD), is the largest in the country, refused to move any goods going to or from South Africa. Their action had added significance in that it defied the prohibition against strike action during the term of the unions' two-year contracts.

The shipping bosses immediately took the strike to the labor courts, where union officials were forced to back the boycott. Even during the important "Easter strikes" last year, the union officialdom never stood up to the labor courts in this way.

Meanwhile, another question has come to light in the press. Danish unions have considerable funds invested in capitalist companies. It has been revealed that among these companies several have connections with South Africa. Embarrassed union leaders quickly promised to divest from these companies.

A number of city councils have also added to the pressure for a trade embargo by resolving to stop purchases of South African goods, especially fruit distributed in the publicly funded kindergartens. Politicians of both the Social Democratic and capitalist parties have long maintained that foreign policy should not be discussed in city councils. This case, however, forced a break with that practice under the impact of the widespread anti-apartheid sentiment in the country.

The Danish boycott can serve as an example for other countries, even though its direct economic impact will be small compared with South Africa's big trade partners, Britain, West Germany, and the United States.

In 1984 Danish exports to South Africa

reached nearly US\$100 million, while imports totaled a little more than that amount. Danish coal purchases, however, represent about 10 percent of South Africa's total coal exports. Also, the withdrawal of medical products now being sold to South Africa could have a significant impact.

The ban on coal purchases will probably be approved by parliament with no major trouble. But the proposal for cutting all trade is more complicated, and some debate can be expected

Samoans protest rugby tour of South Africa

By Alex Henderson

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

* * *

A decision by the Western Samoan Rugby Union to accept an all-expense-paid invitation for the Samoan team to tour South Africa this year has sparked debate in the Samoan community both in Samoa and in New Zealand.

The South African Rugby Board has offered to spend \$250,000 [NZ\$1 = US\$0.52] to organize this tour, and their invitation was accepted by the Samoan union in January. But the union's president and Samoan deputy prime minister, Tupuola Efi, who was not present at the meeting which accepted the invitation, is opposed to the tour and is considering ways of preventing it.

Prime Minister Vaai Kolone has also asked the union to reconsider, saying "Western Samoa stands staunchly opposed to apartheid and supportive of international action to bring down apartheid in South Africa."

Those in the Samoan rugby union who supported the tour said that they were angry at being left out of the 1987 world rugby cup tournament, which has been organized by rugby circles in New Zealand and Australia. Playing the Springboks [the South African team] was an opportunity they could not let pass, they said.

Among Samoans in New Zealand speaking out against the decision is Taito Philip Field, president of the Wellington Samoan Sports Club and a former meatworkers' union shed secretary at Gear Meat, Petone. In a letter sent to newspapers in Samoa, he wrote:

"I'm opposed to the proposed Western Samoan rugby tour of South Africa for the same reason I opposed the All Blacks [a New Zealand team] going there. . . . This time I don't think the South African Rugby Board is interested in rugby, but rather a game of political football, using the Samoan rugby team as the ball.

over specific exceptions and time limits for implementation. An additional problem that will have to be addressed is what to do about formally independent South African companies that are owned by Danish capitalists.

Another question that has been excluded from the debate thus far is whether to give direct financial support to the African National Congress and South West Africa People's Organisation (the leading liberation organizations in South Africa and Namibia). The government now gives only "humanitarian" assistance to help the liberation movements. But three workers' parties represented in parliament support government contributions directly to the liberation organizations as well. All the capitalist parties oppose such a measure. Winning this aid will be a key task for the solidarity movement, building on the recent victories in the fight for a trade boycott. □

land team] going there. . . . This time I don't think the South African Rugby Board is interested in rugby, but rather a game of political football, using the Samoan rugby team as the ball.

"There are some very desperate white people in South Africa (Danie Craven [president of South African Rugby Board] being one). Politically, economically, socially, and in sport they are feeling the isolation and mounting pressure of world opposition to the evil of their apartheid system.

"There is internal turmoil from the Black majority, fighting for freedom, justice, and the democratic right to determine their destiny and welfare as a people.

"I think all Samoans, who I am sure take pride in their country's independence and the rights and freedoms they enjoy, should align themselves with the struggle of the Black and Coloured people of South Africa. They should not associate in any way with the racist and oppressive apartheid system of the white minority in South Africa, of which the Rugby Union and the Springboks are a part. . . .

"In brief I see the proposed Samoan rugby tour as nothing more than a cheap propaganda exercise to give credibility to the superficial changes to the apartheid system and the so-called sudden change of white attitude to Blacks and Coloured people." □

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Black workers fight 'mine slavery'

Build National Union of Mineworkers into powerful weapon

By Ernest Harsch

Following a particularly brutal police attack on striking Black workers at the Vaal Reefs gold mine, one seriously injured worker was asked whether he would rejoin his union. "We cannot retreat now from the union," he replied. "It is our organisation. We must fight to defend it."

"The union," he explained, "will free us from mine slavery."

The determination of that mine worker at Vaal Reefs is shared by many thousands of others, in dozens of mines across South Africa. After decades of suffering, of miserably low wages, without any organization they could call their own, Black mine workers have finally forged a powerful weapon to defend their interests and their dignity — the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM). Through their own struggles and active support, they have built it into the largest union in the entire country — and the fastest growing. Launched only in 1982, the NUM already had a quarter of a million members by the end of 1985.

This has not come easily. The miners' union has been involved in some of the most bitter labor battles in South Africa in recent years. Striking workers frequently have to face not only the companies' own armed guards, but also the apartheid police, who have not hesitated to use bullets, tear gas, and helicopters. Many miners have lost their jobs, and some have been killed.

Yet despite such difficult conditions, these workers have stood by the NUM. And they have been making historic gains. Their wages, though still low, have been rising significantly. Some fired workers have won reinstatement. The bosses have been forced to recognize the union as the mine workers' legitimate representative.

Increasingly, Black mine workers, through the NUM, are also being drawn into the forefront of the entire labor movement. They are setting an example to other workers, and to all those oppressed by the apartheid system. They are taking their place in the broader struggle for a free and democratic South Africa.

A crucial sector

Workers in the South African mines wield considerable social power, being employed in one of the most crucial sectors of the entire economy. Although mining's relative importance has been declining with the country's extensive industrialization, it still accounts for between 20 and 30 percent of South Africa's gross national product and about 60 percent of its foreign earnings.

South Africa is rich in a wide range of min-

erals, including platinum, coal, copper, diamonds, vanadium, manganese, and uranium. But the heart of the mining industry is in the gold fields. Stretching in a 300-mile arc from Evander in the Transvaal to Welkom in the Orange Free State, these are by far the largest known gold deposits in the world. The first gold mines were opened near Johannesburg exactly a century ago, in 1886.

Every year, the mining companies rake in fabulous profits. In 1983 alone, they chalked up profits of 1.6 billion rands (at that time, about US\$1.5 billion). This has gone into the pockets both of South African capitalists and of foreign investors, including U.S. investors, who hold millions of dollars in shares in the South African gold mines.

The wealth derived from mining rests on the labor of an overwhelmingly Black work force. Of the approximately 720,000 employees in the mines, more than 620,000 are Africans. From the two other sectors of the Black population, 10,000 Coloureds (of mixed ancestry) work in the mines, as do 900 Indians. The remaining 85,000 or so mine employees are white, about half employed as company officials and half as miners, primarily in skilled positions. More than 500,000 of the Black workers labor for companies belonging to the Chamber of Mines, which functions as the mining bosses' umbrella organization.

Under South Africa's apartheid system, every Black worker is shackled by unfree labor conditions. There is strict state control over movement and residency, making it impossible for Blacks to freely sell their labor. Many are assigned specific occupations by government-run labor bureaus. Racist employment bars, whether enshrined in law or practiced out of "custom," prevent Blacks from advancing to many skilled jobs. Severe repression hinders Black workers from freely organizing themselves.

Together with agricultural laborers, Black mine workers face the most extensive restrictions of any workers in South Africa, restrictions enforced by the Chamber of Mines and the apartheid regime alike.

Migrant labor system

Central to the authorities' control over Black mine workers is the migrant labor system, which has been in operation since the first mines were opened a century ago. Under this system, African workers are recruited from the Bantustans — the rural reserves to which most Africans are assigned — as well as from beyond South Africa's borders. Roughly 95 percent of all African miners are hired in this way, through centralized recruiting agencies

(about 60 percent from South Africa and the rest from Lesotho, Mozambique, Botswana, and other countries in southern Africa).

To gain a job in the mines, a worker has to sign a labor contract, which expires after a specified period of time, ranging from nine months for Africans recruited within South Africa to 15 months for those recruited abroad. When the contract period is over, the miner must then return home before being able to reapply for another stint in the mines.

African migrant workers must leave their families behind, in the countryside. This is a key aspect of the mining companies' efforts to keep down mine wages. The food grown by the migrants' families, however meager that may be, enables the mine owners to drive wages below what it would cost to maintain both the worker and his family in a settled urban existence.

African migrant workers cannot acquire even the limited urban residency rights that other African workers have. By keeping them tied to the countryside, the migrant labor system obstructs their full proletarianization. It holds them back from becoming part of the hereditary proletariat, those who have no further perspective of returning to the land and who view themselves as a distinct, permanent working class.¹

The migrant labor system also strengthens the authorities' ability to physically control Black mine workers. Although many are routinely reemployed by the same company for successive contract periods, militant workers and labor "agitators" can be easily weeded out by simply not rehiring them.

Strikes are often broken through mass dismissals. "Miners sign a contract," an official of Anglo Vaal Mines stated during a 1985 strike. "If they withdraw their labor they are breaking the employment contract and, hence, we can move them off the mines." Since migrant workers have no right to stay in "white" South Africa unless they are working under contract, this also means immediate expulsion to the Bantustans or neighboring countries.

Life and death in the mines

While employed in the mines, migrant workers must live in segregated, single-sex compounds. Living conditions in these barracks-like compounds are abysmal. It is not

1. For a discussion by Frederick Engels on the historical development of the "hereditary proletariat," with particular reference to the United States, see Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *On the United States* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1979) pp. 281-86, 327-28.

uncommon for 20 men to be crowded into a single room, with concrete or steel bunk beds and tiny lockers stacked along the walls.

These compounds, commonly known as "hostels," are built more like prisons than dormitories. In an article in the July 1982 *South African Labour Bulletin*, Jeremy Baskin observed, "The very structure of the compounds is built in expectation of unrest. Most compounds have only one tightly-controlled entrance. The newer ones are often built so that sections can be sealed off if necessary. Well-equipped riot-control rooms are common features. Western Deep Levels mine is not unique in having numbers painted on the various roofs within the hostel. This is to facilitate security action from the air. At Venterspost, the single entrance to the compound is topped by a military-style tower with searchlights and camera equipment. Access to the tower is possible only from the outside, which is used for controlling unrest."

Most mine companies also employ their own security forces, including both white and Black guards.

In an effort to keep the mine workers divided and disorganized, housing in the compounds is arranged along language and tribal lines. Rooms and sometimes entire sections of compounds are segregated according to whether workers are Zulus, Pedis, Sothos, or from some other tribal or language group. They are organized under the direction of *indunas*, tribally oriented foremen. According to one worker, the *indunas*' "function is to police the workers, discourage mixing with other workers, and disorganise us. They are management's puppets and watchdogs."

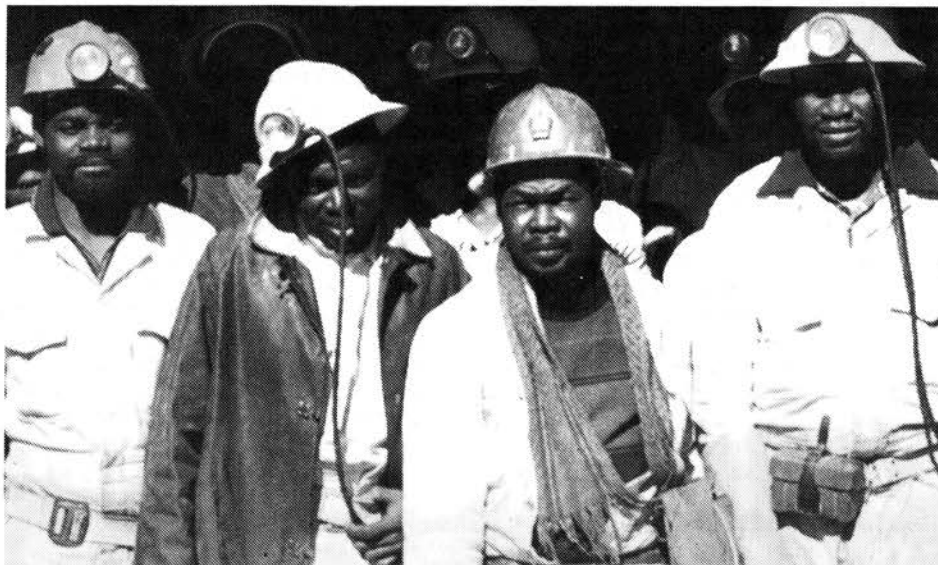
The tribal frictions that are consciously fostered by the mine owners periodically break out into destructive internecine rioting, which the bosses then seize on as pretexts for further repression.

On top of these divisions, employment in the mines is stratified according to racial classification. Certain higher-paid and more skilled job categories are designated exclusively for white or Coloured workers.

While the workers are kept divided and under strict control, the mine bosses have organized themselves into a powerful monopoly institution. The Chamber of Mines, established in 1887, has traditionally presented a common stance in wage negotiations on an industrywide basis. Its centralized recruitment of migrant workers reduces competition in hiring among individual companies.

This monopoly organization — combined with the migrant labor system and the many other social and political controls imposed on Blacks under apartheid — has kept wage rates for Black workers in the mines below those for many other industries. In 1983, wages for African mine workers averaged 291 rands a month, compared, for example, with 451 rands for metal workers and 357 rands for transport workers.

Average African mine wages are only about one-sixth of the average white wage in the mines. This, however, is a considerable im-



Gold miners. After a century of exploitation, they are organizing against the mine bosses and the apartheid regime.

provement over the situation in the early 1970s, when Africans earned just one-twentieth of what white miners received.

Another reflection of the degree of exploitation that Black mine workers are subjected to is the very high accident rate in the mines. "Production is more important than safety," as one mining safety engineer commented.

Over the past decade, more than 8,200 workers have been killed in accidents in the mines, and another 230,000 injured. Since the turn of the century, a grand total of 46,000 mine workers — the vast majority of them Black — have lost their lives in the mines. The mining death rate in South Africa is estimated to be six times that in Britain.

In addition, the extreme heat of deep-level mining, the persistent dust, and the long hours of arduous labor destroy the health of many mine workers. And when they are no longer able to dig out the gold or coal for the mine bosses, they are shipped back to the Bantustans or countries of origin to live out their remaining days on whatever savings, if any, they have been able to accumulate.

Long struggle

Black mine workers have not accepted such conditions passively. The earliest recorded strikes in the gold mines took place at the turn of the century. Since then there have been repeated outbursts. Sometimes they have taken the form of strikes and sometimes what management and government officials refer to as "rioting," in which mine workers express their discontent and anger by destroying mine property.

Before the recent emergence of the National Union of Mineworkers, most of this resistance was unorganized, because of the many restrictions on the ability of Black mine workers to form unions.

Only once before were they able to overcome these hurdles, during World War II when the African Mine Workers Union was formed.

It was headed by J.B. Marks, a leader of the Communist Party of South Africa and of the African National Congress. In August 1946, the union led more than 70,000 Black mine workers out on strike to demand higher pay. The police moved in force against the strikers, killing 13 and driving many others back to their jobs at bayonet-point. The strike leadership was rounded up, and within a few days the strike was crushed. The union never recovered from this defeat.

It became even more difficult to organize in the mines during the 1960s, following Pretoria's banning of the ANC and other anti-apartheid organizations and its general crackdown on the trade union movement.

By the early 1970s, however, unrest among mine workers began to revive. This was encouraged, in part, by the resumption of open political activity and by a massive 1973 strike wave in Durban. Black mine workers were also inspired by advances in the liberation struggles elsewhere in southern Africa, particularly in neighboring Mozambique.

In 1974 a series of strikes broke out in the gold mines. The progovernment press tried to portray these actions as tribal "faction fighting." But they were more than that. According to one account, "At Hartebeesfontein [mine] the so-called ring leaders who were arrested were identified as representative of the three main tribal groups on the mine. It seems clear that cross-tribal solidarity was deliberately fostered by the strike leaders."

Growing class identification, cutting across tribal and language lines, was evident in other strikes as well.

In early 1976 a government-appointed commission of inquiry into mine "riots" continued to stress that they were largely "tribal fights." But the commission's report also made a number of admissions. It acknowledged that "it is the migratory labour [system], per se, that is creating the problem" of mine unrest. It recognized that "the Black worker is aware of

what is going on around him, and of events elsewhere in Africa and in the world. . . . And he is becoming more and more aware of himself and the important part that he plays in the mining industry."

In June 1976, just a few months after this commission concluded its report, Soweto and other Black townships around the country erupted in massive youth rebellions. Although these were eventually crushed through police repression — at a cost of more than 600 lives — they provided a further spur to mass political and industrial organization. Black union membership began to grow significantly.

Unable to prevent this Black unionization, the apartheid authorities felt compelled to modify their labor laws and make some concessions. In 1979 they extended officially recognized union rights to African workers for the first time in South Africa's history. These rights were limited, and unions that wanted official recognition had to register with the government and comply with numerous restrictive conditions. But many unions used this small opening to further strengthen their positions.

Black unionization spread through most of the key industries in the country. Yet because of the particularly difficult conditions in the mines, it took several more years for the first Black mining unions to get off the ground.

The immediate impetus to Black unionization in the mines came in July 1982, when 70,000 mine workers downed their tools over a pay dispute. It was the largest miners' strike since 1946. The police were called in to break the strike, killing 10 workers. Several thousand were fired from their jobs. There was also considerable destruction of mine property.

This strike — following a decade of increasingly bitter conflict in the mines — convinced several of the mining companies to permit a degree of union organizing among their workers. Some mine officials argued that the sporadic and costly outbursts in the mines could be more easily contained if "responsible" trade unionism was introduced.

The Anglo American Corp. (the largest mining conglomerate) and Barlow Rand announced after the 1982 strike that they were prepared to negotiate with any union that could demonstrate "significant representation." This decision was a result of "enlightened self-interest," an Anglo American official explained, stating that it would be "smart down the road to be able to talk with responsible, recognized leaders of our employees."

The NUM is launched

Soon, eight different unions began trying to organize Black workers. The National Union of Mineworkers was one.

The initiative for the NUM's formation came from one of the two main predominantly Black union federations, the Council of Unions of South Africa (CUSA). Launched in 1980, CUSA's leadership was influenced by the political current known as the Black Consciousness movement. Unlike the nonracial unions, which were open to both Black and white workers, CUSA was exclusively Black.

After adopting a resolution in 1982 calling for the formation of a Black mine workers' union, CUSA assigned a young labor lawyer, Cyril Ramaphosa, to begin the organizing efforts. Ramaphosa had been a student activist in the Black Consciousness movement during the 1970s. He was detained twice, for 11 months as a result of his involvement in a 1973 rally in solidarity with the Mozambique Liberation Front (Frelimo) and for six months during the crackdown against the 1976 youth rebellions.

At first, the NUM was the only one of the emerging unions that was granted permission to enter the mining compounds to talk to the workers. The Chamber of Mines initially calculated that the NUM would be easier to deal with than the other unions, based on CUSA's reputation for calling few strikes and its affiliation to the anticommunist International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (in which the U.S. union federation, the AFL-CIO, plays a leading role).

Ramaphosa later stated that it would have been "virtually impossible" to reach the mine workers without first gaining permission to enter the compounds. "So we had to go to the Chamber, the bosses," he said. "They gave us offices, recruiting facilities — the works. We took them. There was no other way we could have got started. That, to many people, was a new development in the country — where a union got access and such good treatment. It just doesn't sound right. We agree. But being the mining industry there was nothing else we could have done."

Nevertheless, because the NUM was given official access to the mines, it met with some suspicion among both mine workers and other unions that it was being groomed as a company union.

Salae Salae, an NUM leader at the giant Vaal Reefs gold mine, explained that when he first began organizing in October 1982 "very often I was chased away by the workers. . . .

Workers thought the union was some type of insurance who wanted to take their money." But over time, these suspicions gave way to interest and then to active support.

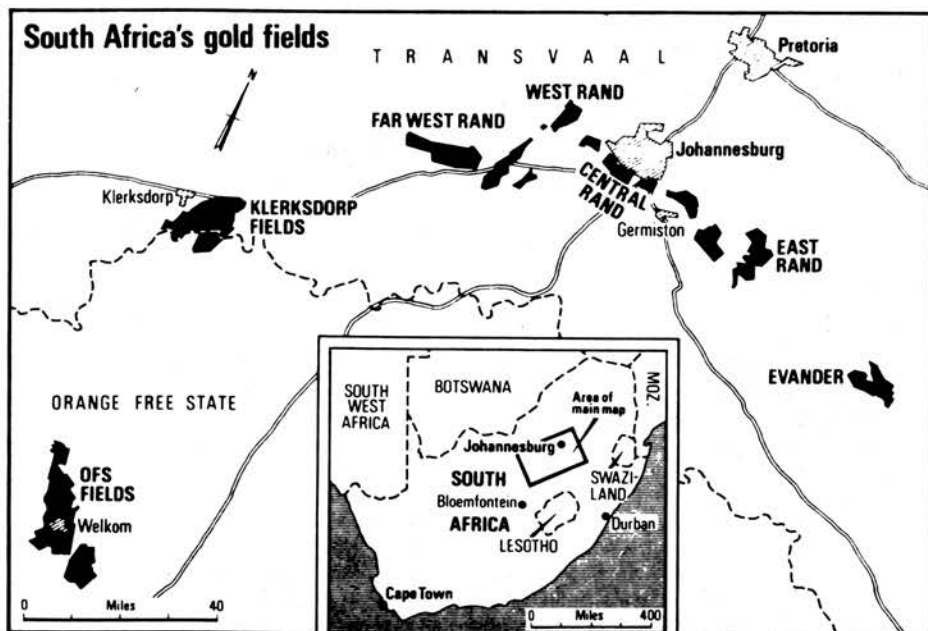
In December 1982, union representatives from eight mines formally launched the NUM at a mass rally of 2,000 held in Klerksdorp. Reflecting the importance of foreign migrant workers, Lesotho-born James Motlatsi was elected president of the NUM. Thirty-one years old, he had worked in the mines for a dozen years. The position of vice-president went to a 25-year veteran of the mines, Elijah Barayi, who had been an activist in the ANC during the 1950s. Ramaphosa was chosen the union's general secretary.

The NUM's first major breakthroughs came in 1983. It won official recognition at a number of mines. In June 1983 the NUM signed a collective agreement with the Chamber of Mines — the first time in South African history that Black mine workers took direct part in negotiations over their wages. Formally, the agreement covered only the 6,000 union members in the mines where the NUM was recognized (out of a total membership of about 20,000 at the time). But in practice, the modest wage increase won by the NUM was extended to all the Black workers in the gold, platinum, and copper mines.

Mine workers throughout the country took notice. Membership applications and organizing drives mounted.

As the NUM built up its strength, and increasingly engaged in struggle on behalf of its members, the Chamber of Mines' attitude toward the union changed. "The honeymoon came to an end," Ramaphosa stated.

Some companies withdrew the office facilities they had given the union. Access to the mines was restricted. Union activists were frequently dismissed from their jobs and arrested. And when workers went out on strike, they were met by police repression.



Since the NUM signed its first agreement with the Chamber of Mines, it has been involved in more strike activity than virtually any other union in the country. The strikes have been sparked by issues ranging from disputes over wages, benefits, and safety to opposition to company victimization of union activists and racist attacks by white mine officials and miners.

Most strikes have involved just one or two mines, while a few have been conducted nationally, against specific mining companies. Many of the local actions have been illegal, as workers responded quickly to immediate grievances and provocations. All the strikes have been brief, lasting several hours to just a few days at most. The NUM has no strike fund.

Although some strikes have ended in defeat and mass dismissals, mine workers have continued to flock to the union. They are attracted by its readiness to *fight* for their interests. Despite the severe economic recession in the country and the regime's frequent use of armed force, the NUM's membership grew to 250,000 by the end of 1985 (about 100,000 of them paid up in their dues).

Several strikes have been key tests for the NUM, underlining both the union's growing strength and the continued obstacles it faces.

In September 1984, the NUM launched the first legal strike ever by Black miners. It followed months of negotiations over wages and other issues with the Chamber of Mines, as the NUM carefully complied with all the drawn-out and complex negotiating procedures a union must go through before it can legally go on strike.

As the strike deadline of September 17 approached, the Chamber of Mines continued to stall in the talks, testing to see if the NUM was serious about waging a national strike. Only on the eve of the deadline did the chamber make an acceptable compromise offer.

But by then it was too late for the NUM to contact most of its members, and the strike began anyway. Some 40,000 Black mine workers struck several Anglo American mines until news of the settlement reached them.

This action sparked a series of other strikes over the next week. At one mine, 4,000 workers belonging to the Black Allied Mining and Construction Workers Union went on strike in solidarity with the NUM. At the Hartebeesfontein mine, 16,000 struck to demand that the NUM be recognized as their union. Some gold and coal mines were shut down, as workers demanded pay increases comparable to what the NUM had won.

As is their custom, police attacked the striking workers, killing 10 of them. Even workers who participated in the NUM's legal strike were attacked, with about 250 injured. "My members," Ramaphosa commented, "are asking themselves whether doing everything above board was worth it. The police acted just as if it had been an illegal strike."

Ramaphosa also observed, "One lesson we've learnt is that we should organise the industry more vigorously. It reminded us of the

1946 Black miners' strike on the Witwatersrand. We are continuing that heritage. We are continuing the struggle started by J.B. Marks."

The NUM's next major challenge came in March–April 1985, when 42,000 workers at Anglo American's giant Vaal Reefs mine struck over pay and other issues. The company broke the strike by dismissing 14,000 of the workers. But as negotiations between Anglo American and the NUM continued, the company agreed to rehire the bulk of the workers.

Rift in Chamber of Mines

In mid-1985 the NUM again moved toward a national confrontation with the Chamber of Mines. The union raised demands for significant pay increases, recognition of May Day as a holiday, and the right to participate in negotiations over steps to scrap job restrictions for Black mine workers. When the chamber rejected its demands, the NUM called for a strike against the six main mining companies.

Coming just a few weeks after Pretoria declared a state of emergency in parts of the country, this strike call was also widely seen as a political challenge to the apartheid regime.

But as the initial strike date of August 25 approached, the NUM and three of the companies reached a compromise agreement, with Anglo American, Johannesburg Consolidated Investment, and Barlow Rand offering pay increases close to the NUM's demand for a 22 percent hike. Anglo American was particularly concerned about reaching a settlement, since 80 percent of the NUM's members were employed in its mines.

This was the first time the mining companies had broken ranks when faced with labor unrest. The NUM considered this a significant development that could lead to a weakening of the chamber as the industry's national bargaining organization.

The three other mining companies — Anglo Vaal, Gold Fields of South Africa, and General Mining Corp. (Gencor) — refused to offer any pay increases at all. Since the NUM was not yet well organized in their mines, they chose to take on the union.

The NUM set a new strike date, and on September 1 between 23,000 and 30,000 workers struck at 11 gold and coal mines owned by the three companies. Fewer workers turned out than the NUM had expected. And the companies, well-prepared for the confrontation, responded with mass dismissals. The strike soon collapsed.

According to NUM spokeswoman Manoko Nchwe, "The mining companies partly broke our strike and partly caught us unawares. But it's also a victory for us because it has shown the determination of our members in spite of all kinds of intimidation."

Since then, the NUM has been engaged in a series of other bitter fights. Some 20,000 strikers, most of them NUM supporters, were fired from several Gencor-owned platinum mines in the BophuthaTswana Bantustan in early January 1986. Several weeks later strikes at two gold mines were also broken with mass dismissals. On February 25 nearly 20,000 miners at

Anglo American's Vaal Reefs complex went out in solidarity with some arrested colleagues.

Flexible tactics

In seeking to defend the interests of its members, the NUM has used a variety of tactics. Whenever possible it has sought to win concessions through direct negotiations with the employers, either at the level of the individual mine or the Chamber of Mines as a whole.

The NUM has also tried to take advantage of some of the legal openings provided by the apartheid regime's recent labor reforms. The court system — including the government-appointed Industrial Court, an arbitration body — is heavily stacked against the interests of the workers. But the NUM's actual strength in the mines has been reflected in several favorable decisions.

In response to Gencor's mass firing of miners during the September 1985 strike, the NUM appealed to the Industrial Court to have the miners reinstated on the grounds that they had taken part in a legal strike. The court agreed, and ordered the company to rehire the workers. The Supreme Court upheld the decision. The NUM viewed this victory as an important precedent for the entire labor movement, undercutting one of the companies' favorite "union bashing tactics."

The mine workers' union has likewise organized mass boycotts, a common tactic used in townships across the country. The NUM's actions have included boycotts of taxi companies to protest high fares, boycotts of white-owned shops that charged high prices, and even boycotts of sporting activities to dramatize workers' grievances.

Some boycotts involved regular mass meetings and won support from all workers, not just NUM members. At the Kloof Gold Mine in East Driefontein, the NUM launched a boycott against nearby white-owned shops to protest high prices and racist treatment of Black customers. The union reached out to nearby farm workers and gained their backing as well.

At Hartebeesfontein, the NUM used boycotts of taxis and bars to help rebuild support for the union, which had declined following an earlier defeat. According to the NUM's press officer, Marcel Golding, "These boycotts proved extremely successful. Instead of going to the bars, workers attended union meetings or got involved in group discussions about the union. This was the most phenomenal aspect of the liquor boycott. Time was spent more creatively, often in ways directly related to worker organisation. The boycott served to politicise workers about their power and role."

'The union is the workers'

Confronted with the power of the mining companies and the repressive force of the apartheid state, the mine workers' union has sought to base itself on mobilizing the strength of its members.

This is reflected in the way the NUM recruits. According to Ramaphosa, "One of our strongest tactics is that we do not impose the

union on workers. We do not look at a mine and say we must go and organise that mine. We wait for workers to approach us, then we get them to form themselves into an organising committee, so that, if they want the union they will have to work and organise themselves. And the union organisers will just be there as facilitators."

Initially, the NUM tried to win over workers by first recruiting team leaders, the category of African underground workers who have advanced to the most skilled positions open to Africans. The union soon came to view this as a mistake, since the interests of the team leaders — who have significantly higher wages and perform some supervisory functions — are not identical to those of the bulk of Black mine workers.

"But now," Ramaphosa said, "we are tending more and more to give more attention to the people at the bottom because they don't have much to lose."

Although the NUM organizes both underground and surface workers, the leadership tends to be drawn more from the surface workers, who are often in a better position to carry out union activities.

The most basic unit of the union is the shaft committee, composed of shaft stewards elected by the ranks. Each mine where the NUM is organized is represented by a branch, composed of all the shaft committees in that mine. Several branches make up a region, of which there are now eight. Each region elects 50 delegates to the union's annual congresses. The congress delegates elect the national executive committee and other national union leaders. The only full-time, paid position in the national union leadership is that of general secretary.

It is not easy to maintain a high level of mobilization in the mines. Meetings cannot be held in the hostels, and attempts to hold outdoor meetings often meet with police repression. Nevertheless, mass meetings of union members take place, at whatever facilities the union can find outside the mining compounds.

Union meetings are often marked by turbulent discussions, chanting, singing of freedom songs, and dancing in the aisles. The proceedings are generally conducted in several different African languages, reflecting the varied backgrounds of the mine workers.

Although the NUM was not legally obliged to hold a strike ballot before its September 1984 national strike, it did so anyway, both to demonstrate its popular support and to directly involve the ranks in the strike decision. The workers voted 43,000 to 210 to strike.

This emphasis on the active involvement of the membership has enabled the NUM to recover from setbacks it has suffered and to rebuild itself in mines where many members have been fired. As one mine worker put it following the March 1985 dismissals at the Vaal Reefs mine, "They can kill us and remove all our shaft stewards, but they will not defeat the union. Because the union is the workers."

By building up an organization that fights in the interests of all mine workers, the NUM has

made progress in combating and overcoming the divisive language and tribal frictions fostered by the apartheid regime and the mine bosses. Intertribal clashes still occur, but the NUM's formation has helped channel the workers' anger against their common oppressors and exploiters.

The union's success in organizing African mine workers from throughout the country, and from the southern African region as a whole, has brought the union into direct conflict with the apartheid regime's Bantustan policy. The Black collaborators who administer Pretoria's Bantustans are extremely hostile toward the emerging democratic unions, including the NUM. In BophuthaTswana, for example, Gencor's efforts to keep the NUM out of the platinum mines are backed up by labor regulations prohibiting any "outside" union from operating there.

While the NUM is overwhelmingly African in composition, it has also begun to organize Coloured mine workers. In May 1985, De Beers Consolidated Mines recognized the NUM at its Namaqualand diamond mine, where most of the workers are Coloureds. A few months earlier, a large contingent of Coloured miners from Namaqualand attended the NUM's third national congress in Welkom.

When the NUM was first formed it was strongly influenced by the ideas of the Black Consciousness movement, which opposed nonracial forms of organization and any direct collaboration with anti-apartheid whites. As a result, the NUM was initially an exclusively Black union. Since then, however, it has altered its stance in favor of nonracialism. Although the NUM remains overwhelmingly Black, it now has a few whites in it, primarily in technical and advisory positions.

Fight against 'job reservation'

One major obstacle in the way of forging class unity between Black and white mine workers is the racist prohibition on Blacks filling certain skilled job positions, a practice known as "job reservation."

By law, only whites (and some categories of Coloureds) can obtain a blasting certificate, which qualifies a mine employee to set up and charge explosives. Possession of such a certificate is necessary to advance to other higher-paid jobs as well. (The holder of a certificate also gains the official title of "miner." So in South Africa white workers are known as "miners," while Blacks are called "mine workers.")

In practice, these restrictions have been greatly eroded, as the mining companies face a growing shortage of skilled, white workers. It is not uncommon for Black workers to actually set up and charge explosives and carry out other skilled tasks, sometimes under white supervision and sometimes not. According to the NUM, some 20,000 Black workers already have the necessary skills to qualify for job promotions, if there were no prohibition on their advancement.

The elimination of this bar, however, has long been opposed by the white mining unions

and employee associations. There are nearly 22,500 white workers organized in eight unions, of which the largest is the Mine Workers Union. The MWU has an ultrarightist leadership, headed by Arrie Paulus, who often attacks the government for making "too many" concessions to Blacks.

These unions, besides negotiating for wage gains and other improvements, also focus on protecting the narrow, craft interests of their members against any "encroachments" into the white workers' privileged job preserve. This backward stance is reinforced by all the propaganda of the apartheid state aimed at convincing whites that they are superior to Blacks.

The position of the white unions on the question of job reservation has often pitted them directly against Black mine workers. The MWU has threatened to go on strike if Blacks are given blasting certificates. Frictions are also exacerbated by the frequent racist abuse that Black mine workers receive from both white miners and mine officials. The fact that many white miners also perform certain supervisory functions further deepens the divisions between Black and white workers in the mines.

In 1981, as part of the regime's labor reforms, a government commission recommended that the Chamber of Mines negotiate with the white mine unions and officials' associations on ways to phase out job reservation. Since then, Africans have been allowed to train as apprentices for skilled trades and to become underground officials.

But the white unions have held out against scrapping job reservation entirely, arguing that the companies would use such a move to replace white workers with lower-paid Black workers. Resistance to ending these job reservations is not universal among white mine employees, however. According to a report in the Jan. 29, 1986, Johannesburg *Sunday Star*, younger whites in the mines "tend to hold attitudes more favourable to black advancement."

The NUM has protested its exclusion from the talks on job reservation between the Chamber of Mines and the white unions. It has repeatedly argued for removing all racist job restrictions. At an NUM congress in early 1985, an end to job reservation was targeted as a major union goal, and that demand figured in some of the negotiations with the Chamber of Mines.

The NUM has likewise resisted mining company efforts to get Black workers to perform skilled jobs at low wages. "Our men are doing the jobs and not getting the money," Ramaphosa complained. An April 1985 strike at the Vaal Reefs mine was provoked, in part, by the firing of some 700 Black mine workers who had refused to carry out jobs legally reserved for whites.

The NUM is also campaigning for an end to the "piccanin" system in the mines, in which Black workers are expected to fetch and carry for white miners. It has urged Black workers to defend themselves against racist assaults.

Although the NUM is by far the largest

union seeking to organize Black mine workers, it is not the only one. There are at least seven others. Several are significant.

The Federated Mining Union (FMU) was set up by the South African Boilermakers Society, a white-led union that has in recent years opened its ranks to workers of all colors, recruiting significant numbers of Blacks. The FMU itself is predominantly Black, although its top leadership overlaps with that of the Boilermakers Society (Ike van der Watt is general secretary of both unions). The NUM and FMU are the only unions of Black mine workers that have won recognition agreements from the Chamber of Mines.

The South African Mine Workers Union (SAMWU) was formed in 1983 and today has several thousand members. Its leadership is composed of officials from several other trade unions, most of which belong to the United Democratic Front, the broad anti-apartheid coalition that has been in the forefront of many of the recent mass protests.

The Black Allied Mining and Construction Workers Union (BAMCWU) was established in August 1982. It is politically linked to the Azanian People's Organisation (Azapo), a Black Consciousness group. It has led several strikes by chrome and asbestos miners and has applied for recognition at two mines.

The United Metal, Mining, and Allied Workers Union of South Africa (UMMAWUSA) emerged from a split in another union in July 1984. Although concentrated mainly in metal manufacturing industries, it has also begun to recruit mine workers.

The African Mining and Allied Workers Union (AMAWU) originated from a split in the NUM in late 1984. Its leader, Vuyani Madola, accuses the NUM of being a pro-company "sweetheart union" and claims to have several thousand members.

The existence of a number of unions, sometimes within the same mine, reflects a continued weakness in the labor movement. The Chamber of Mines has on several occasions sought to use these divisions to its advantage, particularly in its struggle to weaken the NUM. At the Vaal Reefs mine, for example, management has encouraged Black team leaders to join the AMAWU instead of the NUM.

'One industry, one union'

With the aim of overcoming these continued organizational divisions, the NUM, at its second congress in December 1983, issued a call for unification of the different unions, under the slogan, "One industry, one union."

In a speech a few weeks later, Ramaphosa stressed that "unity is our only hope of salvation." This applied not only to the union movement, he said, but to political organization as well. "A united force of oppressed people, speaking with one voice and acting with a will on issues of politics, labour, education, and the economy, could turn this country upside down."

The NUM has likewise been a key force in the efforts to unify the trade union movement as a whole. As an affiliate of the Council of



NUM leader Cyril Ramaphosa.

Unions of South Africa, it participated in many of the conferences that were held to discuss forging a single democratic union federation in the country.

But during 1984 CUSA began to pull back from those unity efforts. This further deepened differences that had already emerged between the NUM and the rest of CUSA over other questions.

At its third congress in January 1985, the NUM leveled some sharp criticisms at the CUSA leadership. It attacked most of the other unions in CUSA for opposing the steps to establish a single union federation. It charged that the other unions did not in practice encourage the ranks to actively participate in the unions' affairs or to exercise control over their leaderships. And it blasted CUSA's affiliation to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.

Later that year, in August 1985, the NUM formally disaffiliated from CUSA. This cleared the way for it to join with other unions in the formation of the new Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), which was launched at a conference held in Durban Nov. 29-Dec. 1, 1985.

COSATU's inauguration signified a major advance for the South African union movement. With a membership at that time of more than half a million paid-up workers, it encompassed the majority of the predominantly Black unions.

The NUM's weight and influence was evident at the conference. Of the 14 resolutions that were adopted, four were drafted and put forward by the NUM, more than by any other single union.² The delegates elected Elijah Barayi, the NUM vice-president, as COSATU's president. During the conference,

2. For the complete texts of the COSATU conference resolutions, see *Intercontinental Press*, Jan. 27, 1986, pp. 36-39.

Barayi publicly declared that the mines should be nationalized once apartheid is abolished.

COSATU's formation also marked a step toward unity among the mining unions, bringing into the federation not only the NUM, but also the SAMWU and UMMAWUSA. Since one of the COSATU conference's decisions was to move toward the establishment of a single union in each industry, these three unions are expected to join ranks.

International solidarity

For several years, the NUM has also been building solidarity with mine workers in other countries. This has been facilitated by its membership in the Miners International Federation, which includes more than 30 miners' unions from Europe, North America, Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

After attending an MIF congress in May 1984, the NUM proposed the establishment of a southern African mine workers' federation, and eventually a continentwide grouping. Just a week before COSATU was launched, 25 NUM representatives traveled to Harare, Zimbabwe, for a regional conference of miners' unions. They joined representatives from unions in Botswana, Lesotho, Zambia, and Zimbabwe to form the new Southern African Miners' Federation. Ramaphosa was elected its president. The conference participants issued a unanimous call for full international economic, political, military, and other sanctions against the apartheid regime.

During the long British miners' strike of 1984-85, the NUM made a dramatic gesture of solidarity by sending the British NUM a modest financial contribution. A striking British miner was invited by the South African NUM to tour the South African mines. "The message I took them was one of solidarity," he said upon his return to Britain. "This too is the message I brought back home with me to the striking miners in Britain."

Closer ties have also been forged between the NUM and its sister union in the United States and Canada, the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA).

Nomonde Ngubo, a founding member of the NUM, has moved to the United States to become an international representative of the UMWA. She has spoken around the country as part of the UMWA's anti-apartheid campaign, which includes calls for an end to all U.S. investments in South Africa. The UMWA has also established a fund to aid South African miners and their families who have been victimized for their union activities.

In late 1985, NUM President James Motlatsi and three other NUM officers toured the United States and Canada to further strengthen ties with the UMWA. "We came to the United States to seek your help, and to offer you ours," Motlatsi told UMWA members who were on strike against the A.T. Massey Coal Co. in West Virginia and Kentucky.

'Moving to the point of liberation'

Like other Blacks suffering under apartheid, mine workers have been driven into direct

struggle against the white minority regime. Every time the police are sent out to crush a strike, the point is reinforced that mine workers must confront not only the Chamber of Mines, but also the entire structure of political and social control that seeks to keep Blacks in perpetual servitude, with no recognized rights, not even that of citizenship.

Leaders of the NUM have repeatedly stressed the role that mine workers can and must play in the broader freedom struggle. "The black union movement," Ramaphosa said, "has educated and is educating black workers and is turning them into fighters, not only for the bread and butter issues, but for liberation from oppression as well. . . . Step by step, work stoppage by work stoppage, demonstration by demonstration, demand by demand, black workers are moving to the point of liberation."

In the past, mine workers were often cut off from the struggles taking place in the Black townships, a tendency reinforced by their physical isolation in the migrant worker compounds and their lack of firm social roots in the urban areas.

As one NUM member in the Western Transvaal commented, "The township people thought we were stupid. They thought that we were scared and did not want to fight for our rights. All this has now changed. They respect us."

With this growing respect has come greater solidarity. During the September 1985 strike, the United Democratic Front urged its members throughout the country to actively support the NUM. When NUM members in Namakgale, in the Lebowa Bantustan, occupied their hostels in December 1985 to protest the firing of 1,500 mine workers, they won direct backing from local Namakgale residents, who provided them with food.

Such solidarity has been reciprocated. In January 1985, the NUM threatened to launch a national strike if the government-owned Sasol coal-to-oil conversion plant did not rehire the thousands of workers it had fired for taking part in a massive political general strike in the Transvaal the previous November. Most of the Sasol workers were subsequently reemployed.

When President Pieter Botha imposed a state of emergency in parts of the country in July 1985, the NUM issued a sharp protest

against the crackdown. A threat by Botha to expel all migrant workers from South Africa if international economic sanctions were imposed against the country was met by an NUM warning. "If he attempts to proceed with his ill-advised threats," an August 1985 NUM congress declared, "our union will immediately call a national strike of all miners."

Some of the sharpest anti-apartheid declarations by an NUM leader came during COSATU's inaugural conference, after the mine workers' Elijah Barayi was elected federation president. Calling the apartheid regime a government of "criminals and drunkards," Barayi demanded abolition of the pass laws and warned, "If the political order in this country does not change soon, we will refuse to pay taxes and rent." Barayi called on Botha to resign and "make way for the real leader of the people, Nelson Mandela," the ANC leader who has been imprisoned since 1962.

This identification with Mandela was taken a step further when NUM delegates met in Soweto in late February 1986 for their annual national congress. They symbolically elected Nelson Mandela the NUM's honorary life president. □

DOCUMENTS

South African unionists, ANC meet

Three groups discuss common fight against apartheid

[The following is the text of a communiqué issued following a March 5-6 meeting in Lusaka, Zambia, among the leaderships of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), and the African National Congress (ANC).

[COSATU, a half-million-member union federation formed in late 1985, encompasses the bulk of the predominantly Black, democratic trade unions in the country. SACTU, which is unable to function openly in South Africa because of the repression, is the union formation that is politically allied with the ANC, the vanguard organization of the anti-apartheid struggle.

[The first direct contacts between COSATU and the ANC and SACTU were made in December 1985, just a few days after COSATU's inauguration, when COSATU Secretary General Jay Naidoo met with leaders of the other two groups in Harare, Zimbabwe.

[In addition to the delegation leaders named in the communiqué, the participants in the subsequent Lusaka meeting included Cyril Ramaphosa, general secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers (a COSATU affiliate), and ANC leaders Thabo Mbeki and James Stuart.]

* * *

Delegations of the executive of the Congress

of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), the national executive committee of the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), and the national executive committee of the African National Congress (ANC) met in Lusaka on 5th and 6th March, 1986.

The respective delegations were led by Comrade Jay Naidoo, general secretary of COSATU; Comrade John Nkadimeng, general secretary of SACTU; and Comrade Oliver Tambo, president of the ANC. During the course of the discussions, COSATU and SACTU held a separate session to discuss matters of common interest as trade unionists.

The meeting resulted from the common concern of all parties arising from the fundamental and deep-seated economic, social, and political crisis into which the Botha regime and the apartheid system of national oppression and class exploitation have plunged our country. There was common understanding that the Pretoria regime and the ruling class of South Africa are powerless to provide any real and meaningful solutions to this general crisis, that lasting solutions can only emerge from the national liberation movement, headed by the ANC, and the entire democratic forces of our country, of which COSATU is an important integral part.

In this regard it was recognised that the fundamental problem facing our country, the question of political power, cannot be resolved



Charles Ostrofsky/IP

ANC President Oliver Tambo.

without the full participation of the ANC, which is regarded by the majority of the people of South Africa as the overall leader and genuine representative.

The meeting recognised that the emergence of COSATU as the giant democratic and progressive trade union federation in our country is a historic event in the process of uniting our working class and will immeasurably strengthen the democratic movement as a whole.

After extensive discussion on the current internal and international situation, characterised

by a warm spirit of comradeship, the three delegations agreed on a number of important issues. They agreed that the solutions to the problems facing the country lie in the establishment of a system of majority rule in a united, democratic, and non-racial South Africa. Further, that in the specific conditions of our country it is inconceivable that such a system can be separated from economic emancipation. Our people have been robbed of their land, deprived of their due share in the country's wealth, their skills have been suppressed, and poverty and starvation have been their life experience. The correction of these centuries-old economic injustices lies in the core of our national aspirations.

Accordingly, they were united not only in their opposition to the entire apartheid system, but also in their common understanding that victory must embrace more than formal political democracy.

The COSATU delegation explained that the principal tasks facing their federation are to consolidate their membership and affiliates, rapidly effect conversion of the general unions which are part of COSATU into industry-based unions, within each industry bring one union to unite the entire work force of our country under the banner of COSATU, at the same time as a representative of the workers in the general democratic struggle, both as an independent organisation and as an essential component of the democratic forces of our country. In this regard, the advancement of the interests of the workers and the democratic struggle of our people requires that COSATU, in working together with the other democratic mass organisations, seek to build disciplined alliances so as to ensure that the mobilisation of our people in united mass action also deepen the organisational basis of all democratic organisations of the people.

The delegation of the ANC also reported to the meeting on its policy, its programme, its strategy and tactics. The ANC emphasised the need for the greatest possible mobilisation of all the people of our country to join in united political action against the apartheid regime, equally and in combination with the mass political struggle. The ANC also stressed the importance of the armed struggle to defend the people against the enemy armed forces and to give the people the possibility to seize power from a white minority regime which holds on to power by the use of force.

The three delegations agreed that it is of central importance that the campaign for the immediate, unconditional release of all political prisoners, including Nelson Mandela, should develop with even greater intensity. They agreed that the three organisations would do their utmost in pursuit of this goal.

As the crisis of our country deepens, so too does the resistance, anger, and the will of our people to fight back. In the process many issues have emerged and will continue to emerge as central campaigning issues. At this very moment the entire democratic movement is confronted with the task of finding the correct campaign basis to destroy Bantu Education

[segregated schooling] and establish in its place one single, democratic, non-racial, free, and compulsory system of education for all the children of our country.

Similarly it has become imperative that the workers of our country together with all the democratic forces work together to destroy the pass laws — the badge of slavery — and the whole system of influx control and prevent the Botha regime from reintroducing this hated system in any guise whatsoever.

In these and all other campaigns facing our people, it is the duty of the democratic forces to work together and consult one another in order to establish the maximum unity in action by all our people.

The delegation further agreed that the obstacle to any negotiated solution is the Botha regime. They concluded that no negotiations are possible while the leaders of the people are in prison and while the Pretoria regime refuses to accept that our country should be governed by all its people, both black and white, as equals, as brothers and sisters. In this context the national liberation movement headed by the

ANC explained that neither negotiations nor "talks about talks" have taken place and that the ANC is committed that any negotiations, if and when they should take place, must be public and involve the entire democratic movement.

In the discussion between COSATU and SACTU, both agreed that the widest possible unity of trade unions in our country is of utmost importance in our people's struggle against the apartheid regime and the bosses. Both agreed that there was no contradiction whatsoever arising from their separate existence.

The meeting between all three organisations was characterised by an overwhelming optimism that despite all the manoeuvres by the Botha regime and its allies, despite the heightening repression, victory over the system of white minority racist rule is not far off.

The meeting reiterated the commitment of the three organisations to fight for a society free from the chains of poverty, racism, and exploitation, which would require the restructuring of the present economy. □

10 AND 20 YEARS AGO



March 29, 1976

BRUSSELS — Did International Women's Year mark a step forward for the women of the world? The answer is an angry "no," according to some 1,000 women who assembled in the Palais des Congrès here March 4-8, in the International Tribunal on Crimes Against Women.

Personal testimony and reports from more than 30 countries brought forward a powerful indictment of the oppression and discrimination women face in all spheres of life, all around the world.

Testimony and reports on the first morning centered on medical crimes against women, in areas such as abortion, contraception, forced sterilization, and mistreatment by the medical profession. A common theme of many of these presentations was the fact that the hierarchy of the Catholic church and reactionary groups and parties in many countries are organizing a massive, lavishly funded campaign to deny women the right to abortion and other forms of control over their bodies.

Discussion on the second day of the conference centered on economic discrimination, both when women are working and when unemployed. Women from several countries told of high and "hidden" unemployment of women. They hit out at discriminatory firings, pointing out that in times of economic downturn, women are first fired.

The third day of the conference opened with reports from women who are members of oppressed minorities in different parts of the

world. An American Black woman described her treatment at the hands of the "racist, sexist" welfare system in the United States.

A South African Black woman spoke of the horror of living in apartheid South Africa.

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Does the U.S. State Department employ American surplus food shipments as blackmail in dealing with the governments of impoverished countries?

In a March 19 dispatch from Washington, *New York Times* correspondent John W. Finney reports that "One United States condition for the resumption of surplus food aid to the United Arab Republic was restrictions on the production of Egyptian cotton. . . ."

Finney was told about the "secret condition" by "Congressional sources," who said it was one of the steps taken "to curb the accelerating arms race in the Middle East."

According to this propaganda, the Egyptian government was selling a good part of its cotton crop to the Soviet Union and buying in exchange large shipments of arms. As a result, certain unnamed congressmen objected to sending surplus food to Egypt to relieve hunger and distress.

"To help allay the criticism," continues Finney, "the Administration has privately informed some key Congressmen that President Nasser agreed that there would be no increase in cotton acreage in the 1966-67 season over the previous year."

Print workers continue strike

Win broad support from miners, women's organizations

By Steve Craine

Fired printers and other production workers at Britain's largest newspaper chain are organizing support among other working people for a difficult fight to save jobs. They and their unions are up against wealthy press magnate Rupert Murdoch and the Conservative Party government, both of which are determined to use this battle to hobble the union movement as a whole.

On January 24 Murdoch forced 6,000 union members out on strike when he moved production of his four newspapers to a new printing plant, demanded drastic reductions in the work force, and refused to recognize long-established rights of union members. Since then supporters of the fired unionists have turned out regularly to picket Murdoch's new plant in Wapping, East London. The plant was built like a fortress — complete with barbed wire, guard towers, and a moat — in anticipation of his war on the unions.

Support demonstrations held outside "Fort Wapping" since the strike began have drawn several thousand people each Saturday to protest Murdoch's union-busting.

Saturday, March 8 — International Women's Day — there was an especially large outpouring of labor solidarity. Taking part that day were activists from Women Against Pit Closures, which had made a vital contribution to the 1984-85 national coal miners' strike.

Ann Lilburn, national chairwoman of Women Against Pit Closures, told the printers, "You didn't desert us [during the miners' strike] and we'll not desert you."

Also addressing the March 8 rally was Arthur Scargill, president of the miners' union. He called for a mass campaign in support of the printers. "We want nothing less than the complete throwing out of the antiunion laws," he said. "If you don't take action, and take it quickly," he added, "this government will render trade unions totally ineffective."

The antiunion laws Scargill referred to were passed in 1980, early in the administration of Margaret Thatcher. Murdoch and a few other publishers have been the first British bosses to aggressively take advantage of the legal ammunition provided by these laws. They intend to prove to other British capitalists — and to the workers — the utility of these laws in breaking the unions.

Well before his confrontation with the print unions began, Murdoch had reorganized the distribution side of his operation into a legally independent, but totally owned, subsidiary. Thus, when union members employed by the distribution company joined the strike, Murdoch was quickly able to win a court ruling that their strike was a "secondary action" in viola-

tion of the 1980 Employment Act. The Society of Graphical and Allied Trades (SOGAT) was fined £25,000 (about US\$35,000) on February 11, and all its assets were placed in receivership by the court. A few days later the other major union, the National Graphical Association (NGA), was likewise fined.

The big-business magazine *Economist* commented that this strike "has shown that the law against secondary action is the most crippling of the trade-union reforms."

SOGAT General Secretary Brenda Dean has pointed out that there is no way an effective strike can be waged and remain within the new Tory labor laws. The London weekly *Socialist Action* noted, "It now appears that judges and lawyers, not their members, are to be the people who determine the policies and activities of trade unions."

Another critical factor in Murdoch's success in thus far continuing to publish, despite the mass firing of nearly all his production workers, is the agreement he reached with the leadership of the Electrical, Electronic, Telecommunications and Plumbing Union (EETPU).

While the company was negotiating with the printers late last year, officials of the EETPU secretly agreed to let their members work without a contract under the same conditions the printers had rejected. When the printers walked out, Murdoch had electricians operating his new presses within one day.

The conditions rejected by SOGAT and the NGA (and accepted by the EETPU leadership) included a legally binding no-strike pledge, open shop, complete "flexibility" for management in job assignments, and, of course, the elimination of thousands of jobs.

Despite the frequent mass demonstrations outside "Fort Wapping," the electricians have continued working.

Their strikebreaking actions pose a direct challenge to the principles of labor solidarity that the printers' unions are trying to promote through their support groups and the mass pickets.

The electricians' blatant scabbing was also brought before the General Council of the Trades Union Congress, Britain's principal labor federation. But TUC leaders voted 15 to 14 not to direct the EETPU to instruct its members to honor the printers' picket lines.

Murdoch is now bragging that his new plant and new labor relations will increase his company's profitability by 75 percent. His apparent success is encouraging other big-business publishers to move ahead with plans to introduce new technology, cut back staff size, and junk work rules. A new national daily, *Today*, hit the newsstands March 4. It is typeset,



Tony Savino

Union pickets outside Rupert Murdoch's scab printing plant in East London.

printed, and delivered by a staff of only 600.

The print bosses have tried to portray unionized printers as opposed to progress in the industry. This, along with the slander that the printers have been overpaid, is being used to try to divide the printers from other workers and to undercut popular support for the strike.

But as SOGAT National Executive Committee member Eddie Furey explained, "We are not opposed to new technology. It shouldn't, however, be about making greater profit for the likes of Murdoch, but to benefit all workers and their families by the introduction of a shorter workweek, higher wages, and the freedom that would bring. The question is not new technology, but who controls and reaps the benefit." □

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