

INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS

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Asia

Europe

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the Americas

Vol. 24, No. 12

June 16, 1986

USA \$1.25 UK £0.80



SOUTH AFRICA

- Pretoria's Terror Raids
- Speech by COSATU Leader: Jay Naidoo Explains Union Policies

Apartheid regime's commandos attacked this ANC office in Harare, Zimbabwe, while helicopter-borne troops raided Botswana and warplanes bombed refugee camp in Zambia.

Pakistan

Millions Demand End of Zia Dictatorship

Libya

A Country Transformed by Revolution and Oil

New Attacks on Tamil Minority in Sri Lanka

Pretoria's terror raids

By Ernest Harsch

For the first time, the apartheid regime of South Africa launched coordinated, simultaneous commando raids against the capitals of three neighboring African states May 19, attacking targets in Gaborone, Botswana; Harare, Zimbabwe; and Lusaka, Zambia.

Although the Pretoria regime had previously attacked Gaborone, in June 1985, these were the first openly acknowledged raids into the capitals of Zambia and Zimbabwe.

A statement by South African army chief Lt. Gen. A.J. Liebenberg claimed that the raids were aimed at "terrorist transit facilities" and "operational centers" of the outlawed African National Congress (ANC), which is leading the freedom struggle in South Africa.

But the actual targets tell a different story:

- In Botswana, helicopter-borne troops fired into a housing complex in Mogaditsane, just outside the capital. One citizen of Botswana was killed, and three people were wounded.

- In Zimbabwe, South African commandos blew up a downtown office of the ANC and attacked an ANC-owned house. Neither building was occupied, apparently because Zimbabwean security forces were able to warn the occupants in time.

- In Zambia, South African planes bombed a United Nations-run refugee camp just outside Lusaka, killing two people, one a Zambian citizen and the other a Namibian refugee. Among the wounded were two Angolan children, aged two and five.

The ANC has reported that none of its members were hurt in the attacks.

ANC President Oliver Tambo, in a May 20 interview, called the raids "characteristic of the terrorist nature of the apartheid regime. . . . Like other attacks, this latest one is wholly unprovoked, it is criminal, it is an act in violation of the territorial integrity of independent sovereign states."

Three days after these actions, South African troops conducted a more devastating attack on Angola. According to an Angolan Defense Ministry statement, South African forces mounted an artillery and armored car assault on Angolan army units in southern Angola May 22, killing 53 Angolan troops. Linking this to the raids on Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Zambia, the Angolan government condemned Pretoria's aggression against Angola as part of a "systematic policy of destabilization" in the region.

Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda has laid the blame for the raids directly on Washington. "Those in Pretoria, in Cape Town, are puppets of the Reagan administration," he said. "They only emulate what he does." Kaunda blasted the Reagan administration's policy of "constructive engagement" with Pretoria and pointed to the U.S. air strike against Libya as

an inspiration for the apartheid regime.

Pretoria has itself pointed to Washington's attack on Libya as a justification for its raids. South African President Pieter Botha claimed that international law condoned preemptive strikes against "terrorist" facilities abroad, stating, "Israel's attack on the PLO headquarters in Tunisia and America's attacks on certain installations in Libya are cases in point."

Embarrassed by this obviously accurate analogy with Washington's own aggressive actions abroad, U.S. officials sought to deny any parallels and have publicly condemned the South African raids. The White House ordered a South African military attaché to leave the United States, but it argued against any further economic sanctions against the apartheid regime.

On May 23 the U.S. and British representatives vetoed a United Nations Security Council resolution that would have sharply condemned the South African raids and imposed sanctions on Pretoria.

This stance flies in the face of sharp international condemnations of Pretoria's attacks, as well as increasing calls for economic sanctions and embargoes.

Commonwealth Secretary-General Shridath Ramphal termed the raids "flagrant acts of war" and called for sanctions. A meeting of the foreign ministers of Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Angola, Tanzania, and Mozambique did likewise, and pledged continued support to the ANC. The Danish government, on May 30, banned all commercial links with South Africa. The Argentine government has broken all diplomatic ties in protest against the raids.

Within South Africa itself, some 4,000 students held a rally at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg to protest the attacks. The Congress of South African Trade Unions, the largest union federation in the country, condemned the raids as "illegal actions" aimed at "destabilizing our subcontinent." The National Union of South African Students, the main white university student

group, blasted the assaults as a "flagrant violation of the sovereignty of neighbouring states."

Some liberal capitalist critics of the apartheid regime have expressed puzzlement at its reasons for carrying out these particular actions. "Militarily, the gains are piffling or irrelevant," the editor of the Johannesburg *Business Day* complained. "Politically and economically, the cost may well be ruinous."

Aside from its general goal of striking at the ANC wherever possible, Pretoria seems to have had several motivations in mind.

One was to make a gesture toward ultrarightist political currents that have accused the Botha regime of being too "soft" on domestic protests and of making too many concessions to Black demands. Reflecting the desperation of a layer of white supporters of the apartheid system, semifascist groups like the Afrikaner Resistance Movement have become more active in recent months. The raids on Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Zambia were generally popular among those to the right of Botha's National Party. As an ANC statement pointed out, "Botha is trying to convince his rightist followers that he is still in control of the situation."

The attacks were also in response to a recent negotiating effort spearheaded by several prominent political figures from British Commonwealth member-states, who have been seeking to arrange talks between Pretoria and the ANC. By striking out at three Commonwealth countries that have provided assistance to the ANC, the Botha regime has once again signaled its rejection of any such talks. In a May 21 speech, Botha emphasized that the attacks on the three countries were only "the first installment."

In answer to Pretoria's intransigence, the ANC has called for greater armed struggle and popular mobilization against the apartheid regime. In a May 21 broadcast to South Africa over the ANC's Radio Freedom, Oliver Tambo called for mass participation in the general strike set for June 16, the 10th anniversary of the 1976 Soweto youth rebellions. "Let every mine, factory, farm, and white home be without labor," Tambo declared. "Let every university and school be emptied of its youth. Let every shop close its doors. Let every community strike a blow for freedom." □

Polarization in Philippines

By Doug Jenness

On May 25 Philippine President Corazon Aquino announced the formation of a commission to draft a new constitution for the country. She named 44 people to the body, leaving five slots vacant for opposition forces that had supported former president Ferdinand Marcos.

The following day Blas Ople, a longtime labor minister in Marcos' government and member of parliament, announced that he and four associates would fill the vacant seats.

Ople broke with Marcos' New Society Movement following the former president's flight from the country in February, and, with a small group of supporters, formed the Nationalist Party.

The 44 members appointed by Aquino include clergymen, politicians, lawyers, academics, a retired general, a student leader, and other Aquino supporters. A leader of a union federation that had been linked to Marcos was named to represent labor. Two members of Bayan (New Patriotic Alliance), a

Communist Party-led coalition of mass-based organizations, were also appointed. They are Jaime Tadeo, a peasant leader, and Lino Brocka, a film director and regional officer of Bayan.

No known leader of the Communist Party of the Philippines or the CPP's guerrilla formation, the New People's Army, were named to the commission. Speculation in the press that CPP or NPA figures might be considered for the commission had drawn sharp criticism from U.S. government officials.

Aquino urged the commission, which convened on June 2, to produce a new constitution in 90 days. She said it would quickly be put to a referendum vote, paving the way for elections by the end of the year or early next year.

In March Aquino abolished the National Assembly, in which Marcos supporters had held a majority. She issued Presidential Proclamation No. 3 establishing a provisional "Freedom Constitution" giving her absolute legislative power until a new constitution is drafted. This gives her the authority to remove Marcos officials from local and provincial positions and replace them with her own supporters.

Many Marcos officials have fiercely resisted these dismissals and have organized big demonstrations against them. These reactionary actions have presented a serious challenge to workers' and peasants' organizations to deepen their independent mobilizations in defense of democratic rights.

Following the elimination of the National Assembly, some organizations, including Bayan, called for establishing a democratically elected constitutional commission instead of one handpicked by the president.

According to the May 26 *New York Times*, "Mrs. Aquino has answered those who criticize her decision to appoint the members by saying that the country cannot afford another election at this time and that an election would slow down the transition to a constitutional government."

Aquino's new constitution commission is sharply counterposed to the workers' and peasants' fight to participate in the country's decision-making. Their massive mobilizations, which played a decisive role in toppling the Marcos tyranny, gave them new-found confidence to press for extending and using democratic rights. They have made important conquests, but the fight continues.

The Task Force Detainees of the Philippines, a human rights organization, reported in April that nearly 500 political detainees are still being held. Moreover, many political organizations, including the CPP, are still illegal.

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. They could become a forum in which to debate alternative proposals, including the demand for a thoroughgoing land re-

form and removal of U.S. military bases in the Philippines.

In the three months since the Marcos dictatorship was brought down, political polarization has been deepening. There is a growing gap between, on the one hand, Aquino and the politicians and military officials who support her and are pressing to consolidate her regime, and, on the other hand, the needs and expectations of working people who have been drawn into political life for the first time in many years.

Aquino needed the support of workers and peasants to get rid of Marcos, but she doesn't want the weight of their organizations brought

to bear on the drafting of the constitution or anything else.

Rather, she equivocates and retreats in the face of pro-Marcos demonstrations. She urges peasant guerrillas to put down their arms in order to have a cease-fire and amnesty even though the private armies of the plantation bosses continue to wage war against them.

The rightward motion of the new Philippine regime challenges the popular organizations to depend on their own independent mobilizations to purge all the remnants of the Marcos tyranny, carry on the fight for democratic rights, and create the best conditions for advancing the fight for social and economic gains. □

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

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

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INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS (ISSN 0162-5594) is published biweekly except for one issue in August for \$30 per year by 408 Printing and Publishing Corporation, 408 West Street, New York, NY 10014. Second-class postage paid at New York, NY. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

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

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

To Subscribe:

U.S. and Canada: Send US\$30.00, drawn on a U.S. bank, for a one-year subscription. Correspondence should be addressed to: Intercontinental Press, 410 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014. Telephone (212) 929-6933.

Britain and Ireland: Send £20 for a one-year subscription. Make checks payable to Pathfinder Press. Address all correspondence to: Pathfinder Press, 47 The Cut, London SE1 8LL, England. Telephone (01) 261-1354.

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Write to New York for subscription rates to all other countries.

Millions demand end of Zia dictatorship

Rallies across country greet opposition leader

By Steve Craine

Since the official end of martial law in Pakistan in December 1985, there has been a rising wave of public opposition to the regime of Gen. Mohammed Zia ul-Haq. The protest activities mushroomed and gained international attention as millions of Pakistanis turned out to cheer the return of the most prominent opposition politician, Benazir Bhutto in mid-April.

Bhutto is the daughter of deposed Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who was ousted by General Zia in 1977, ushering in eight and a half years of martial law. Bhutto was executed in 1979 for alleged conspiracy to murder the father of a political rival five years earlier.

Even before Benazir Bhutto's return from exile in Europe, protest actions calling for free elections and other democratic demands were on the upswing. Rallies of more than 50,000 were held in Lahore in January, Rawalpindi in March, and Karachi in April on the anniversary of Bhutto's execution and just a few days before his daughter's return to the country.

These protests and many smaller ones have been led by the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD), a coalition of 11 political parties. The major component of the MRD is Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party (PPP), which had been the ruling party before Zia's 1977 coup and remains the largest party in the country.

On March 26 the first political general strike in eight years was reported in the Liyazi section of Karachi. The strike was called to protest the killing of a student during a demonstration of the unemployed on March 24. Organized by the newly formed Baluchi Unity Front, the strike attracted support not only from Baluchis (the oppressed people of southwestern Pakistan), but from many workers of the other nationalities living in Karachi, Pakistan's largest city.

A Karachi daily described the impact of the strike: "All the shopping centres, businesses, government offices and banks remained closed. Young people put up barricades and lit bonfires to obstruct the traffic. Public transport remained off the roads."

Other workers have also used the slight relaxation of repression to organize new unions. An incident at a Lahore hospital, for example, led to a provincewide nurses' strike and the formation of a new union of nurses.

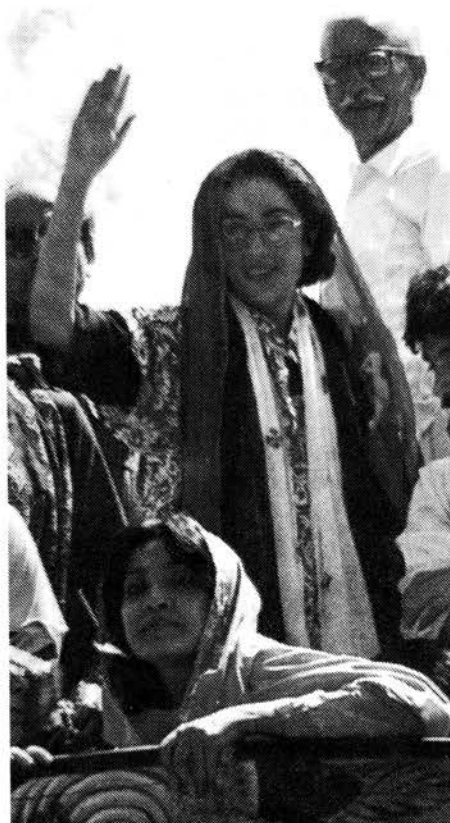
Expectations have been raised by the formal dismantling of martial law and a number of other tentative steps taken by the regime over the past year and a half. But since most of these measures have been contradictory and limited by new restrictions, popular pressure

has continued for greater democratic rights.

Benazir Bhutto's return provided a focus for this protest activity. Crowds at Bhutto's rallies dwarfed the record-breaking turnouts at the demonstrations earlier this year. Estimates of the largest of her rallies, in Lahore, ranged upwards from 500,000. Throngs of supporters lined the roads to greet her as she toured the Punjabi countryside outside Lahore, the traditional PPP stronghold. In Sind and North-West Frontier Province, participation exceeded both the organizers' and the government's expectations.

'Another dictator must go'

At Lahore, Bhutto compared the situation in Pakistan to the recent mass upsurges that overthrew dictators in Haiti and the Philippines. "Marcos is gone, the president of Haiti is gone, and now another dictator must go," she said. "The time has come," she added, "to be united and push out the dictator who has ruled us for these nine years." The crowd chanted "Zia out!



Benazir Bhutto, recently returned from exile, greets crowds of opponents of Zia dictatorship during tour through Pakistani countryside in April.

Zia must go!" and "Zia is a dog!"

The program Bhutto has put forward for getting rid of Zia hinges on the call for elections before the end of the year. She called her enthusiastic reception in April a "people's referendum" for new elections.

Although a National Assembly was elected in February 1985, political parties were excluded, and the main opposition groups called for a boycott of the election.

While declaring her commitment to bring about a "peaceful and graceful transfer of power," Bhutto has also stated that one way or another the change must occur. "There will be elections this year and Zia will go," she said in Islamabad, the capital. "The question is, 'Does Zia go gracefully or does Zia not go gracefully?'"

Bhutto has used the massive mobilizations of her supporters to lay down a challenge to Zia. Following her stormy welcome to Lahore, she pointed out, "With that kind of following, I could have taken over by force, burnt the cantonments, burnt the ministers' houses, and taken over the secretariat. But our party is against violent means. I hope Zia gets the message now and does not try to dig in his heels."

Demonstrators denounce Washington

At a number of Bhutto's rallies, opposition to the military regime was linked to denunciations of its backers in Washington. "Hang Zia, hang Reagan!" was one of the chants raised by demonstrators. Several U.S. flags were burned in Lahore.

Bhutto herself has tried to avoid antagonizing the U.S. government, which sends large amounts of economic and military aid to Pakistan and which she hopes may become convinced to facilitate Zia's departure as it ultimately did in the cases of Duvalier in Haiti and Marcos in the Philippines.

But the Pakistani masses who are rallying behind Bhutto have deeply felt grievances against the U.S. government — for its role in supporting the dictatorship and virtually turning parts of Pakistan over to Afghan counter-revolutionaries. A major criticism Bhutto faces within the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy is that she is too soft on Washington.

The MRD describes itself as a broad united front for the restoration of democratic rights and the release of political prisoners. It includes working-class and capitalist parties, as well as parties organized along religious lines. It does not project itself as a political party.

Since the MRD was set up in 1981, the Pakistan People's Party has dominated the movement. But following Bhutto's return from exile

in April, the PPP's policies and Bhutto's campaign have overshadowed the program of the united front even more.

Bhutto's own strategy includes invoking a largely rewritten version of the period of her father's administration and appealing to many figures in the present government. She portrays her father as a martyr for the cause of democracy and paints the years of his rule as a much more progressive and prosperous period than they were in reality for most Pakistanis.

Bhutto has been only mildly critical of some of the civilian politicians in Zia's government and in the National Assembly, including the prime minister, Mohammed Khan Junejo, who was appointed by Zia. Maushahid Hussain Sayed, editor of the Islamabad daily *The Muslim*, among other Pakistani commentators, has written that she is counting on an alliance of political figures with some elements of the military to ease the way to Zia's ouster.

A leader of the National Liberation Front (QMA), a Karachi-based component of the MRD, commented that "it will be tragic indeed if she were to compromise with the army to remove this government since this will only mean a change of face and not of the system, and the army will use her and the PPP as a kind of sandbag in its own defence."

Nevertheless, Bhutto's campaign, especially because of the size of the crowds she has attracted, has done a lot to inspire other struggles for democratic rights. She is now seen as the symbol of opposition to the regime and the proof that such opposition is possible.

General Zia has tried to dismiss the significance of the support shown for his rival. "This kind of thing isn't surprising," he said. "The steam always blows when the lid is taken off the vessel of boiling water."

But the long-simmering antagonism against Zia's rule is based on real grievances that have not been addressed by his lifting the lid a trifle.

Origins of Zia's dictatorship

Zia took power in July 1977 in an attempt to impose "order" in a period of growing political ferment and large-scale mobilizations against the government of Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto.

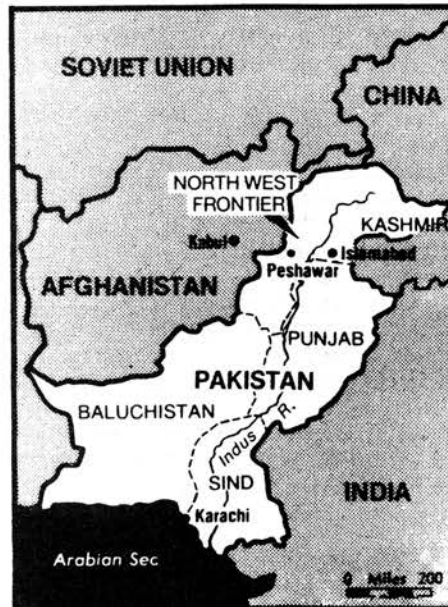
Despite Bhutto's populist and even socialist rhetoric, his government had been unable to improve the conditions of the masses. His rigging of a March 1977 election provoked a confrontation with the largest opposition grouping, the rightist-led Pakistan National Alliance. He brutally repressed workers' protests as well as agitation against the electoral fraud. But from March to July, mobilizations and clashes with the government increased.

General Zia took power with the stated goal to "defuse the situation." He pledged that military rule would be temporary, but the promised elections were repeatedly postponed. Meanwhile, he dismantled the progressive programs instituted by Bhutto's government and increased the level of repression.

The new government attempted to focus the diverse components of the opposition toward Bhutto as an individual. The former prime

minister was arrested immediately, charged with corruption and murder, and eventually executed, despite a big campaign in Pakistan and internationally to save his life.

One of the first acts of the military government under Zia was to ban all trade union and political activities under penalties of up to seven years' imprisonment and 10 lashes with the whip. Public floggings and punishments such as amputating the hands of accused thieves were instituted in the name of "Islamization" of the penal system. Restrictions on freedom of speech and the press were also im-



posed.

Zia and the military ruled through martial law decrees. Martial Law Regulation No. 13 declared, "No person shall . . . bring into hatred or contempt or excite or attempt to excite disaffection towards the Armed Forces or any members thereof." Such decrees were not subject to any form of challenge or review.

Pakistan's deteriorating economic prospects have also fueled opposition to the government. The 100 million people of the country have a per capita income of less than US\$300 per year, and the foreign debt stands at about \$10 billion. The cost of servicing this debt has become increasingly onerous.

Although not an oil producer, Pakistan has been hard hit by the declining price of oil on the world market. This is because more than 2 million Pakistanis had been employed abroad, mainly in the oil-producing countries of the Middle East. As much as \$3 billion a year was being remitted by these Pakistani workers to their families at home, a considerable contribution to an economy that had a total output in 1982 of \$32 billion. Close to one-third of all Pakistani families have directly benefited from such remittances.

In the past year, many of these oil jobs overseas have dried up. Pakistan is losing this revenue, and hundreds of thousands of workers

are coming home looking for employment. Many of the returning workers now have skills for which there is absolutely no market in Pakistan because Pakistani industrialization programs have never taken off.

The government also fears the loss of the considerable income it has derived from sending Pakistani soldiers as mercenaries to serve in foreign armies, especially in the Persian Gulf region. In 1984 it had such contacts with 22 governments. Saudi Arabia alone paid about \$2 billion a year for two Pakistani divisions.

War in Afghanistan

An additional strain on the Pakistani economy is the presence of some 2 to 3 million Afghan refugees in the country, primarily in the North-West Frontier Province. While some Pakistanis are politically opposed to the counterrevolutionary war against Afghanistan and the U.S. backing for the armed rightist groups active among the refugees, many more Pakistanis simply view the Afghans in Pakistan as competitors for jobs and scarce resources.

The Afghans in the border areas live mainly off the huge amounts of aid sent from the United States. Some also profit from the drug trade and extortion, functioning almost completely outside Pakistani law. U.S. aid to Afghan refugees in Pakistan amounts to more per capita than the average income of Pakistani citizens.

Some figures in the military and the government have grown rich as middlemen between Washington and the Afghan counterrevolutionaries. The Pakistani military is in charge of transshipping arms, most of which come through the port of Karachi, to the rightists' bases on the border. A certain amount of this matériel never reaches its intended destination. According to the Dec. 9, 1985, *Time* magazine, "there are suspicions of a tacit understanding with Washington under which Pakistan can appropriate what it deems useful."

The Afghan counterrevolutionary war is also responsible for winning the Zia government much larger amounts of direct aid from Washington. Since the Afghan revolution of 1978 and the fall of the shah of Iran the following year, the Zia regime has become by far the most important U.S. ally left in the region. Pakistan's special role as a conduit for arms and a staging area for Afghan antigovernment forces adds to its importance to Washington.

Zia seeks more aid

A five-year agreement ending in 1986 provided U.S. military and economic assistance totaling \$3.2 billion. Zia has requested twice that amount for the next five years, and already the Reagan administration has proposed a \$4.02 billion, six-year aid package.

General Zia's gradual removal of the most objectionable features of martial law in the face of growing domestic opposition may also help to improve Pakistan's international image and provide some political cover for the continuation of this aid. As correspondent Steven

Weisman wrote in the Dec. 31, 1985, *New York Times*, "Washington has put enormous faith in General Zia's actions in recent years, hoping that these steps will impress Pakistan's critics in Congress and lead to the renewal of large amounts of American military and economic aid."

Democracy Zia style

The first step in Zia's "democratization" campaign was a referendum held in December 1984. Presented as a plebiscite on the legitimacy of Zia's rule, the referendum was worded in such a way as to make it impossible to draw any serious conclusions from the results.

The text of the referendum read, "Whether the people of Pakistan endorse the process initiated by General Mohammed Zia ul-Haq, the president of Pakistan, to bring in laws of Pakistan in conformity with the injunctions of Islam . . . and for the preservation of the ideology of Pakistan, for the continuation and consolidation of that process and for the smooth and orderly transfer of power to the elected representatives of the people."

The government claimed a turnout of 65 percent and a yes vote of 98 percent. The PPP, which through the MRD organized an illegal boycott of the referendum, estimated the actual level of participation in the vote at only about 6 percent. Low figures were reported in most of the West European press, though not in the major U.S. news media. The PPP further charged that widespread ballot box stuffing and other fraudulent practices occurred.

Zia declared that the referendum, despite its ambiguous wording, constituted a legal mandate for him to continue in office for another five years.

Two months later, elections were held for a National Assembly — the first to be elected since 1977, just before Zia's coup.

But even before the newly elected nonparty assembly could be convened, Zia decreed sweeping amendments to the 1973 constitution, which had been superseded by martial law since 1977. The amendments allowed the president to simultaneously hold the post of army chief of staff. They gave him the power to license or disqualify political parties, veto any legislation passed by the assembly, and dissolve that body and reinstitute decree rule at any time at his discretion.

Those clauses of the 1973 constitution that guaranteed fundamental political rights and personal freedoms were held in abeyance. Unlike the 1973 system, the new constitution provides for a unitary government with a powerful president at its head. This eliminated the limited guarantees of participation that were formerly provided, at least in theory, to the oppressed regions and tribal groups under the less centralized, parliamentary system that existed before 1977.

However, even these constitutional changes were meaningless as long as martial law continued. In August 1985, following a demonstration of tens of thousands at the funeral of Shahnawaz Bhutto, a son of the former prime

minister, who died under suspicious circumstances in France, the government announced that martial law could be lifted by the end of the year.

Although this had been promised many times before, Zia now faced greater pressures to actually do so. He also had the mechanisms in place for a continuation of his regime under a civilian cover.

Martial law ends

The formal end to martial law, December 30, was preceded by the arrest of some 30 opposition leaders. Demonstrations sponsored by the MRD in several major cities earlier that month were teargassed by the police. And one of the last actions of the now-disbanded military courts was to sentence 26 political prisoners to death.

General Zia himself was quite blunt about the limitations of the change he envisioned for the country. He pointed out that the civilian government would be an extension of the military one, and threatened, "Anyone trying to derail the train of democracy will have to face terrible consequences."

Specific measures accompanying the end to martial law made its limitations obvious. Zia granted himself and other members of the former military government immunity from prosecution for all actions taken in the martial law period. Decrees and orders promulgated during that time were declared "indemnified," that is, incorporated into civil law without possibility of legal challenge.

Participation in electoral politics in the new "democratic" setup will also be severely lim-

ited. In addition to having the power to deny registration to any political party, Zia has already ruled that anyone who boycotted the February 1985 National Assembly elections will have to wait until 1990 to participate in politics. Members of the nonparty National Assembly who join any of the new political parties will automatically lose their seats, according to a rule against "floor-crossing."

But despite all these limitations, the mass movement against the dictatorship has won a substantial shift in the political climate in Pakistan. The fact that many Pakistanis have been able to rally openly and attack Zia directly and personally without reprisals is an indication of this change.

The easing of military rule that has been won in the past several months has heightened Pakistanis' expectations for genuine democratic rights. The demand for free elections, which Bhutto is putting at the center of her campaign, has tremendous appeal, given the long denial of this right. This has already limited Zia's ability to employ the old methods of repression.

The editor of an Urdu-language national daily newspaper explained to the *Washington Post* in April, "I have not seen this level of democracy before in Pakistan. You can go to a public meeting and listen to the speaker, and then walk home without fear of being caught by police with *lathis* (batons) or tear gas or getting beaten by thugs."

This is a real gain for the Pakistani people, and they are stepping up their fight to move on to the complete elimination of the Zia dictatorship. □

Norway's Labor government devalues krone

Shortly after becoming prime minister in May, Norwegian Labor Party leader Gro Harlem Brundtland devalued the krone 12 percent. This action drastically reduces the buying power of Norwegians. Brundtland has attempted to sweeten this bitter pill by proposing legislation to limit tax-free profits on speculation.

Brundtland heads a coalition government that includes the Labor Party and the Socialist Left Party. Her government was installed following the failure of the former government coalition, headed by Conservative Prime Minister Kare Willoch, to win a vote of confidence on April 30.

Willoch had asked for this vote when he proposed a gasoline tax equivalent to 21 U.S. cents per gallon. This proposal was part of an austerity package that also included reducing social services. The Labor Party, then in opposition, rejected the gasoline tax, arguing that it unfairly hit people with lower incomes.

The former coalition headed by Willoch included the Conservative Party, the Christian Democrats, and the Center Party. These parties still hold 78 of the parliament's 157 seats, while the Labor Party and its bloc hold only 77 seats. But on the gasoline tax, the Progress

Party, with two seats, voted against the government's proposal, defeating a key piece of the conservatives' austerity program. The new Labor-led coalition government thus remains a minority government depending on a shaky bloc with the Progress Party.

Willoch's government, which had replaced the Labor government as a result of the 1981 elections, was reelected in September 1985. But since that election several important developments have occurred.

In the weeks before the April 30 no-confidence vote, more than 100,000 oil workers had gone out on strike. They were supporting the struggle of food service workers on the offshore oil rigs for a 28 percent pay increase to bring their wage rates in line with those of other oil workers.

Moreover, in the past six months the Norwegian economic situation has worsened as the result of the sharp drop in oil prices. For a long time Norway was less deeply affected by the economic crisis that has hit the rest of capitalist Europe because its huge income from oil exports served to buffer it. But the recent oil glut and drop in prices has resulted in a gigantic loss of revenues. □

Central American presidents meet

Ortega calls summit a 'first step'

By Harvey McArthur

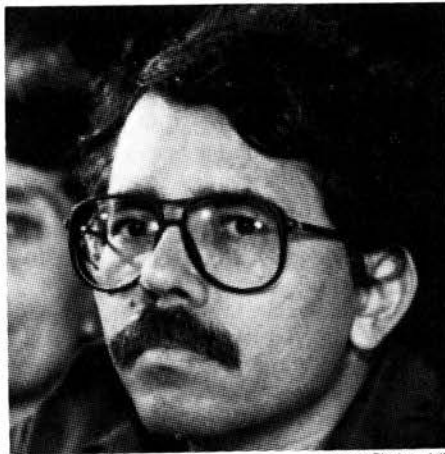
MANAGUA — The May 24–25 meeting of Central American presidents in Esquipulas, Guatemala, marked an advance in confronting the problems of war and the economic crisis affecting the region, according to Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega.

"In more than four years of crisis maintained by the U.S. government, we the leaders of the Central American countries had not managed to meet," Ortega told a May 26 press conference here.

The private meetings held by the presidents of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua in Esquipulas were thus an important "first step" that "showed the desires of the peoples and governments of Central America for peace and dialogue," Ortega said. "Not all the problems could be resolved," he added, "but it was the beginning of a dialogue that helps us find a way out of this situation."

The five presidents signed a joint declaration in which they agreed to "formalize the presidential meetings as a necessary and useful means to analyze . . . and seek solutions" to the problems of the area. They agreed to create a Central American parliament, to be elected by citizens of the five nations. They affirmed their desire to "review, update, and stimulate" the economic integration of the region. They called for joint efforts to confront the problems of foreign debt, deteriorating terms of trade, and need for more advanced technology in the region.

The Esquipulas declaration states that peace can "only be the fruit of an authentic democratic, pluralistic, and participatory process,



Nelson Blackstock/IP

DANIEL ORTEGA

which implies the promotion of social justice, respect for human rights, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the nations." Ortega reported that, despite much discussion of these points, there was no agreement on the forms that democracy and political pluralism should take.

In the declaration, the five presidents also affirmed their willingness to sign the Contadora treaty, but pointed out that there were "unresolved aspects such as military maneuvers, arms control, and verification procedures." Ortega reported that the presidents agreed not to be held to a June 6 deadline for signing the Contadora agreement, as had been proposed by the president of Colombia, but would continue negotiations "to exhaust discussions on the pending points." In the Esquipulas meetings, Ortega pointed out that en-

ding U.S. government support to the *contras* was "fundamental" to establishing peace in the region.

At the May 26 press conference, Ortega explained a new Nicaraguan proposal to advance the Contadora discussions by starting negotiations on offensive weapons. This demonstrated Nicaragua's continued willingness to seek a negotiated end to the fighting in Central America, he said.

Nicaragua's proposal includes a list of 14 categories of offensive weapons that it is prepared to "reduce, limit, control, and eliminate in the framework of the current political negotiations to achieve peace." Any limits would have to apply to all Central American countries simultaneously, Ortega stressed. All countries also had the right to defensive weapons to protect against any aggression, he added.

The arms Nicaragua proposed discussing are: military aircraft, military helicopters, military airfields, battle tanks, heavy mortars larger than 120mm, self-propelled anti-aircraft artillery, multiple rocket launchers larger than 122mm, heavy artillery larger than 160mm, self-propelled artillery, surface-to-surface missiles mounted on warships, and naval vessels of more than 100 metric tons displacement or 40 meters length. Nicaragua also proposed discussing international military maneuvers, foreign military bases, and foreign military advisers.

In response to questions by journalists, Ortega explained that Nicaragua would not discuss rifles or other weapons that have been distributed to Nicaragua's workers and peasants to defend their country. "When we talk of 200,000 or 300,000 armed people in Nicaragua," he explained, "this is not an army that can invade another country, but simply an entire people armed and ready to defend their land from imperialist aggression." □

New magazine appears

The first issue of *International Marxist Review*, an English-language magazine published under the auspices of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, has just appeared. The magazine, which is published in conjunction with the French-language *Quatrième Internationale*, has announced that it plans to come out three times a year.

The contents of the first issue are: "What is the theory of permanent revolution?" by Ernest Mandel; "The land question in Latin America today," by Margarito Montes Parra; and "Reflections on the Polish revolution," by Zbigniew Kowalewski. Also included is "Black revolt in South Africa," a resolution adopted by the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International in February 1985.

Airmail subscription rates are: Britain and Europe £8.50 or 100 French francs; all other countries US\$18. Surface mail for all countries is £8.50, 90 FF, or \$14.

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New attacks on Tamil minority

Government uses 'terrorism' charge to restrict rights

By Malik Miah

[The following article is reprinted from the May 30 issue of the U.S. revolutionary socialist newsweekly the *Militant*.]

* * *

The South Asian island-nation of Sri Lanka off the southern coast of India has been in the news lately.

On May 4 an Air Lanka jet preparing to leave the capital city of Colombo's Katunayake International Airport was blown up. Twenty-one people, mostly tourists from Europe and Japan, died, and 41 others were injured in the explosion.

Four days later the interior of Colombo's Central Telegraph Office was hit by an explosion, killing 12 people and wounding more than 100.

While no individual or group claimed responsibility for the explosions, the government immediately charged it was the work of Tamil "terrorists."

Tamils are a discriminated-against national minority. Of Sri Lanka's 16 million people, 75 percent are Sinhalese, 18 percent Tamil. The Tamils are mainly concentrated in the northern and eastern provinces.

Since the late 1970s, a number of Tamil groups have waged an armed struggle to end the Sinhalese-dominated government's rule of the northern and eastern provinces, declaring for "Eelam" — an independent Tamil homeland.

The government has responded with repression, including military occupation of the Tamil areas. It has also attacked the democratic rights of left-wing and liberal Sinhalese in the southern part of the country who support Tamil self-determination and oppose the government's broadside attacks on civil liberties under the guise of fighting "terrorism."

In a May Day speech, Sri Lanka's president, Junius Jayewardene, reaffirmed his government's policy of a military solution, instead of meeting the just demands of the Tamil people. According to *Sri Lanka News*, "The president drew rounds of applause when he said that a military solution was the answer to a military question. One cannot preach non-violence to those who come with the gun."

Taking advantage of recent factional warfare between two Tamil armed groups — the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization (TELO) — in which the leader of TELO was killed, National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali repeated the government's charge that the Tamil guerrilla groups are "criminals" and called on the Indian government to help the Sri Lankan government find a

solution to the "terrorist" problem.

Jayewardene also demanded that the Indian government close down offices and bases of Sri Lankan Tamil organizations based in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu.

The Indian government favors a political solution to the civil conflict between the Sri Lankan government and the Tamil minority. Many Indians are supportive of the Tamil democratic struggle because of the ethnic links between the 50 million Indian Tamils in Tamil Nadu and those in Sri Lanka. The Indian government is also concerned about the Sri Lankan government's growing military ties with the Israeli and Pakistani governments.

Despite this pressure from New Delhi, the Sri Lankan government continues its drive to crush the democratic struggle of the Tamil minority. This has led to a rise in the number of political prisoners and "disappeared" in the country.

A May Day statement by the civil rights organization, Campaign for the Release of Political Prisoners (CROPP), reported that there are more than 3,000 people detained under the government's Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) and emergency regulations. The detainees are held in prisons and camps throughout the island.

The overwhelming majority of these prisoners are Tamils, "some who have been held for even over 18 months — the maximum time stipulated in the PTA."

CROPP reports that many prisoners are physically harassed and tortured; some have died in police cells. [See texts of CROPP statements below.]

The problem of the "disappeared" was also noted in a report from the U.S. State Department. It said that "reported disappearances rose during 1985. There were a number of reports of the disappearance of young Tamil

males who have been arrested and taken in for questioning by the security forces."

The State Department reported that Amnesty International estimated in October 1985 that "180 such detainees had 'disappeared' in recent months."

According to information provided to the *Militant* by Qadri Ismail, a reporter for a major English-language daily, the *Island*, there has been an increase in arrests in the South. Those apprehended are mainly Sinhalese youths and persons associated with human rights groups, such as the Movement for Inter Racial Justice and Equality (MIRJE).

MIRJE advocates a peaceful, just, and democratic solution to the ethnic problem. This, it says, is only possible when the government ends its repression, meets with the recognized Tamil leadership, and begins serious negotiations toward finding "a just political solution."

CROPP recently issued a major statement taking up the new wave of arrests in the South. It called on "progressive and democratic organizations, political parties and trade unions, students and intellectuals to exert pressure on the government to compel it to desist from the use of these laws [PTA and emergency regulations] to persecute their political opponents and, in connection with these arrests, to act in conformity with the normal process of law."

The statement was signed by leaders of all the major opposition parties, including the former governing party, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party. In addition, central leaders of major trade unions, left-wing groups, and scores of prominent academics — most of whom are Sinhalese — signed the statement.

This broad support of democratic rights is an indication of the growing opposition to the United National Party-led government's repressive policies. While many of the signers do not support self-determination for the Tamil minority, they favor a political solution and oppose government violations of civil rights.

CROPP is calling for international solidarity with their campaign to free political prisoners and defend the democratic rights of all Sri Lankans.

Statements of support can be sent to CROPP, c/o MIRJE, Aloe Avenue, Colombo 3, Sri Lanka. □



Tamil guerrilla fighters.

Political repression in Sri Lanka

More than 3,000 political prisoners on island

[The following are two statements issued by the Campaign for the Release of Political Prisoners (CROPP), a civil liberties group based in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The group works closely with the Movement for Inter Racial Justice and Equality, which has come out in defense of the oppressed Tamil people of Sri Lanka. The first of the CROPP statements reprinted below was issued in February. The second was issued on May 1. Some 25,000 copies of it, printed in Sinhala-language leaflets, were distributed at various May Day rallies.]

* * *

The recent wave of arrests in the South of political activists of opposition parties and groups marks a new stage in the erosion of civil liberties and democratic rights in Sri Lanka. Through this repressive course, the state is seeking to resolve the mounting problems created by its political and economic policies, of which the most pressing and serious are the following:

1. The hardships and mass discontent arising out of continuing inflation, rising living costs, cutbacks in social welfare, unemployment, and corruption.
2. The tensions created among workers, sections of the peasantry, and students through the adoption by the state of specific strategies of economic and social control and the attempt to meet such tensions by the repression of these groups and their representative organisations.
3. The failure of the government to provide a peaceful, just, and democratic solution to the ethnic problem, resulting not only in the daily tragic loss of lives on both sides, but also in the growing militarisation of our society, the diversion of an increasing proportion of public funds to military expenditure, and the imposition of further economic burdens on the people.
4. The increasing alienation of the state from the people in consequence of the postponement of general elections through the device of a referendum.

However the attempt to resolve these problems by extending and intensifying repression will not resolve the crisis of our society but will only deepen its tensions and conflicts.

Since the new arrests have taken place under the special powers that the government wields, both under emergency regulations and the Prevention of Terrorism Act, there are serious questions which arise regarding the rights as well as the safety of persons taken into custody. Detainees can, under these powers be kept in any place the authorities choose, so that they do not enjoy the minimum rights and safeguards enjoyed by those held in normal prisons. They can, at the will of the authorities, be cut off from access to relatives,

friends, and lawyers, who remain ignorant even of their place of detention. Under these conditions they can be defenceless against torture or even deprivation of life.

Further, where the government is free to arrest and detain persons without the obligation which exists under the normal law to produce them before a court, there is a great danger that these powers can be used against members of opposition parties and other organisations which are viewed with disfavour by the authorities so as to stamp out legitimate democratic rights of dissent and criticism.

We call upon progressive and democratic organisations, political parties and trade unions, students and intellectuals to exert pressure on the government to compel it to desist from the use of these laws to persecute their political opponents and, in connection with these arrests, to act in conformity with the normal process of law.

In the meantime, we call upon the government to make public the names of all those arrested, to give due access to families and lawyers to ensure that they are held in humane conditions and free from harassment, physical coercion, torture, and death. We also urge that inquiries and investigations be expeditiously conducted and the detainees either released or produced before the judiciary, under the normal law.

* * *

The Campaign for the Release of Political Prisoners has consistently drawn the attention of the people of Sri Lanka and of its state to the plight of those detained under the Prevention of Terrorism Act [PTA] and the emergency regulations.

A rough estimate indicates that there are now over 3,000 such detainees in prisons and camps throughout the island. Of these, 230 Tamils and 37 Sinhalese are at Welikade, approximately 2,000 Tamils are at Boossa, and the rest are in army and police detention camps in the North and East and in police stations in the South. There are among these detainees some who have been held for even over 18 months — the maximum time stipulated in the PTA by when a detainee must be produced before a magistrate or released.

The conditions under which these detainees are kept are abominable, particularly in the army camps and police cells. As a detainee himself has written:

"The places of detention vary from lock-ups at police stations and army camps to special detention camps for 'terrorists.' Some are also being detained at the remand prison, Colombo. Many of them are denied even the elementary facilities provided to remand prisoners. For example, many suspects detained at the police

stations are being kept 24 hours inside the cell, thus depriving them of even a few minutes of fresh air. Moreover they are being kept along with common criminal suspects and, in certain cases, even with lunatics."

Such conditions of detention make possible physical harassment and torture of detainees. Some deaths in police cells indicate that such harassment has indeed taken place.

The State has been extremely secretive about the correct number or whereabouts of these detainees. Even the monitoring committee into cease-fire violations, which was authorised to visit prisons and detention camps and report on their conditions, was, as far as we know, unable to get a complete list or even an accurate figure of those detained.

CROPP's efforts to obtain precise information have also been equally unsuccessful. CROPP's efforts to alert the public to this situation have also been thwarted. Even though there is supposedly no censorship of newspapers now, CROPP has been unable to secure any publicity for its activities in the three main newspaper groups; paid advertisements containing its statement have been refused by all these groups.

Reports indicate that arrests still continue. CROPP is aware of such recent arrests; in a number of them, next of kin have yet been unable to obtain precise information as to why or where they are being held.

CROPP believes that the PTA and emergency regulations are being used by the government to stifle the people's democratic rights of expression. This is another step on the authoritarian path that the government has been treading for the last six or seven years and signals a further erosion of the democratic rights of the people of Sri Lanka.

The continued violation of human rights in Sri Lanka has evoked an adverse response from the international community. Not only organisations such as Amnesty International or the Standing Committee on Sri Lanka headed by Dame Judith Hart, but also bodies such as the U.S. Congress have expressed their dismay at this situation.

With the assistance of other sympathetic organisations like the Movement for Inter Racial Justice and Equality, CROPP is resorting to all possible means of redress available within the present legal framework. A number of habeas corpus applications are being filed, and cases have been taken before the PTA Advisory Board. These efforts however, remain insufficient in the face of the legal powers that have been appropriated by the state.

It is in this context that CROPP calls upon all political parties, mass organisations, human rights groups, and activists and other concerned persons to exert pressure on the government to release all political prisoners and to repeal all laws, including the Prevention of Terrorism Act, which violate the democratic rights of the people of Sri Lanka. □

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Independence activists held in U.S. jail

Seven seized by FBI interviewed in New York

[The following introduction, interview, and bracketed insertions are translated from the June 9, 1986, issue of *Perspectiva Mundial*, a Spanish-language socialist fortnightly magazine published in New York. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Before dawn on Aug. 30, 1985, 300 agents of the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) carried out a massive round-up in Puerto Rico.

"The terrorist forces of the U.S. government came onto my property and broke down the door of my house. The FBI . . . dressed like Martians, threatened my family with death, pointing automatic rifles at my wife, Aida, and my children," Orlando González Claudio told *Claridad*, the weekly newspaper of the Puerto Rican Socialist Party (PSP).

González Claudio was one of the 11 proindependence activists taken into custody during this round-up in Puerto Rico. The same day, two other proindependence activists were arrested elsewhere, one in Mexico and the other in Texas.

These independence activists — the majority of whom remain in prison in the United States without the right to bail — have been labeled "terrorists" by Washington.

The U.S. government accuses them of having participated in the 1983 robbery of \$7 million from a Wells Fargo Company armored car in the state of Connecticut. They are accused of being members of the *Macheteros*, a proindependence group.

Four of the 13 proindependence activists were released from jail after posting bail of up to \$1 million. The four are Jorge Farinacci, Norman Ramírez Talavera, Carlos Ayes Suárez, and Ángel Díaz Ruiz.

The U.S. courts are keeping the other nine incarcerated without the right to bail on the basis of a supposed danger and "risk of flight." This decision was based on a 1984 law allowing preventive detention.

On May 2, 1986, the Federal Appeals Court of the Second Circuit of New York ruled against this law, declaring it unconstitutional. The court's decision was based on a motion filed by the defense attorneys for the nine jailed activists.

Their lawyers also filed a motion before a federal court to have the trial moved to San Juan, Puerto Rico.

On May 7 *Perspectiva Mundial* visited the nine jailed proindependence activists in the Metropolitan Correctional Center in New York and interviewed seven of them. The nine still in jail are: Elías Castro Ramos, Hilton Fernán-

dez Diamante, Orlando González Claudio, Ivonne Meléndez Carrión, Luz María Berríos Berríos, Filiberto Ojeda Ríos, Juan Enrique Segarra Palmer, Luis Alfredo Colón Osorio, and Isaac Camacho Negrón.

Below we are printing the interview with the last seven listed above. The interview was conducted by Selva Nebbia and Andrea González.

* * *

Question. Can you tell us a little about your personal histories?

Ivonne Meléndez Carrión. I am 32 years old and the mother of four children. My husband, Ángel Díaz, was also arrested and released on bail. He is in Puerto Rico with the children.

I have been a worker in a pharmaceutical plant in Barceloneto, Puerto Rico, for three and a half years.

I have four years of university studies in sociology and anthropology.

I have never been a participant in any political party, but I have taken part in mass activities about things I considered just and that I thought were necessary to support, such as activities against social injustices.

For example, the dismantling of Villa Sin Miedo, the FBI's terrorist activities in Puerto Rico, the Cerro Maravilla case.¹

In addition, I took part in many other activities that developed in order to make people conscious of the level of unemployment, criminality, low wages, very high cost of living, etc.

I have been president of the Parent-Teacher Association at my children's elementary school. I have worked as a volunteer to correct some of the many serious problems facing education in Puerto Rico, such as the lack of medical attention, overflowing sewage, shortages of materials and books, and cleanliness of the facilities and surroundings.

My life has revolved around these kinds of social struggles, and I feel it is very important to be developing sound minds and healthy bodies, free from vices. That's where my dedication to the children comes from.

Filiberto Ojeda Ríos. I was born in Río

1. Villa Sin Miedo (village without fear) was a squatters' community in Puerto Rico that gained this name in 1981 during a tenacious struggle by 300 resident families against the government's violent attempts to uproot them.

Cerro Maravilla is a mountain in Puerto Rico on which two young proindependence activists were set up and murdered by the police in 1978.

Blanco, a town in Puerto Rico, in 1933. I lived in Puerto Rico during my early years, and during the Second World War I came to the United States.

I had my first contact as a child with what racism is and the discrimination against Puerto Ricans and minorities in New York. While it is brutal now, in that period it was much more brutal.

I returned to San Juan, Puerto Rico, where I went to high school, and later I studied music.

In the early 1950s I returned to the United States and began to work in factories and to get into contact with various publications like the Communist Party's *Daily Worker*. I continued studying music.

The actions of the nationalists in 1950 and 1954, the attack on the U.S. Congress,² had a big influence on my young mind at that time. I began to take part in Puerto Rican political organizations in New York.

In the 1960s I moved to Cuba with my family, working as a musician for a number of years, until I became part of the [Puerto Rican] Proindependence Movement [MPI — the precursor of the PSP]. All my children were educated in Cuba. I have four children and three grandchildren.

In 1969 I moved to Puerto Rico, where I was arrested and accused of subversive activities in the country. I was forced to live underground in my country for 16 years, until I was captured in August 1985.

Luis Alfredo Colón Osorio. I have nine children. I was born in Culebra. The island of Culebra is the place where the people threw out the U.S. Marines for the first time. [Until 1975 the island was used as a firing range.]

I began to know the Americans and the army through my experiences as a child, seeing how they acted on that island. Later I was raised in poor neighborhoods of Puerto Rico.

At 17 I volunteered for the United States Army, motivated by the televised U.S. propaganda seen on our island, on the basis of the war movies.

I wanted to be the all-American hero. And so I went into the U.S. Army, where I learned about the racism that exists in that nation as well as about our country's colonial position.

2. In 1950 a nationalist insurrection took place in Puerto Rico, which was drowned in blood by Washington. In 1954 five nationalists carried out an armed attack in the U.S. Congress to call attention to the independence cause. The U.S. government held them in prison for 25 years, until it had to free them due to the pressure of world solidarity.



Perspectiva Mundial photos by Selva Nebbia

Ivonne Meléndez Carrión (left) and (from left to right) Isaac Camacho Negrón, Juan Enrique Segarra Palmer, Luz María Berríos Berríos, Luis Alfredo Colón Osorio, Filiberto Ojeda Ríos, and Orlando González Claudio.

I left the army with a series of emotional problems that were not attended to by the Veterans Administration. I finally rehabilitated myself by myself, on the basis of the consciousness I gained through reading Che Guevara. Because I feel that he was the one who recruited me to favor independence. I sold *Claridad* and later I did social work in the communities.

At the time of my arrest I was working as a mechanic.

Q. What do you think of the court's recent ruling against the preventive detention law?

Juan Enrique Segarra Palmer. I think it is a little premature to say exactly what it means. We have not had an opportunity as a group to discuss what it means.

I personally feel a lot of satisfaction that our case has served to unmask and deal a blow to a law that has such a fascist and totalitarian stamp as this no-bail law.

Meléndez Carrión. The U.S. government considers me, personally, to be "dangerous" and "a risk to flee." They already know about my life. I am accused of transporting stolen money, which even if it were true does not involve any act of violence.

As far as being "a risk to flee," I have a clean criminal record. I have lived in the same town, Vega Baja, for more than 25 years, which shows that I have roots in the community.

Given these facts or "evidence," I feel that it is an injustice that I have been a prisoner for eight months, with the possibility of being a prisoner for a year and a half before we are brought to trial.

Isaac Camacho Negrón. When we speak about U.S. laws, about why we defend ourselves, in my case, I know that all these laws

are against me, since Puerto Rico is a colony. When I decided to fight the United States, I decided to specifically fight these laws and what they represent.

They are the same laws that guarantee that the United States can be in Puerto Rico, oppressing it. I am happy to be helping to expose the contradictions of the laws, so that in Puerto Rico they are aware of these contradictions. I think it is necessary to fight these laws.

The clear example is the Second Circuit Court's decision in which they are basically saying: look, the 26 amendments of the U.S. Constitution are applicable to all U.S. citizens except the Macheteros and except for all those persons who fight against the system. Because the U.S. laws are good if and when they benefit the U.S. ruling class.

The clearest example of this is the murder of Chilean President Salvador Allende [during a U.S.-sponsored military coup in 1973]. The Chilean constitution was good if and when they elected a U.S. puppet. And since the Chilean people did not elect a U.S. puppet, they had to eliminate Allende.

They tell people that the elections in El Salvador are good because they elected a U.S. puppet but that in Nicaragua they are bad because they elected someone who does not want to be the Americans' clown.

Orlando González Claudio. I am one of those who supposedly will benefit from this decision. I don't have much faith that that will be the case, because the enemy will do everything possible, even if they violate their own laws, to keep us in jail.

Q. What is behind the motion your lawyers have filed for a change of jurisdiction in the case?

Segarra Palmer. [The motion] is based on the most fundamental human rights, such as

the right not to be exiled, which is what happened in our case. We are exiled — which is the worst punishment that you can inflict on a human being — without having had a trial, without having been found guilty. It even goes against the entire supposed U.S. tradition of being tried by a jury of your peers.

Our motion cites the part of the constitution that says that one of the gravest offenses is to be "transported overseas," which is what is happening in our case.

And within the criteria of law in the United States, as established by the Supreme Court, there are 10 criteria for deciding a change of jurisdiction.

The first is the "location of the defendants," and we are all from Puerto Rico.

The second is the "location of the witness." The whole investigation, the whole persecution of us is taking place in Puerto Rico.

The third criterion is the "location of the issues to be contested," and in our case no one is "contesting" whether or not there was a robbery in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1983. What is being "contested" is whether there was a conspiracy in Puerto Rico [to carry out the robbery].

Therefore, the "location of the issues to be contested" is Puerto Rico.

And finally, all the evidence that the government claims it has against us consists of some tape recordings [of telephone conversations], something that violates Puerto Rico's constitution.

They try to say that Puerto Rico is a "self-governing commonwealth." How can they then say that an article of Puerto Rico's constitution is simply worthless!

Well, all these tapes are in Spanish; we in Puerto Rico speak Spanish. How is a U.S. jury, which does not speak Spanish, going to decide what is being said on the tapes or what is not being said, or what interpretation should

be given to what is being said. It is all absurd.

That is, there is no reason to carry out the trial here, except the reason that the U.S. government wants to make sure that we are found guilty.

Ojeda Ríos. The federal court in the United States is the federal court in Puerto Rico. We feel that it is illegal, a violation of the Puerto Rican people. We energetically and vehemently object to the fact that as Puerto Ricans we are subjected to being judged by those who oppress our people, the United States government.

And if I am forced to have to defend myself in the federal court, I would prefer that it be in Puerto Rico, because I would have Puerto Ricans surrounding me. My lawyers are there nearby, there would be more lawyers from Puerto Rico working with my case. I would have my community near; I would have my people. I would have the popular support that I would otherwise lack. I would have what I at least feel would help me from the political vantage point.

But it is not because I recognize the court in Puerto Rico in any way; I oppose it with the same energy, the same vehemence.

The fact that I asked for a change of jurisdiction does not in any way represent a recognition of the court in Puerto Rico, which is totally illegal, is a sham, and is a symbol of oppression.

Also from the human vantage point, the fact that all of our families and children are in Puerto Rico, and are subjected to having their fathers, their mothers, or their children far away from them is a cruelty.

Independently of being a prisoner, it is not the same to be a prisoner here and to be a prisoner in Puerto Rico. And this is a very important factor because as prisoners here we do not have access to our own community, to those who truly would have an interest in coming out in our behalf.

Colón Osorio. For example, here those who are confined have a right to buy things in a commissary, and they passed a law giving them the right at Christmas to buy more than they can normally buy for daily use. So they can buy special foods for the Christmas season, such as sweets and other things.

With this new law the Americans can buy their sweets, but we Puerto Ricans cannot because they do not sell our *pasteles* here, or our rice pudding.

Luz María Berríos Berríos. Regarding the motion for a change of jurisdiction, I personally am very happy with it. I think that we have a much greater chance that our Puerto Rican people would be more just. I don't have the same impression of the people in this country, mainly because with all that the press is saying, with this antiterrorist focus, I do not think that they have a complete view of what is happening.

Q. Do you think that the FBI round-up last August 30 and your arrests are related to the

war escalations of the United States in Central America and the Caribbean?

All. Yes. Definitely.

Camacho Negrón. Our case was a rehearsal for beginning an attack against Nicaragua. The truth is that we are inside the monster and we are an obstacle to their continuing the aggression in the region.

They use the base in Puerto Rico as a base of attack. They began with [the 1983 invasion of] Grenada and they want to strike against Nicaragua.

The training exercises that were carried out in Libya, those that were carried out in Vieques, in Culebra, and in other parts of Puerto Rico are simply a rehearsal. So is the action now taking place in Puerto Rico — the Ocean Venture '86 military maneuvers — which practices carrying out the attacks that the U.S. empire uses against different peoples of the world.

Ojeda Ríos. I view this more as a defensive measure of a system that is falling apart. If you analyze the last 20 or 30 years, you realize that there have been nothing but defeats for the United States government.

Take for example the situation in South Korea, which was seemingly a victory for the United States. Today we know that a tremendous struggle for democracy is unfolding in that country, because democracy does not exist there.

I see this as part of the U.S. government's foreign policy, which it hides under a cloak of antiterrorism. This is the facade it tries to erect, but fundamentally it is a defensive measure of a system that is in full retreat and is at the point of receiving mortal blows.

Segarra Palmer. The United States is prepared to go and wipe out the supposed terrorists in any country of the whole world and they carry out rehearsals with helicopters, planes, and Special Forces. And they do this in

their colony, Puerto Rico.

Q. What do you think of Reagan's antiterrorist campaign, and the campaign against Libya?

Camacho Negrón. Well, the U.S. antiterrorist campaign did not begin now with Libya. It began many years ago. For example, we see the U.S. campaigns against Nicaragua, and when the United States seized all the territory that had belonged to Mexico.

The United States is founded on a terrorist campaign; it is held together by the attack against innocents. Puerto Rico is not an exception. It is part of this whole U.S. expansionist campaign.

When Puerto Rico was invaded by the United States in 1898, it was an expansionist campaign in which we got the worst of it.

Meléndez Carrión. Because of my identification with the independence struggle, I have been classified by the imperialist government as a terrorist. But all you need is to compare my life with that definition to see that it's really the FBI that fits that description perfectly. The examples are Puerto Rico, Libya, South Africa, Grenada, El Salvador, Nicaragua, etc.

I understand that achieving Puerto Rico's independence is part of the struggle that must develop to change the colonial economy and way of life in which Puerto Rico now lives.

Colonialism by the imperialist countries has been recognized as a crime and as illegal by the United Nations. In Puerto Rico's case it is the biggest monster, the United States.

So it is very easy to be for independence in Puerto Rico if you have political consciousness, if you love the homeland and peace, and if you want to transform a country that is in crisis into a healthy place for our children and the children of all our beautiful Puerto Ricans.

I feel strong and firm in continuing to struggle for our freedom and, more importantly, to achieve the independence of our homeland. □

Jordanian police attack student sit-in

In the most bloody repression in Jordan in a decade, national riot police attacked 2,000 sit-in demonstrators on the campus of al-Yarmuk University in Irbid on May 15. The government admits its forces killed three Palestinian students. Opposition sources reported the toll was as high as 15 dead and 85 wounded.

Some 800 students were arrested and held for several days. As one student explained it, the attack was "another case of the suppression of freedom of expression in the country."

When residents of the city of Irbid protested the police riot on campus, King Hussein's police responded by rounding up dozens of alleged organizers, including the entire Political Bureau of the outlawed Jordanian Communist Party and some members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

The 14,000-student university had been the scene of a series of demonstrations over the

previous two months. While the government claimed the only issue involved was a proposed fee hike, demonstrations had also been held in support of Palestinian rights and to protest the U.S. bombing of Libya. The May 15 sit-in was organized in response to the expulsion of 32 leaders of the Libya protest, according to a communiqué of the Jordanian Committee in Defense of Democratic Freedom and other sources.

The three identified fatalities of the May 15 attack — two women and a man — were all from the Israeli-occupied West Bank. Students at Bir Zeit University, near Ramallah on the West Bank, held a three-hour strike on May 21 to condemn the actions of the Jordanian government. The Bir Zeit students marched behind three empty coffins draped with Palestinian flags. Some protesters also burned pictures of King Hussein. □

Miners' leader: no nukes!

Arthur Scargill on dangers of nuclear power

[The following is a statement on nuclear power by Arthur Scargill, president of Britain's National Union of Mineworkers (NUM). It is taken from the May 23 issue of the London revolutionary socialist newsweekly *Socialist Action* and is preceded by that newspaper's introduction.]

* * *

One of the key issues behind the miners strike was the government's running down of the mining industry in favour of unsafe nuclear power. Nuclear power now supplies 18 per cent of British electricity. Each nuclear power plant directly replaces 3,500 miners and a further 3,500 other jobs. The British nuclear power programme was openly aimed at weakening the National Union of Mineworkers — as was admitted in Cabinet minutes.

The Chernobyl disaster reminds us all that it is not just the NUM but every one of us who are paying a catastrophic price in the threat posed by Britain's nuclear power programme. On last Saturday's [May 17] *Any Questions* radio programme Arthur Scargill, president of the NUM, was asked his view on nuclear power. The following was his reply. It shows the enormous possibilities for the entire labour movement to campaign with the NUM against nuclear power, and for an energy policy based on coal and "alternative" sources.

* * *

I feel very passionately about this question of nuclear power for two reasons. First of all, being president of the NUM I've got a vested interest. But secondly, and far more important, I've got a vested interest as a member of the human race.

I have been for many years one of the leading members and the first chairperson of the British anti-nuclear campaign, which is opposed to all the development of nuclear power in Britain, whether it is Magnox, the Advanced Gas Reactor, or the fast-breeder reactors.

Let's get a couple of things very clear. First, we don't need nuclear power. Secondly, in terms of cost, if you take the cost of a new nuclear power station like Sizewell — which this government wants — and add to that the decommissioning costs as projected by the French, you're talking about £1,680 million. Compare that with the cost of building a coal-fired station: at £737 million difference, the coal-fired station is much cheaper.

Thirdly, we have to take into account the safety factors. There is simply *no* solution to safety problems created by nuclear power.

I challenge anyone who supports nuclear power to answer four points.

One, can they guarantee that workers in the nuclear industry will not continue to become contaminated with radiation and as a consequence get cancer and leukemia as they have done in British nuclear power stations?

Second, can they guarantee that there will not be another nuclear accident — not only like the one at Chernobyl but also like the one that we had at Windscale in 1957 when radiation levels were measured as far away as Norway and Sweden? We've still got people in this country dying as a consequence — with cancer deaths in Cumbria and Lancashire region 50 per cent higher.

Thirdly, can they guarantee that plutonium, which is produced by nuclear power for the production of atomic weapons, will not fall into the hands of some nuclear nut-case?

And fourthly, can they guarantee that nuclear waste will not continue to pollute our planet and our seas, bearing in mind that the

Irish Sea is now the most polluted stretch of water in the world?

If the answer to any one of those questions is "no," they can't guarantee it, that should be enough to stop the nuclear power programme. If the answer to all four questions is no, then there should be no question that it should be stopped.

Finally, let me say this. There *is* an alternative energy programme that should be put into effect. We, the NUM, reached an agreement and signed it with the government — not only the Labour government but the Tory government as well — based primarily on coal but looking towards the day when we have wind, wave, tide, barrage power, and solar energy. Because, if we're realists, then we ought to be developing alternative energy sources as well: alternative energy sources that are in the interests of people in this country. And therefore the answer is we want to stop nuclear power now and develop a real energy policy based initially on coal but with the alternative energy sources rapidly coming up behind.

If we are honest with ourselves, we have not tackled the question in the wake of the disaster in the Soviet Union nor in the light of the evidence that's available. The answer is a simple one. We should stop nuclear power and develop an alternative energy policy. Now! □

Philippines

Nuclear plant mothballed

By Will Reissner

Honoring a pledge made during the recent presidential campaign, the new Philippine government of President Corazon Aquino has decided not to open the nearly completed Bataan Nuclear Power Plant. The decision was made in response to widespread protests against the plant, which is both unsafe and expensive.

The nuclear plant, built by the Westinghouse Electric Corp., was constructed on the side of an extinct volcano, and lies 45 miles from an undersea earthquake fault, making it potentially subject to devastating tidal waves.

In 1984 the Washington-based Union of Concerned Scientists concluded that the plant was "too dangerous to begin operation."

Deposed Philippine dictator Ferdinand Marcos reportedly received an \$80 million "facilitation fee" from Westinghouse for approving the purchase of the nuclear plant, even though Westinghouse's bid was more than twice as high as a competing bid from the General Electric Company.

When construction of the plant began in 1976, it was budgeted to cost US\$1.1 billion. But costs have already risen to \$2.1 billion, and another \$363 million would be needed to make the plant fully operational.

The Philippines, saddled with a foreign debt of \$26 billion, is now paying \$355,000 *per day*

in interest charges alone on the idle nuclear plant. Over the next 10 years, the country is scheduled to pay out \$1.98 billion to service the debt on the plant.

Even before Marcos was overthrown, big protests against the plant had been mounted. Protests last year delayed the scheduled startup of the facility, and later 26 transmission towers were blown up, apparently by guerrillas of the New People's Army, which is led by the Communist Party of the Philippines.

The nuclear accident at Chernobyl in the Soviet Union has reinforced popular opposition to opening the plant. Aquino spokesman Rene Saguisag pointed out "if we go ahead now we may have an uprising on our hands."

Saguisag traveled to the United States in late May to try to negotiate some way for the Philippines to avoid having to repay a \$600 million loan that the Marcos government took out to finance much of the plant's construction costs.

At present, relations between the Philippine National Power Company and Westinghouse are tense. The National Power Company filed suit in Manila to recover a \$42.8 million letter of credit cashed by Westinghouse, claiming it was to be paid on completion of the project. Westinghouse responded with a countersuit arguing that it is owed another \$24 million. □

SELECTIONS FROM THE LEFT

[The following selections deal with the April 25 accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in the Soviet Union.]

WAS TUN

"What Is to Be Done," a socialist newspaper published fortnightly in Frankfurt, West Germany, by the International Marxist Group (GIM), the German section of the Fourth International.

An article on the front page of the May 15 issue began, "The nuclear accident at Chernobyl, in the Soviet Union, has not only demonstrated one's powerlessness against radioactive clouds. Several hundred thousand people demonstrated in many European states with force and determination to bring to life a new international movement against nuclear facilities, with one single aim: Shut down all the nuclear installations — now!

"In response, Chancellor [Helmut] Kohl, from Tokyo, proclaimed an 'Initiative Against Hysteria.' Back from that meaningless summit, he . . . determined that there was no ground for concern and that the West German nuclear power plants pose no danger. In reality, he and his government know better."

THE MILITANT

A revolutionary socialist newsweekly, published in New York City.

The May 9 issue, the first one following the Chernobyl accident, began an editorial on its front page. It opened, "The accident that occurred at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in the Ukraine is another grim reminder of the serious hazards of nuclear power. And it has sparked renewed demands by opponents of nuclear power in the United States and Western Europe to shut down all nuclear power plants in their countries."

The U.S. and West European governments, the editorial stated, have adopted a hypocritical stance on the Chernobyl accident. "They are using the accident to stir up anti-Soviet sentiment, and at the same time head off criticism of their own use of unsafe nuclear power."

After citing the hypocritical position of the British government, the *Militant* continued, "But it is the U.S. government that takes the cake for its sanctimonious stance."

"The U.S. power companies produce the most nuclear-generated electricity of the 26 countries that have nuclear reactors. It is followed by the Soviet Union, France, Japan, and West Germany. . . .

"Of the 25 nuclear accidents classified by the *Washington Post* and *New York Times* as major, 16 of these occurred in this country, including the partial meltdown at the Three Mile

Island plant in Pennsylvania in March 1979. . . .

"There is simply no known way to make nuclear power safe. It is inherently dangerous because it produces massive amounts of radiation. All radiation, even the small amounts that appear in nature, is harmful. And the huge amounts produced in the generation of nuclear power are extremely harmful — potentially catastrophic."

The editorial went on, "U.S. government officials have criticized the Soviet government for not providing all the facts about the incident immediately."

"But Washington holds the world record for cover-ups."

"Almost at the very moment that President James Carter was 'reassuring' people who lived near the Three Mile Island plant that it was 'quite safe for all concerned,' his appointees at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission were coolly discussing the still-real possibility of a core meltdown or disastrous hydrogen explosion. . . .

"There is only one way to protect people from catastrophic nuclear accidents, from the cancer and genetic damage caused by nuclear power, and from the growing accumulation of deadly radioactive waste that cannot be stored safely."

"That is to shut down all nuclear power plants immediately. Humanity simply can't afford not to."

Rouge

"Red," weekly newspaper of the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), French section of the Fourth International. Published in Paris.

The May 8–14 and May 15–21 issues both carried extensive coverage on the Chernobyl nuclear accident and the dangers of nuclear power.

Under the headline, "Who will be the next victim?" *Rouge* ran an article in the first issue based on interviews with two experts on nuclear power. "Since the information from Soviet sources has been doled out in small morsels," it began, "everyone wants to know if the West has exaggerated the accident at the Soviet station or has presented it relatively accurately."

"In fact, the Western bourgeoisies are pulled by two contradictory desires: their tangible anticommunism is behind the first reaction of the CIA, which is interested in milking this affair to the maximum, knowing that the Russians, through their silence, cannot contradict it. But, on the other hand, there is a basic solidarity among nuclear scientists, among governments concerned with the development of this energy, an international 'nuclear lobby' that functions quite well."

The article went on to describe many of the dangers of nuclear power, including in France, where there are dozens of nuclear plants currently in operation.

"When two-thirds of French electricity is of nuclear origin, what will happen here in case of a serious accident? The Europeans, notably the Germans, have seemingly demanded that the Soviets shut down all their stations similar to the one at Chernobyl. But there are nine plants of that type in the United States, and four in France. . . ."

Another article in the same issue surveyed the development of the Soviet Union's nuclear power program and the risks involved.

Among several articles in the May 15–21 issue, the lead article examined the French nuclear industry and the companies that profit from its development. Besides the economic motivations behind the spread of nuclear power in France, the article explained, the government has used it as a base to expand its own nuclear weapons program.



"Socialist Banner," newspaper of the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT), Mexican section of the Fourth International. Published in Mexico City.

An editorial in the May 12 issue began: "The accident that took place at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in the Soviet Union demonstrates once again the risks of using nuclear energy, not only for military purposes, but also for peaceful ones."

"Despite the traditional policy of covering up information by the degenerated workers' states and despite the exaggerations about the accident in the Western news agencies — in which there has been a clear anticommunist campaign — it is evident that the explosion at Chernobyl has become one of the worst accidents in the history of the peaceful use of nuclear energy."

After noting previous accidents at nuclear power plants, such as at Three Mile Island in the United States, the editorial continued:

"What is certain is that in the capitalist countries powerful economic interests lie behind the defense of nuclear power, as do military interests that are always tied to the use of this energy source, however peaceful it may be."

"For its part, the Soviet Union, dragged into a competition to keep up with U.S. imperialism and its allies on the military and economic planes, as well as in technological development, is also impelled to use atomic energy."

"While nuclear arms and nuclear power plants and reactors are proliferating around the world, there are no guaranteed methods of totally safeguarding against a catastrophe."

The editorial concluded, "The existence of Chernobyl, Three Mile Island, or Laguna Verde — to give an example much closer to Mexicans — makes it necessary to establish a broad front of opposition to the use of nuclear energy that will fight for the shutting down of all nuclear plants throughout the world."



Fortnightly French-language organ of the Socialist Workers Party (PSO), Swiss section of the Fourth International. Published in Lausanne, Switzerland.

"The catastrophe at Chernobyl has once again put the nuclear debate at the center of the news," began a front-page editorial in the May 10 issue. "And that's fortunate, since the nuclear lobby does not want such a debate. The conspiracy of silence is its best ally. The proof: the systematic information blackout following every nuclear accident."

La Brèche then cited the examples of a 1969 nuclear accident in Lucens, Switzerland, and the 1979 partial meltdown at the Three Mile Island plant in the United States. In both cases, the editorial noted, the authorities sought to minimize the dangers.

"With Chernobyl and the silence of the leaders," *La Brèche* continued, "the Soviet authorities are playing the same scandalous game. This emphasizes, if it is still necessary to do so, the need for a broad, independent antinuclear movement, in the East as well as in the West."

"But it is to display serious hypocrisy to pretend that a similar accident is impossible here, that Chernobyl is a result only of the USSR's technical and scientific deficiencies. . . ."

"Every nuclear option, in the East and in the West, is being revealed for what it is: dangerous, uncontrollable, and a grave mortgage on the future."

**Socialist
ACTION**

A revolutionary socialist weekly, published in London.

"A Chernobyl in Britain?" asked the headline of an article in the May 16 issue.

"The government is now mobilising all its propaganda to convince people that British nuclear power is safe, that a Chernobyl could never happen here," the article began.

After reviewing the seriousness of the accident in the Soviet Union, it continued, "The phrase 'no one expected it' should go down as the nuclear industry's epitaph for Chernobyl. Accidents like this are simply not supposed to happen. The industry 'calculates' the odds against it as one accident every 10,000 years of reactor life. But Chernobyl survived for just ten years, not 10,000."

"Accidents of the type that finally culminated in Chernobyl are in fact not unusual. . . . In Britain there have been 300 nuclear 'inci-

idents' that we know of at Windscale/Sellafield alone since 1950. The 1957 Windscale reactor fire led to 30 deaths amongst 260 extra cancer cases.

"There is no reason whatever to believe 'British' nuclear technology is any safer than 'Russian.'"

The front page of the same issue carried an article entitled, "Labour Must Ban All Nuclear Power," criticizing the comments of the Labour Party leadership in the wake of the Chernobyl accident.

"This week," it began, "the Labour leadership has thrown away a rare opportunity — that of taking a step that is clearly in the interests of every single person in Britain and across the world, and which at the same time, would be an enormously popular step electorally. That was to pledge that the next Labour government would put an end to the use of all nuclear power in this country. Instead, the Labour shadow cabinet, and almost certainly the national executive, is going to pledge the opposite, that is to *maintain* Britain's deadly nuclear power stations."

This stance, the article continued, was in contradiction to the party's official policy, as adopted at its last conference. "The resolution," *Socialist Action* continued, "carried by 3.9 million votes, called for: 'a halt to the nuclear power programme and phasing out of all existing plants.' A number of major trade unions . . . helped to ensure that vote was carried with more than a 60 per cent majority. . . ."

"Such a policy is vital to the health and survival of the human race — and it is immediately seen as such by the majority of people in Britain."

International VIEWPOINT

A fortnightly review published in Paris under the auspices of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.

The lead article in the May 19 issue was a report by Goran Eklof from Stockholm, Sweden, on the reaction there to the Chernobyl nuclear accident.

"What are the facts about the claims that are being repeated over and over again in Sweden and other Western countries that the Soviet nuclear-power program is qualitatively more dangerous than, say, the Swedish one? . . ."

"The Swedish government has been quick to point out that the Swedish reactors are of a different model than the one that broke down in Chernobyl. And a representative of the Swedish industrialists' organization Industriforbundet has argued that 'The Soviet reactors are so unlike the Swedish ones in their basic construction that a similar accident is impossible in any of the Swedish nuclear power plants.'"

"It is obvious that a 'similar accident' is highly unlikely, since the Swedish reactors do not use graphite dampers like the Soviet ones. But that does not exclude *another* kind of

meltdown."

Eklof continued, "Naturally, the prettied-up, late, and, to say the least, incomplete information from the Soviets about the accident was irresponsible, unacceptable, and criminal. But in this respect also, the Swedish authorities have no reason to congratulate themselves."

Eklof stated that "not a word was said about Swedish preparedness for dealing with a similar accident. Was it by chance that the Swedish Institute for Protection Against Radioactivity [Straalskuddsinstitutet] failed to publish figures about the doses of radioactivity measured in greater Stockholm? Or did that have something to do with not wanting to 'alarm' people in a city that in fact cannot be evacuated? . . ."

"But the worst of all is that the social democratic government has flatly rejected the demand for closing the two nuclear power plants at Barsebaeck in Skaane, which are only 12 miles from Sweden's third largest city, Malmo, and a like distance from Copenhagen. That is, the Swedish reactors are only 12 miles from Denmark's capital and major population center, one-sixth of the distance from Chernobyl to Kiev."

After noting an upturn in the already large antinuclear movement in neighboring Denmark, aimed at the shutting down of Sweden's Barsebaeck plant, Eklof reported, "The polls now show that 60 percent of Swedes are against nuclear power. . . ."

"The Swedish spring has come late but it has finally arrived and it is a hot one. . . . We can expect powerful mobilizations by antinuclear opinion in Sweden."

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A country transformed by revolution, oil

Major social and economic changes since 1969 coup

By Ernest Harsch

Not so long ago, in the 1960s, Libya barely figured in international politics. It had little impact even in its own North African region.

Although some oil wealth flowed into the country, it failed to touch the lives of ordinary Libyans, who remained among the poorest people in the world. Governed by a corrupt monarchy, they had to watch as a handful of aristocrats and foreign businessmen grew rich and as parts of Libyan territory were auctioned off for U.S. and British military bases. Silenced by illiteracy and repression, they had to

This is the first of a series of three articles on the Libyan revolution. The subsequent articles will look at the class and social conflicts that have marked the revolution's development, the Libyan government's foreign policy, and the imperialist efforts to turn back the revolution.

listen to the pronouncements of a regime that dutifully parroted a foreign policy line dictated by its imperialist benefactors.

All that began to change in 1969 with the opening shots of the Libyan revolution. The monarchy was overthrown and the foreign military bases were promptly shut down. Foreign oil companies were forced to accept terms more favorable to Libya. Much of the oil wealth has been redirected toward overcoming the country's economic and social backwardness and improving the lives of its people.

Themselves the victims of imperialist oppression, Libyans have instinctively reached out to link up with other peoples across the globe fighting for their independence and rights. From Iran and Palestine to Nicaragua, South Africa, and Northern Ireland, the Libyan government and people have extended their support and solidarity in the struggle against the common enemy — imperialism.

As seen from Washington, London, Paris, and other imperialist capitals, the 3.5 million people of Libya have committed the gravest of crimes. They have dared to speak their minds and to oppose the injustices they see around them. To these governments, this is nothing short of "terrorism"; it is an example that must be stamped out.

So the U.S. bombers were sent to pound Tripoli and Benghazi on April 15, in the biggest U.S. air strike since the end of the Vietnam War. The purpose was to teach the Libyan people a "lesson," the word President Reagan used for this act of state terrorism.

Although that particular attack failed to bring Libya to its knees, it is part of a broader,

relentless campaign directed from Washington to reimpose imperialist domination over the country. The stakes for Libya, and the rest of the world, are great.

A difficult road to statehood

The course along which the Libyan people have sought to carve out a distinct, independent identity of their own has been a long one. The different peoples and tribes of the area today known as Libya were drawn together only over time, as a result of their common struggles against a succession of foreign rulers.

With the first Arab migrations into Libya in the 7th and 11th centuries, there began a process of intermixing between the Arabs and the original Berber inhabitants, so that today almost all Libyans are of combined Arab-Berber background. Although this intermixing, together with the spread of Islam and the Arabic language, brought some unifying factors to the peoples of the region, social organization remained highly fragmented. Until the past few decades, most Libyans were engaged in nomadic livestock herding. They were also organized in tribes. These were often in conflict with each other over territorial rights and ac-

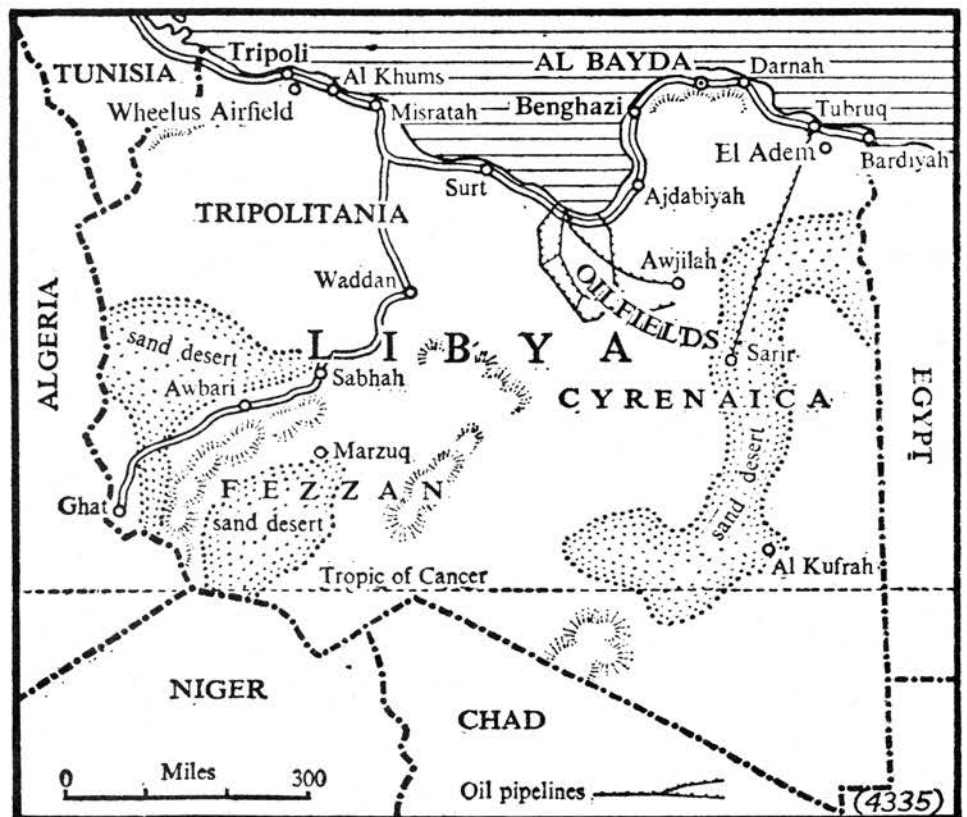
cess to grazing lands and trade routes.

For the most part, land, whether for farming or grazing, was held as the collective property of the tribe or kinship group. Poverty was general and little social stratification developed. Unlike in other parts of North Africa, no landlord class emerged.

No indigenous centralized political authority arose either. That was imposed from the outside.

After a brief occupation of Tripoli by Spanish crusaders in the 16th century, Libya came under the domination of the Ottoman rulers of Turkey. But this had only a limited unifying effect, since Libya's three provinces were administered separately: Tripolitania in the west, Cyrenaica in the east, and the Fezzan in the south.

As the power of the Ottoman empire declined around the beginning of this century, Italian colonial interests began to move in. Italian troops invaded for the first time in 1911. They faced fierce armed resistance from the nomadic tribes of the interior, and it took the Italian authorities until the early 1930s to crush the last of the guerrilla fighters. The Italian fascist authorities under Benito Mussolini aimed to transform Libya into a settler colony. They



confiscated much of the best arable land for large-scale Italian-owned agricultural estates.

The brief period of Italian colonial rule brought some changes to Libyan society. The old tribal structures and nomadic way of life were weakened somewhat. A small Libyan working class arose, as well as new urban petty-bourgeois strata. However, the Italian domination of most major commercial activity blocked the emergence of a Libyan capitalist class. Most Libyans, in fact, were involved only minimally, if at all, in the market economy.

Italian colonial rule ended abruptly with Italy's defeat in World War II, during which some significant battles were fought on Libyan soil.

According to Jamil M. Abun-Nasr, "Libya did not possess even at the end of the Second World War any of the essential prerequisites of an independent nation-state. It had a predominantly nomadic population, local and tribal particularisms were very strong, and, except for the period between 1932 and 1939, it did not have the experience of living under a political authority which effectively united the whole country."¹

These divisions were further exacerbated in the immediate postwar period by the continued occupation of Libya by the Allied powers that had defeated the Italian forces there. British military authorities governed Cyrenaica and Tripolitania, while French forces administered the Fezzan. In addition, Washington had built the large Wheelus air base outside Tripoli.

For a while, Libya's fate remained uncertain. The British authorities, in alliance with the Sanusi emirate headed by Sayyid Idris in Cyrenaica, briefly considered proclaiming Cyrenaica a separate, independent state. Libyan nationalist forces, which were stronger in Tripolitania, opposed this and pressed for an independent, unitary Libya. Finally, an agreement was hammered out under United Nations sponsorship whereby Libya was to become an independent federal state, under a monarchical form of government. Officially presented as a "compromise," this was in fact a victory for the most reactionary, tribally based social forces in the country and marked a setback for the nationalists. Nevertheless, Libya did avoid complete dismemberment and was finally on the road toward formal independence.

Oil and corruption

On Dec. 24, 1951, Libya became an independent state. Sayyid Idris of Cyrenaica was proclaimed King Idris I.

Though free from direct colonial rule, Libya was still under imperialist domination. Idris signed agreements granting Washington military base rights at Wheelus and other facilities in exchange for financial and economic assistance. London secured a similar agreement giving it base and troop-stationing rights. Although French troops were withdrawn in 1954,



Crowds celebrate overthrow of King Idris.

Paris nevertheless retained certain military transit rights.

The most important of these foreign military facilities was the Wheelus air base. It was integrated into the U.S. Strategic Air Command during the Korean War and was used as a staging area for the imperialist intervention in the Congo in 1960.

Domestically, little had changed for the Libyan people. Libyan society remained essentially tribal, with Idris' monarchy resting for support on the *sheiks* and other tribal potentates. No political parties were allowed.

At the time of independence, Libya was one of the poorest countries in the world. Eight out of 10 Libyans lived as nomads or agriculturalists. Some 90 percent of the population was illiterate, and there were only 14 university graduates in the entire country. Disease and illness were widespread.

With hardly any industry and little commercial agricultural production, Libya's main exports throughout the 1950s were animal hides, esparto grass (for making paper), and scrap iron from the debris left behind by World War II. Most Libyans remained engaged in subsistence livestock herding or cultivation, in a society that was still basically precapitalist.

In 1959, however, oil was discovered in large deposits. This provided the key basis for Libya's subsequent transformation. One of the most backward countries was suddenly thrust forward as a central producer for the world capitalist oil market. Undreamed-of wealth poured into the country.

The oil industry grew astonishingly rapidly.

By the early 1960s large quantities of oil were being exported by U.S. and other foreign companies, and by the end of the decade Libya had become the fifth-largest oil exporter in the world.

The oil companies, which were granted concessions on extremely favorable terms, raked in huge profits. The Idris regime also filled its coffers.

But little of the new-found oil wealth was directed toward developing the country or benefiting its people. Aside from oil, virtually no other industry was developed, despite the huge funds now available. The oil industry itself provided only a few jobs for Libyans, since it was highly capital-intensive. What commercial activity there was in Tripoli and other towns continued to be dominated by non-Libyans (including merchants from other Arab countries and Italian entrepreneurs); still no Libyan capitalist class developed.

The Idris regime itself did not seek to invest the oil wealth in productive enterprises. It preferred to consume. Much of the income from oil exports went toward luxury goods for supporters of the monarchy and other corrupt officials. Fortunes were made overnight, and graft became the normal order of business. A U.S. State Department official termed the Idris regime "one of the most corrupt in the area and probably one of the most corrupt in the world."

The monarchy was totally incapable of using the development of the oil industry in Libya's national interests. But with the oil came important changes, which ultimately served to undermine the foundations of the Idris regime.

Tens of thousands of Libyans flocked to the main cities in the hopes of getting jobs or engaging in petty trade. Large slum areas grew up in Tripoli and Benghazi. Tripoli doubled in size between 1954 and 1964. By the latter year, 80 percent of the country's population had become settled, and only 20 percent were still nomadic or seminomadic — a significant change in a society where the majority of Libya's rural inhabitants were still nomads just a decade earlier.

The need for more skilled Libyans spurred an increase in educational levels, at least for some sectors of the population. But many of them became dissatisfied with the limited economic and social opportunities open to them. Various middle-class layers — in the towns, university, and military — grew frustrated with the rampant corruption of the Idris regime and the fact that the oil wealth was not being used to advance the country.

Nationalist forces — which had been set back by the imposition of the monarchy in 1951 — began to revive. Anti-imperialist sentiments spread, reinforced by resentment over the enormous power of the foreign oil companies in Libya and inspired by political developments elsewhere in the world.

Libyan students became restive in the mid-1960s, demanding an end to the U.S. and British military bases, criticizing the regime's oil policies, and pledging support for the Vietnamese revolution and the Palestinian struggle.

1. Jamil M. Abun-Nasr, *A History of the Maghrib* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), pp. 377-78.

gle. During the 1967 Middle East war, Libyan oil and dock workers went on strike and Tripoli and Benghazi were swept by demonstrations. Various clandestine Arab nationalist and leftist groups began to form. The monarchy's attempt to stifle this political unrest through repression only further heightened the political and social tensions in the country.

Operation 'Palestine is ours'

On Sept. 1, 1969, while King Idris was enjoying himself at a luxury spa in Turkey, a group of junior officers staged a coup. Signaling the anti-imperialist and pro-Palestinian orientation of this group, the code word for the action was "Palestine is ours." With little bloodshed and only a minimal deployment of military units, the takeover succeeded within just a few hours.

No forces of any significance came to the defense of the corrupt Idris regime. Although the Libyan ambassador to Turkey appealed for direct British military intervention "to restore order and peace," London declined.

Initially, the leaders of the coup remained anonymous. It was more than a week before Muammar el-Qaddafi was announced as the new commander-in-chief of the armed forces and head of state. It was four months before the full composition of the governing Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) was announced. All 12 RCC members were lieutenants or captains under 30 years of age. Qaddafi, as commander-in-chief, was promoted to colonel, the rank he still holds today.

While the ousted monarchy was drawn from the Sanusi family of Cyrenaica, the RCC was much more geographically representative, its members coming from all three provinces. Most were of humble backgrounds, some growing up in urban slums and others, like Qaddafi, coming from rural nomadic or seminomadic tribes. In naming a new cabinet, the RCC appointed a leader of the 1967 dock workers' strike as the first prime minister.

Describing these officers' motivation for the coup shortly afterward, Qaddafi stated, "Our souls were in revolt against the backwardness enveloping our country and its land, whose best gifts and riches were being lost through plunder, and against the isolation imposed on our people in a vain attempt to hold it back from the path of the Arab people and from its greatest cause."

Early statements by Qaddafi and other RCC members stressed their nationalist aspirations and their support for the pan-Arab orientation of Gamal Abdel Nasser, the president of neighboring Egypt. While the influence of Nasser's views was the most frequently cited, Qaddafi has also expressed political admiration for figures like Abraham Lincoln, Sun Yat-sen, Giuseppe Garibaldi, and Mahatma Gandhi.

Some of their political inspiration, Libyan leaders have said, derived from Islam. "We are socialists within the frame stipulated by the Koran," Qaddafi proclaimed. "We are socialists indeed, but first and above all, we are Muslims." RCC members condemned

capitalist exploitation and profiteering and pledged to forge a "popular revolutionary alliance of the working forces." They at the same time denounced communist views and claimed that any efforts by the workers to advance their specific class interests would be detrimental to the rest of Libyan society.

Democratic revolution

While the coup was widely welcomed throughout Libya, there had been no direct mass participation in the overthrow of the Idris regime. Nevertheless, the Sept. 1, 1969, action represented much more than a simple change in government. It marked the beginning of a revolution.

Since then, Libya has experienced some profound transformations that have lifted the Libyan people up from the ranks of the world's poorest and have gone at least some way toward overcoming the country's state of extreme underdevelopment and social backwardness. Whatever its limitations and contradictions, this revolutionary process has been sweeping.

The revolution that was initiated in 1969 is a democratic revolution, one that has moved Libyan society forward from its legacy of imperialist domination and precapitalist social relations.

One of its key aims has been to further advance the process of uniting the Libyan nation, of instilling in the Libyan people an awareness of their common interests and national aspirations. This was given a boost through the abolition of the monarchy and other measures designed to undercut the old tribal leaderships. One of the new government's early acts was to redraw the country's administrative districts so as to cut across the previous tribal boundaries. Family, kinship, and tribal affiliations still retain a strong influence among many Libyans, but more than before they have come to view themselves first of all as *Libyans*, and their country as an integral part of the broader Arab world.

The Libyan people's common identity has been further reinforced by the struggle to lift the weight of imperialist oppression. That struggle has also been a central aspect of their revolution.

The revolutionary process in Libya has likewise sought to harness the country's vast oil wealth toward advancing Libyan national interests. Rather than buying sumptuous palaces, jewelry, and limousines for a parasitic aristocracy, as was the case under Idris' reign, much of the oil income has been used in an effort to modernize and develop the country and to improve the lives of ordinary Libyans.

Except for a few student and labor actions in the 1960s, Libya previously had little history of modern, mass political activity. This, too, is changing. Through local "people's congresses" and other organizations, the Libyan masses are being drawn more into active political life. Although this process has experienced some difficulties and has been conducted within strict guidelines set by Qaddafi and his colleagues, it has nevertheless strengthened the

revolution's popular base.

Expulsions and nationalizations

Among the first acts of the new Revolutionary Command Council were steps to reduce direct imperialist involvement in Libyan political and economic life.

The RCC canceled a controversial agreement signed by the Idris regime to purchase a \$1.1 billion air defense system from Britain (which would have involved an increase in British military personnel in Libya). On March 31, 1970, the British military bases at Tubruq and el-Aden were evacuated at the Libyan government's insistence.

Less than three months later, on June 16, 1970, Washington was forced to pull its forces out of the Wheelus air base. The U.S. Peace Corps was also ordered to leave.

At the time of the 1969 coup, an estimated 75 to 80 percent of Libya's manufacturing enterprises were owned by Italians. But in July 1970 the government expropriated all Italian-held property, including land, real estate, livestock, machinery, and businesses. As a result, the bulk of the 25,000 Italians still living in Libya left. The property of Libya's small Jewish community was also expropriated. Although some Jews received compensation in the form of government bonds, the Italians did not.

Foreign-owned banks were nationalized. These included two Italian banks, one Egyptian bank, and the British Barclays Bank. The Libyan government acquired majority holdings in these banks, while individual Libyans were allowed to buy shares up to a certain limit. Insurance companies were likewise compelled to yield to majority Libyan government and private control. The entirely Libyan-owned Libyan National Insurance Co. also had to cede 60 percent of its holdings to the government.

In July 1970 the three main domestic oil distribution companies — Shell, Esso, and a subsidiary of the Italian ENI — were nationalized without compensation.

In December 1971 the Libyan government nationalized the assets of British Petroleum. This marked the beginning of a series of nationalizations of the foreign companies engaged in extracting Libya's oil. Like British Petroleum, some were fully nationalized, including Shell, Texaco, and Atlantic Richfield. Others negotiated agreements ceding 51 percent participation to the Libyan government; these included Occidental, Marathon, Mobil, Exxon, and Agip. Mobil and Exxon later pulled out entirely. Libya's oil holdings are managed by the government-run National Oil Corp.

The Libyan government at the same time pressed the foreign oil companies to give Libya more of the proceeds from the export of oil. It sharply increased tax and royalty payments, and took steps to push up the price of oil.

The Idris regime had played little active role in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), in part under the pressure

of the U.S. and West European oil companies. But the Qaddafi government has been in the forefront of the OPEC countries' efforts to seek better terms from the international oil conglomerates. In fact, Libya's own moves tended to spur other oil producers to press for similar arrangements.

The nationalization of Libyan oil interests has given the Libyan state much more direct control over its oil resources, compared with the situation under the Idris regime. This has enabled it, for example, to limit oil production so as to prevent a rapid depletion of its reserves, as well as to have some say over how the oil is marketed and for what price. But inevitably, this control is limited, given the major oil companies' continued domination of the world market — a problem shared by all the OPEC producers.

One obvious effect of the change in Libyan oil policies in the years following the coup was the sharp rise in oil income, pushed up by higher prices and greater tax and royalty payments. From a little more than \$1 billion in 1969, Libya's oil earnings soared to a peak of \$22 billion in 1980.

This placed the Qaddafi government in an exceptionally favorable position to initiate its ambitious plans to develop Libya. Its massive financial resources, combined with the relatively small size of the Libyan population, also made it possible to rapidly improve the lives of the vast majority of Libyans.

Benefits for the masses

Within days of taking power, the new government doubled the minimum wage and lowered rents by decree. Wages and salaries increased further in subsequent years, particularly for the lower-paid, so that wages for unskilled workers were soon close to those of skilled employees.

Food prices are subsidized. This means that consumers can buy such essential commodities as wheat, flour, rice, cooking oil, barley, and tea well below their costs on the international market.

In 1969, medical care — including hospital service, doctors' treatments, and medicines — was made free for all residents of Libya. A major campaign was launched to build hospitals and health clinics around the country. By the late 1970s there were six hospital beds for every 1,000 Libyans and one doctor for every 800.

Many contagious diseases were soon eradicated, as well as trachoma, tuberculosis, and other maladies that are still common in much of Africa and the Middle East. The infant mortality rate has decreased sharply, from about 158 per 1,000 live births in 1960 to 95 in 1982. The average life expectancy in the same period has increased from 47 years to 57 years.

Although education under the Idris regime had expanded somewhat following the attainment of independence in 1951, it was still available to only a small portion of the population and was limited mainly to the primary grades.

The Qaddafi government adopted a policy



Old shantytowns (foreground) give way to new apartment buildings.

of "Education for all." Education was made free, up through the university level. Primary schooling became compulsory for all, a policy that was extended in the mid-1970s to cover three years of intermediate schooling as well.

Large sums were poured into the educational system. By 1984 this had reached \$1.5 billion a year. Between 1969 and 1979, the number of schools in Libya rose by two and a half times, with a particular emphasis on building new secondary schools to overcome the earlier deficiencies. Mobile classrooms were provided for remote rural areas. New universities were constructed, and the number of university students rose from 3,000 in 1969 to 20,000 in 1982 (in addition to thousands of Libyan students studying at universities abroad).

Before the revolution, women — who have historically suffered considerable oppression in Libyan society — were largely excluded from schooling. But since then, special steps have been taken to draw them more fully into the educational system. Literacy classes have been organized for women workers during working hours, and special educational programs have been developed for rural women. Although almost all schools were segregated by sex in the past, a majority today are mixed. Yet there is still considerable social prejudice against women participating in public life. Thus while most young girls go to primary school, they are much more likely than boys to drop out at the secondary level because of family pressures.²

There have been some measures to promote adult literacy in Libya. But the country's overall literacy rate has been raised primarily through expansion of the regular school system. Officially, the number of literate Libyans rose from 10 percent in 1950 to 70 percent by the end of the 1970s. But a 1978 study by Dr. Mustafa Attir of al-Fatah University in Tripoli concluded that *functional* literacy (measured by the ability to read newspapers and fill in

2. The gains of Libyan women, and the difficulties they still face, will be examined more broadly in the second article in this series.

standard application forms) was still less than 50 percent. More Libyan women are likely to be illiterate than men.

From shanties to apartments

At the time of the coup, Tripoli and Benghazi were surrounded by vast slum areas. More than 150,000 families were in urgent need of housing throughout the country. Some 70,000 families still lived in tents.

The new government embarked on a massive housing construction program. In addition, those wishing to buy or build houses received long-term, interest-free loans. By the mid-1970s, some 250,000 new housing units had already been built. Most slum areas were eradicated by the end of the 1970s, although a few shantytowns still survived into the next decade and housing in some of the older sections of Tripoli remains overcrowded.

One of the former slums on the outskirts of Tripoli was Abu Selim. Visiting it in 1976, *New York Times* correspondent Marvine Howe reported, "It is still sandy and treeless, but all the shacks have been replaced by pastel-colored concrete apartment buildings three and four stories high.

" 'We used to live like animals, but now we can have a good life,' Bedrya Ali, a nurse's aide, said, proudly showing visitors her neat rent-free apartment of three rooms."

In May 1978 a law was passed formally abolishing rents. Home ownership was limited to one house per family, while those renting houses became the new owners, having to pay only a small mortgage to the government (usually amounting to about one-third of the former rent).

Previously, urban centers, particularly Tripoli and Benghazi, had been divided into districts called *mahallas*, each occupied mainly by members of a single tribe. The construction of new residential neighborhoods and suburbs, without regard to the old tribal delineations, has served to promote greater intertribal contact.

The construction of new housing, medical facilities, and schools in the main cities and towns, along with the opening up of new job

opportunities, has accelerated the urbanization process in Libya. By 1983 an estimated 53 percent of all Libyans were living in urban centers, one-third of the entire population in Tripoli alone. Many of the families that were still nomadic at the time of the 1969 coup have since settled in or near the urban areas to take up more remunerative occupations.

The large concentration of population in metropolitan Tripoli has caused some social problems, however. According to Marius and Mary Jane Deeb, who conducted extensive research into some of the social transformations in Libya since the beginning of the revolution, the extensive growth of population in the capital "has resulted in the concentration of social facilities in Tripoli, to the detriment of other regions in Libya that still suffer from severe shortages in such services; second, it has created a 'vicious circle' situation, whereby immigration into the city has accelerated because the social services are better and more available than in other regions of Libya."

They continued, "The drain in human and material resources has also been a major problem resulting from this lopsided demographic growth in Libya. Whereas, for instance, Tripoli suffers from unemployment at the level of the unskilled worker, most rural areas are suffering from underemployment, and precious arable land is not being cultivated because of a shortage of manpower in the rural hinterland."³

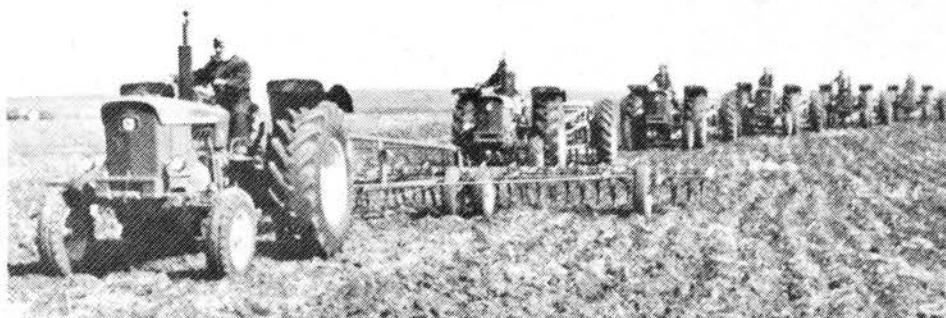
Farming: no easy solutions

Unchecked migration toward the towns is only one of the many difficulties facing agriculture in Libya. The greatest is the country's harsh environment.

The vast bulk of Libya's land area is either desert or semidesert. Only some 2 percent of the country is considered arable. Most of this is along the coast, in the mountainous Jebel region, and in the oases that are scattered in different parts of the country. Another 6 percent or so of the country is suitable for livestock grazing.

Private property in land began to develop only at the end of the 19th century, and then largely under the pressure of policies imposed by the Ottoman rulers. The Italian colonialists — besides seizing some of the best lands for themselves — likewise tried to transform collective land ownership among Libyans into private ownership, but with only partial success.

After the coming to power of the Qaddafi government, the expropriated Italian-owned lands were mostly distributed to Libyan peasants, with government credits for seed, fertilizer, and machinery. As of the early 1970s, there were more than 130,000 individually owned farms in the country, at an average size of 14.5 hectares (one hectare = 2.47 acres). Of these, 453 were commercial enterprises large



Tractors, irrigation, and other assistance has helped Libyan farmers increase production, despite difficult climatic conditions.

enough to employ farm managers, while another 11,000 involved some sort of partnership. Rural class differentiation thus remained limited and the sizes of landholdings were relatively egalitarian.

The Qaddafi government has adopted land policies aimed at blocking any further concentration of ownership. At first, during the early 1970s, this involved a decree stipulating that unused land would revert to state ownership. Then in 1978 Qaddafi proclaimed that "land does not belong to anyone." Although many Libyan peasants continued to hold land titles, this new policy in effect sought to revive the traditional tribal concept of collective land ownership. According to Qaddafi, anyone who wants to have a right to exploit a piece of land by "tilling the soil and breeding livestock," a right that can be passed on to one's heirs. Farmers and livestock breeders are discouraged from employing hired labor, however. And unused land continues to revert to state control, for subsequent redistribution.

Since there was no exploiting landlord class in Libya, these new land policies had little immediate impact for most rural producers. Far more important has been direct government assistance aimed at boosting agricultural production.

Projecting an ambitious goal of attaining self-sufficiency in food production, the government has allocated a significant portion of its budget toward agricultural development. Between 1976 and 1980 alone, this amounted to nearly \$6 billion. In the 1981-85 development plan, agriculture got 14 percent of the total investment allocations.

The government has provided many Libyan cultivators with easy-term loans, technical assistance, and outright grants of farm machinery, fertilizer, and seed. Between 1970 and 1981, the amount of fertilizer used in the country rose by nearly six times.

Such assistance has encouraged some nomads to take up settled agriculture. Reporting in the Dec. 30, 1980, Paris daily *Le Monde*, correspondent Paul Balta described the farming community of Wadi el-Ramli: "Like a thousand other farmers established there — mostly former pastoralists who have patiently converted to agriculture — Mohamed al-Farjani has been given, for free, a house, a cow, 20 sheep, 50 chickens, 5 beehives, a tractor, and the equipment necessary to cultivate

his lot of 26 hectares. In the irrigated zones, 200 others have received plots of land of 6 to 10 hectares."

Many agricultural development projects have been initiated, including the construction of dams, wells, and extensive irrigation systems. By the late 1970s some 280,000 hectares of land were irrigated (about 15 percent of the total arable land, compared with 5 percent that was irrigated in the early 1970s).

In a period of just 10 years, some 400 million trees were planted to try to reclaim part of the desert, although only about half of them have survived.

During the early 1970s, the government announced with much fanfare that it would "convert the barren deserts into green lands." Enormous sums were spent to build elaborate irrigation systems at Kufra, Sarir, Tawurgha, and other locations in the desert. Various farming and livestock projects were then developed around them.

These ventures succeeded in reclaiming patches of the desert for agricultural production (principally wheat), but they have also proved to be a drain on the economy. The final costs far exceeded initial estimates. The irrigation systems led to continual declines in the underground water level, necessitating constant and expensive modifications to the pumping systems.

According to a report in the October 1983 London monthly *Middle East*, "It is privately acknowledged that the desert farming projects in the south have failed, and will probably be phased out over the years." The production growth rates of cereal, fruit, and vegetables in these areas were only about half those projected. Moreover, as one farming expert in Libya told the magazine, "Wheat produced at Sarir under pivot irrigation costs five times more than the world price by the best estimates — even more than wheat from elsewhere in Libya."

This indicates some of the difficulties of trying to rapidly modernize agriculture in a country as underdeveloped as Libya, and where the physical environment itself serves as a brake on increased agricultural production. And while the Libyan state has significant funds at its disposal, it still lacks enough trained agricultural technicians and administrators. The rural producers themselves remain poorly organized.

3. Marius K. Deeb and Mary Jane Deeb, *Libya Since the Revolution: Aspects of Social and Political Development* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1982), p. 14.

Another difficulty has been the decline in the rural labor force. Despite the assistance given to farmers and the notable improvements registered in their living conditions, the government has been unable to stop, let alone reverse, the continued migration to the main urban centers, where conditions remain more attractive. While 70 percent of the active labor force was employed in the countryside in the 1950s, this has since fallen to less than a quarter.

Clearly, the government's early projections that it could soon attain self-sufficiency in food production were unrealistic. As of 1981 Libya still had to import 60 percent of its food needs. This was nevertheless a significant improvement, since only five years earlier it had to import 80 percent. By 1985 Libya was producing most of its own eggs, poultry, vegetables, and fruit, and about two-thirds of its wheat, barley, and meat.

New industries

Aside from the oil industry, the Libyan economy at the time of the 1969 coup was extremely backward and underdeveloped. There was only one tobacco plant employing 500 workers, two textile plants, a gypsum factory and cement plant, and various small food processing enterprises.

Within a few months of the coup, in April 1970, the Qaddafi government proclaimed its goal of industrializing Libya. Large- and medium-scale industries would be built through state investment, it said, while the private sector was encouraged to develop small-scale enterprises.

Libyan officials pointed to several considerations behind this industrialization policy. One was to overcome Libya's lopsided development and end its dependence on the sale of a single export product, oil. Another was to prepare for the day when the oil fields run dry. According to official figures, the known oil reserves, at current levels of production, are still expected to last more than 30 years. But some estimates place the oil fields' survival at less than 20 years.

Since the early 1970s, industrial development has received one of the biggest slices of the government budget. As a result, scores of new factories have been or are being built, under contract by various foreign corporations. These have included clothing, fertilizer, cement, brick, plastics, chemical, asphalt, glass, foodstuffs, shoe, electric cable, pipe, and vehicle assembly plants.

Iron ore deposits of more than 700 million tons have been discovered at Wadi Shatti, in southern Libya. In anticipation of their development, a \$1 billion steelworks is under construction at Misurata, on the coast. A large petrochemicals complex is also being built at Ras Lanouf, likewise on the coast.

In August 1984 the Qaddafi government launched its most ambitious and expensive development project yet — in fact, one of the largest single construction projects in the world. At an estimated cost of at least \$11 bil-

lion and perhaps as much as \$25 billion, it will include the construction of two giant pipelines leading from large water reservoirs under the southeastern desert to the populated coastal strip between Benghazi and Tripoli. For a country where lack of adequate water is a severe handicap to agriculture and industry alike, this "Great Man-Made River Project," as it is officially called, could prove a great benefit to the country's future if it can actually be built.

Other development projects have also been completed or launched. Over the past 10 years, some 30,000 kilometers of roads have been built, primarily along the coast, but also into parts of the interior. The ports of Tripoli and Benghazi have been expanded, and work is under way to reconstruct several smaller ones. A new international airport has been built in Benghazi and several power stations have been constructed around the country.

Libya's economy has clearly become more developed than it was in 1969. The basis has been laid for further progress. But Libya's industrialization program has nevertheless experienced some difficulties and shortcomings, and some of the key goals projected in the early 1970s have not been attained.

Some of these industries, like the large agricultural projects, are highly inefficient and have cost far more than was originally foreseen. The ready availability of large amounts of financing has reinforced a tendency among Libyan economic planners toward extravagance and waste.

Continued dependence

Nor has the growth of some industry lessened Libya's dependence on the world capitalist market. Many industries rely on imported spare parts, technical assistance, and even raw materials. In fact, Libya depends on other countries for much of its labor force — skilled technicians coming mostly from the imperialist countries and unskilled and semi-skilled workers from nearby Arab states. It is estimated that about half of all workers in Libya come from abroad.

Foreign corporations, mostly from Western Europe and the United States, have drawn large (and often inflated) profits from their participation in Libya's industrialization effort. Speaking to a May 1985 session of the General People's Congress, the main legislative body, Qaddafi reminded the delegates, "We took the Libyan monies from the defunct regime and gave them to 1,000 foreign companies after the revolution so that these companies can build factories, plantations, roads, houses, hospitals, and schools for us, and provide us with arms, and so forth. . . . All these achievements were realized in this manner: through contracts with foreign companies. These companies may have taken 150 or even 200 for something worth only 100. We paid them what they asked."

Finally, despite all the efforts of the past decade and a half, Libya remains almost entirely dependent on oil. Although the non-oil sector now accounts for 21 percent of Libya's gross domestic product, oil exports continue to

account for 99 percent of the country's foreign earnings.

"When we talk about available revenues we, in fact, mean the price of oil and nothing else," Qaddafi told a December 1985 session of the General People's Congress. "What you must realize is that . . . you have nothing but oil."

With the current glut in the world oil market and the fall in the price of oil, this has had serious repercussions for the Libyan economy, disrupting many development projects.

In 1980, Libya earned \$22 billion from oil exports, an amount that plunged to \$8 billion by 1985. A number of planned industrial and agricultural projects have been scrapped as a result, including the construction of a new fertilizer plant, aluminum smelter, and a railway that would have linked the iron ore deposits in the south with the port at Misurata. Construction on the Misurata steel mill itself has been disrupted because a South Korean company quit working on it until its bills are paid. Many other projects have either been scaled back or slowed down. The main exception has been the giant water pipeline project, which is still considered a high priority.

In a 1974 book on Libya, Ruth First, a prominent member of the South African Communist Party, observed, "Hinged on the structure of the industry, the exploitation of oil has made Libya inescapably part of the international capitalist system. Though much of the economy is still blatantly precapitalist, the dominant mode of production is capitalist, linked to giant multi-nationals resting on American, British, and European monopoly capital and management. Despite its great wealth Libya is dependent in the fullest sense of the word, providing crude oil to the metropolitan centres of the world in exchange for manufactured goods, foodstuffs, even primary materials."⁴

This remains as accurate a description of the Libyan economy today as it did a decade ago.

The existence of the oil industry certainly has made it possible for the revolution to bring the Libyan people rapid advances in their living standards and to at least begin to overcome their country's legacy of underdevelopment. Many other oppressed peoples have been far less fortunate.

But Libya's virtually exclusive dependence on oil at the same time leaves it more vulnerable, not only to the fluctuations of the international oil market, but also to the pressures of imperialist interests that are unremittingly opposed to any moves by the Libyan people to assert their national sovereignty.

Such imperialist opposition, combined with the country's difficult physical circumstances and vestiges of precapitalist social relations, have made the Libyan revolution's course a turbulent one. Those pressures have been reflected in sharp internal social conflicts that have been part of the revolution from the very beginning.

It is to those domestic conflicts that the second article in this series will turn. □

4. Ruth First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1974), pp. 248-49.

Preface to new book on Comintern

'The German Revolution and the Debate on Soviet Power'

By John Riddell

[The following is the complete preface to *The German Revolution and the Debate on Soviet Power*, the latest volume in the series *The Communist International in Lenin's Time*. The book is published by the Anchor Foundation and distributed by Pathfinder Press, 410 West St., New York, N.Y.; 47 The Cut, London SE1 8LL, England; and P.O. Box 37, Leichhardt, Sydney, NSW, Australia. This preface is copyright © 1986 by the Anchor Foundation and reprinted here with the permission of the publisher.]

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In the first days of November 1918, while war still raged across Europe, German workers and soldiers rose in revolt, forming revolutionary councils across the country. Their uprising toppled the German Empire on November 9 and brought Germany's participation in the war to an abrupt end two days later, thereby halting the world inter-imperialist slaughter.

The overthrow of the kaiser's regime, coming a little more than a year after that of the Russian tsar, opened a second front in the struggle against the international imperialist system. It helped lessen the imperialists' attempts to isolate the Russian workers' and peasants' republic established under Bolshevik leadership in November 1917.

Ever since the outbreak of World War in August 1914, when the leaders of most parties of the Second International had betrayed the working class and its internationalist principles, the Bolsheviks had advanced the call for a new, Communist International. Now the German revolution was helping to create the political conditions in which, in the view of the Bolshevik leaders of Soviet Russia, this new organization could be officially launched.

In November 1918 German working people confronted the same alternative paths that Russian workers and peasants had faced in 1917: forward, to the replacement of capitalist and landlord rule by a revolutionary government of the exploited toilers, or back to restabilized rule by the exploiters, those responsible for the horrors of the World War. The debate and struggle over this question in the German and international workers' movement is the central thread running through the documents in this book.

Many of these documents recount the struggle by German revolutionists for leadership of the working class against both the open and the veiled supporters of capitalist rule inside the workers' movement. Others tell the story of the debates at the founding congress of the German Communist Party (KPD) in December 1918. The second part of the book records the

international debate on Soviet power and the process that led to launching the Communist International (Comintern) in March 1919.

The political record of the German revolution aids in understanding the events that led to founding the Comintern. Moreover, the successes and failures of working-class strategy and tactics in the German revolution were to figure among the key experiences drawn on by the Comintern as it hammered out its perspectives at its first four congresses held between 1919 and 1922.

Russian Communist leader V.I. Lenin held that the new International was born as a living movement in the months of November and December 1918, when Communist parties were formed in several European countries. He placed special importance on the formation of the Communist Party in Germany, where the workers' movement was strong and had a Marxist political heritage. The revolutionary wing of the German movement was now in the center of a deep-going challenge to rule by the big industrial and landowning capitalists. In January 1919 Lenin explained:

"The foundation of a genuinely proletarian, genuinely internationalist, genuinely revolutionary Third International, the *Communist International*, became a fact when the German Spartacus League, with such world-known and world famous leaders, with such staunch working-class champions as [Karl] Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, Clara Zetkin and Franz Mehring, made a clean break with . . . social-chauvinists (socialists in words, but chauvinists in deeds) who have earned eternal shame by their alliance with the predatory, imperialist German bourgeoisie and [Kaiser] Wilhelm II. It became a fact when the Spartacus League changed its name to the Communist Party of Germany. Though it has not yet been officially inaugurated, the Third International actually exists."¹

The Spartacus League had originated as a revolutionary current in the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD), initiating and spearheading opposition to the SPD majority leadership's open support in August 1914 to German imperialist war policy. The Spartacists called on workers around the world to conduct a revolutionary class struggle against the imperialist bourgeoisie, which was responsible for the war. At first the Spartacists were only a small handful. But as discontent mounted against the war and against the German imperial government that was waging it, their stand won increasing working-class sup-

port.

Wider layers of the SPD ranks and a growing minority of its leaders soon began to oppose the party leadership's war policies. Most oppositionists within the SPD leadership, however, were centrists, who shared the class-collaborationist outlook of their colleagues in top party bodies. Prodded into action by mounting working-class discontent, these oppositionist leaders had become convinced that the threat of social revolution could be averted only through bringing a halt to Germany's participation in the war, a perspective they shared with a growing layer of petty-bourgeois and bourgeois pacifists.

These oppositional forces were expelled from the SPD in January 1917 and formed the centrist-led Independent Social Democratic Party of Germany (USPD). The Spartacists joined the USPD and carried on their fight for revolutionary policies as a public faction within the new party.

The Spartacists' revolutionary agitation and resistance to the war had won them the respect of broad layers of German workers and soldiers. They became the most authoritative current outside Russia to stand up against the chauvinist war effort of the government of their own country and to attempt to put the international workers' movement on a revolutionary course.

When the workers and soldiers overthrew the kaiser and his regime on November 9, 1918, the SPD and USPD leaders formed a provisional government committed to preserving the existing capitalist state. The Spartacus League advocated replacing this government with one resting on the mass-based councils of workers and soldiers that had arisen during the uprising. Only such a government, they argued, could advance the interests of the exploited German working people. They fought the efforts by the SPD and USPD leaderships to reconsolidate capitalist rule. Their work to establish a revolutionary government and lessen the isolation of the world's first workers' and peasants' government in Russia was hailed by the Bolsheviks and other revolutionists around the world.

The Spartacists gained further authority among German workers as outspoken defenders of the Soviet government of Russia. Inspired by the victory in Russia, working people in Germany, like those in many other countries, looked to the October 1917 revolution as the first successful example of how to overturn capitalist political rule and begin the construction of a new society.

In Russia the workers' and peasants' government was based on mass, delegated councils of the exploited — *soviets* in the Russian

1. V.I. Lenin, "Letter to the Workers of Europe and America," in *Collected Works* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1974), vol. 28, pp. 429-30.

language. These soviets had arisen in the course of the 1917 revolution as democratic bodies through which workers, peasants, and soldiers could centralize their struggle against the war, landlordism, and capitalist exploitation. Revolutionary-minded workers and peasants outside Russia began to look to the soviets as an embodiment of their own demand for a government that would represent their class interests against those of their exploiters. The call for a "council republic" or "Soviet republic" became a popular way of expressing the desire to "do what the Russians did."

During 1918, a Communist current began to take shape in the international workers' movement. It was made up of revolutionary internationalists committed to the conquest of state power by the proletariat and its allies and to the establishment of governments of the soviet type.

A few days before the victory of the German workers and soldiers, a revolutionary tide had broken apart the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and workers' and soldiers' councils had been formed in many areas. Poland and other countries of eastern Europe were swept by revolutionary struggles in November and subsequent months. In western Europe and North America, where such major explosions had not yet erupted, revolutionary currents who looked to the Bolsheviks gained in strength.

The Communist movement was also attracting revolutionary fighters from the oppressed peoples of Asia. Inspired by the Russian revolution to deepen their struggle against imperialist colonial domination, these revolutionists sought assistance from the Bolshevik leadership in hammering out a strategy to advance this goal. Throughout vast regions of Asia that had been colonized and nationally oppressed by the old tsarist empire, militants looked to the Bolshevik-led Soviet government for help in carrying out democratic, antifeudal revolutions against local landlords and profiteers. Here too, governments based on soviets of the peasants and other exploited toilers arose.

The Communist International thus took shape in the fight to defend and consolidate the workers' and peasants' republic in Russia, to establish Soviet governments in a number of other countries in central and eastern Europe and in the Asian regions of the old tsarist empire, and to extend this revolutionary process to new sections of the globe.

"The most characteristic feature of this International," Lenin stated in an article written shortly after the Comintern's formation, was that it "has already begun to develop, to a certain extent, into a union of Soviet Socialist Republics."

The International Working Men's Association (First International) — founded in 1864 and led by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels during its decade-long existence — "laid the foundation of the proletarian, international struggle for socialism," Lenin wrote.

The Socialist (Second) International, founded in 1889, in which Engels played a leading role until his death in 1895, "marked a

period in which the soil was prepared for the broad, mass spread of the movement in a number of countries." The growth of this International, Lenin said, "proceeded in *breadth*, at the cost of a temporary drop in the revolutionary level, a temporary strengthening of opportunism, which in the end led to the disgraceful collapse of this International.

"The Third International actually emerged in 1918," Lenin continued, "when the long years of struggle against opportunism and social-chauvinism, especially during the war, led to the formation of Communist Parties in a number of countries. . . ."

"The Third International has gathered the fruits of the work of the Second International, discarded its opportunist, social-chauvinist, bourgeois and petty-bourgeois dross, and *has begun to implement* the dictatorship of the proletariat."²

The establishment in Russia of a revolutionary government of the workers and exploited peasants in October 1917 and the expropriation of the landlords and capitalists over the following year polarized the world working-class movement. As Lenin noted, "working people all over the world have instinctively grasped the significance of the Soviets as an instrument in the proletarian struggle and as a form of the proletarian state. But the 'leaders', corrupted by opportunism, still continue to worship bourgeois democracy, which they still call 'democracy' in general."³

The struggle between proponents of these counterposed views irreversibly deepened the split in the German workers' movement. Before 1914, the SPD and the trade unions linked with it had been the most powerfully organized and politically authoritative contingent of the international workers' movement. By the end of 1918, the SPD had broken apart, giving birth to three rival parties.

The "majority" SPD defended the rule of the industrialists, bankers, and landowners and had assumed responsibility for administering the German capitalist state. The Spartacists, along with other revolutionists, formed the Communist Party of Germany, which strove to overthrow capitalist rule and establish a state defending the interests of the working class and its allies.

Between them stood the USPD. After the November revolution the majority of its leaders quickly realigned themselves with the SPD; together with a minority of the USPD ranks, these centrist leaders were to rejoin the SPD within four years. The majority of the USPD's working-class ranks, on the other hand, and a minority of its leaders radicalized after November 1918 and were won in 1920 to a fusion with the KPD.

In January 1919 the German government, now headed by the SPD alone, unleashed

right-wing military units against the revolutionary workers of Berlin, dealing them a sharp defeat. Workers in other regions of Germany were subjected to similar armed attacks in subsequent months. The impact of this confrontation sped the polarization of the international workers' movement into two opposed camps. Taken together with the example of the Russian revolution, the German experience convinced millions of workers of the need for a new, Communist International.

* * *

The Communist International in Lenin's Time, the series of volumes of which this book is a part, aims to make more accessible to today's readers the example and lessons of the international Communist movement that grew out of the Russian revolution and that was led by the Bolshevik Party (renamed the Russian Communist Party [Bolsheviks] in March 1918). The series seeks to trace the historic continuity of revolutionary Marxism through the struggle to launch the Communist International and the first five years of its activity — the years during which its policies were shaped by Lenin and the team of Marxist revolutionists led by him. The program, strategy, and organizational conceptions hammered out at that time remain the foundation for all those seeking to chart a revolutionary course in the changed conditions of today's world, more than half a century later.

The volumes of *The Communist International in Lenin's Time* will present the discussion and debates within this worldwide movement — debates that were shaped by the great political upheavals of the first quarter of this century. It will include the key exchanges between the leaders of the new International and various reformist, centrist, and anarcho-synicalist currents.

A previously published volume of the series, *Lenin's Struggle for a Revolutionary International*, covers the years of preparatory struggle from 1907 through 1916. A forthcoming volume will include materials from the years 1917-18, focusing on the impact of the victorious October revolution in Russia on the prospects for forming a new, revolutionary International.

The series will follow the Comintern's development from its foundation until the end of 1923. Seven volumes will publish the complete resolutions and proceedings of the first four Comintern congresses, held in March 1919, July-August 1920, June-July 1921, and November-December 1922. Companion volumes will record the decisions, debates, and activity of the Comintern's elected Executive Committee (ECCI) during the years between these congresses, as well as key developments in various national Communist parties that shaped the course of deliberations at the congresses. Another volume will cover the year following the Fourth Congress, including the expanded ECCI plenum of June 1923. The Communist International's work among trade unionists, women, anti-imperialist fighters

2. Lenin, "The Third International and Its Place in History," in *Collected Works*, vol. 29, pp. 306-7.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 308.

from colonial countries, and young workers will be the topics of additional books.

* * *

The present volume is divided into two parts. The first focuses on the German revolution and the founding of the German Communist Party. The second takes up the international debate on Soviet power, as well as the preparations by the Bolsheviks for the March 1919 founding congress of the Communist International.

Part one, "The German Revolution," takes up the first two months of the German revolution leading to the confrontation of the revolutionary workers with the SPD-led capitalist government in the Berlin uprising of January 1919. It also records the attempt of the Russian Soviet government after the November 9 revolution to form a united front with the new German republic against international capitalist reaction and to come to the aid of the embattled workers, soldiers, and peasants who had overthrown the kaiser's regime.

Chapters 4 and 5 focus on the strategic and tactical debate among German Communists. These chapters include extensive excerpts from the stenographic record of the German Communist Party's founding congress. The formation of this party posed the question of how vanguard revolutionary forces should be organized, whether they should take the name *Communist*, and under what conditions they would favor organizing a new International. The KPD congress also discussed counterposed positions on Communist participation in the national assembly elections called by the SPD-led government and on the broader question of revolutionists' participation in elections in capitalist countries. It debated whether and how to form a strategic alliance with the exploited peasantry in Germany. All of these problems were discussed extensively in subsequent years in the world Communist movement.

The German Communists' policies diverged markedly on many questions from those advocated and carried out by the Russian Communist Party. The newly formed German party's political strengths and weaknesses were sharply tested in the January 1919 Berlin uprising.

The story of the KPD's formation also sheds light on the evolution of the Spartacist forces led by Luxemburg and Liebknecht. This important revolutionary current increasingly moved toward the Bolsheviks politically through the experience of the First World War, the October 1917 revolution in Russia, and the 1918-19 revolutionary events in Germany.

Luxemburg, Liebknecht, and their followers had waged a sharp struggle against the SPD majority leadership, whom they branded as enemies of the workers' movement. The Spartacists were also sharply critical of the centrist current in the SPD, personified by Karl Kautsky, which later led the USPD. While the USPD leaders opposed many of the majority SPD leadership's policies on the war, they

supported the principle of "national defense" and aimed at no more than a return to the pre-war unity and practice of the SPD and the Second International. Nonetheless, during the war the Spartacists resisted making a clean political break with the Kautskyst current and held back from beginning to build a new, revolutionary party.

Like the Zimmerwald Left, the international revolutionary Marxist current established in 1915 under the leadership of the Bolsheviks, the Spartacists called for a new International. Unlike the Bolsheviks, however, they did not see the necessity of insisting that this International must be purged of all forms of opportunism, including its centrist form. They also disagreed with other aspects of Bolshevik policy regarding the party and its role in the revolutionary struggle and with the Bolsheviks' stand on the worker-peasant alliance, land reform, and the national and colonial liberation movements.⁴

During the initial months of the 1918-19 German revolution, the forces around Luxemburg and Liebknecht came to view themselves more as a Communist current pursuing the same goals as the Bolsheviks. Although the Spartacists lacked political homogeneity, and although all wings of their movement disagreed with many important policies of the Soviet Communist leadership, they were clearly evolving politically toward Bolshevism. This process was still unfolding when Liebknecht and Luxemburg were murdered in January 1919 by right-wing armed detachments launched against the Berlin workers by the SPD-led government. Subsequent volumes will record how the German Communists were won to the Comintern and became members of its leadership bodies.

In part two of this volume, "Toward Launching the Communist International," the framework broadens to the international preparations led by the Bolsheviks in late 1918 and early 1919 to launch the new, Communist International.

Chapter 7 focuses on the exchange between Lenin and Kautsky on the Russian workers' and peasants' government and its lessons regarding the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Chapter 8 contains selections from the debate on Bolshevism at the international conference organized by procapitalist Social Democratic currents in Bern, Switzerland, in February 1919 in an attempt to revive the defunct Second International.

The final chapter traces the Bolsheviks' work to prepare the launching of the new, Communist International and records the Ger-

man Communist leaders' initial opposition to its formation at that time. It will be left to a companion volume, *The Founding of the Communist International*, to show how these objections were overcome in the course of the March 1919 international Communist congress. The congress proceedings published in that volume will also include Lenin's resolution and report "Bourgeois Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," which is his concise assessment of the central issue debated throughout the documents in the present volume.

Leaving aside articles by Lenin, 65 percent of the documents in this book have never before been published in English. Others of these documents exist only in hard-to-obtain translations published more than fifty years ago. The availability of documents in other English-language editions has been taken into account in selecting material for this volume. Lenin's pamphlet, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, although widely available in English translation, has nonetheless been included in full because of its centrality to the political debate on Soviet power recorded in this volume.

The present volume also includes as an appendix the 1919 program of the Russian Communist Party, adopted in the same month as the Comintern founding congress.

* * *

Except for articles by Lenin, the documents in this collection have been newly translated. Occasional interpolations by the editor have been enclosed in square brackets. The writings of Lenin have been reproduced from the most recent English-language edition of the *Collected Works* published by Progress Publishers in Moscow. One item by Lenin not found in that edition has been newly translated from the fifth Russian edition of his collected works.⁵

The aim of this work is not solely to provide a documentary record, but to do so in such a way as to tell the story of the Communist International through its decisions, polemics, and major experiences in struggle.

A running commentary by the editor explains the historical background to the documents and provides a brief account of the main events that shaped them. The editor has made no attempt to provide a historical balance sheet or assessment of the events described. Where appropriate, however, the commentary indicates the subsequent assessment of elected bodies and central leaders of the Communist International during its first five years.

Footnotes by the editor, giving the source of documents and explanatory information, are printed at the end of each chapter. In some cases the authors of documents provided footnotes; these are indicated by asterisks (*) and are printed at the bottom of the page.

Ellipsis points (...) indicate the omission

4. Many of the Spartacists' differences with the Bolsheviks are explained in documents in this volume. For the Spartacists' and Bolsheviks' contrasting attitudes to the centrists and their differences regarding the right of oppressed peoples to self-determination, see John Riddell, ed., *Lenin's Struggle for a Revolutionary International: Documents 1907-16, the Preparatory Years* (New York: Monad Press, 1984), a volume of *The Communist International in Lenin's Time*.

5. See "Remarks on Theses 'Foundations of the Third International,'" printed in chapter 9, page 456.

of material from a translated document. In the text of articles by Lenin, however, we have retained the Progress Publishers' style of using ellipsis points, as in Russian, to show a pause in the author's thought.

A glossary is provided of individuals, publications, and political currents mentioned in this volume. A chronology lists important dates relating to documents in this collection. Existing English-language editions of related material are indicated in a brief bibliography and in the footnotes.

* * *

This book was made possible by a large number of collaborators who helped to collect source material, research historical questions, and translate documents into English.

Robert Dees was responsible for a large part of the research for this volume, helped draft chapter 5, and assisted in writing the commentary as a whole. Bruce Marcus of Pathfinder Press lent editorial assistance and organized the final copyediting and production. Wilfried Dubois of Frankfurt, Germany, helped resolve many of the most obstinate research problems.

Research and interpretation of documents of the German revolution was greatly assisted by Rudolf Segall and his colleagues Helmut Dahmer and Reiner Tosstorff of the Verein zur wissenschaftlichen Erforschung und Aufarbeitung historischen Kulturguts (Association for Scholarly Research and Presentation of the Historical Heritage), Frankfurt. Wolrad Bode and Lüko Willms helped locate important source material.

Others who assisted research work included Fritz Keller in Austria; David Bowie in Britain; Kay Riddell in Canada; Derek Jeffers and Nat London in France; Mehdi Assar and H. Siamak for Iran; Alejandro Gálvez in Mexico; Joost Kirz and Pierre Rousset in the Netherlands; Gérard Donzé and Pierre Hirsch in Switzerland; Fuat Orçun for Turkey; and Jeff Hamill, John Keillor, Ron Richards, and Bob Wilkinson in the United States.

We wish to acknowledge the help of Pierre Broué, Richard Debo, Yoichi Murata, and Hermann Weber, who advised us on aspects of Communist history.

The translations, commentary, and choice of documents, of course, are the responsibility of the editor alone.

Among the many librarians and libraries who were of substantial assistance in locating documents were Geneviève Dreyfus and the Bibliothèque de Documentation Internationale Contemporaine in Paris; Francesca Gorri and the Fondazione Giangiacomo Feltrinelli of Milan; Hilja Kuk and the Hoover Institution of Stanford, California; Marcel van der Linden and the late Vilém Kahan of the International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam; Jane Cooper and the University of Toronto Library, Toronto; and Ethel Lobman and the Tamiment Library, New York.

Staff translators were Robert Dees from French and German, Bob Cantrick from Ger-

man, and Sonja Franeta from Russian. Other translators for this volume were Ron Allen, Jeff Hamill, George Myland, and Rebecca Park (from Russian); John Hawkins (from Ger-

man); and Mehdi Assar (from Farsi). Alix Holt, Denis Peillard, and Rudolf Segall also advised us regarding difficult points in the translation. □

Paraguayan regime moves to cut off dissent

By Steve Craine

On April 24 police in Asunción, Paraguay, used tear gas and clubs to break up a march of hospital workers demanding an increase in their subminimum wages. It was the first use of tear gas in the capital since protests against the visit of Nelson Rockefeller were broken up in 1969.

This attack, and many like it in recent weeks, was in response to an unprecedented upsurge of actions against the government of Gen. Alfredo Stroessner, the longest-ruling military dictator in Latin America. Throughout most of Stroessner's 32-year rule, his grip on the political life of Paraguay has been so tight that public opposition of any kind has been virtually unheard of. But since February, dozens of demonstrations involving from hundreds to a few thousand have been held in Asunción and other cities.

Tear gas was used again a few days later against a political rally of about 1,000 at the home of Domingo Laino, a leader of the Authentic Radical Liberal Party (PLRA). The party is one of the four components of the National Accord, an alliance of capitalist and Social Democratic opponents of the Stroessner dictatorship.

While many recent street actions have been broken up by the police, others have been attacked by paramilitary thugs with close ties to Stroessner's ruling Colorado Party. Some 150 armed thugs also attacked a radio station on April 30. The station, Radio Ñanduti, has been critical of the government and has spoken out for human rights. During the assault, the mob fired guns into the air and threw rocks at the building, breaking windows and destroying electronic equipment.

Another radio station, run by Franciscan priests, was put under government surveillance for, in the words of the station's director, "failing over the past months to give the obligatory praise to the head of state and for increasing its criticisms of governmental excesses."

In early May the national police refused to turn over three detainees to the Supreme Court following an attempt to have them released under habeas corpus provisions. The three were a doctor, a peasant leader, and a law student. The police cited article 79 of the country's constitution, which established a state of siege allowing prolonged detention without trial or other legal recourse.

The rise in active opposition to Stroessner is due to the country's economic problems and the increasing isolation of the regime, as similar military dictatorships have ended in neighboring Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay.

Paraguay's foreign debt is now 10 times what it was as recently as 1981. This year ex-



port earnings are expected to total only \$200 million, due in part to a prolonged drought. In 1980 the country exported \$310 million worth of goods.

This decline of the economy as a whole, along with widespread corruption in the circles around General Stroessner, has led important sections of the capitalist class to look for alternatives to the present government.

The National Accord is a loose bloc of the PLRA, the Revolutionary Febrerista Party (PRF, an affiliate of the Socialist International), the Christian Democratic Party, and the Colorado People's Movement (MOPOCO), a split off from the Colorado Party that has close ties with the Democratic Party of the United States.

This bloc has raised the possibility of a formal multiparty alliance of the kind established in Argentina and Uruguay to take over from the military dictatorships there. It also has the support of the Paraguayan Bishops' Conference.

The PRF organized the first in the recent wave of demonstrations in February. On March 21 PLRA Secretary General Miguel Abdon Saguier called for "popular mobilization" to remove General Stroessner "from power and from the country." The same day, the government had agreed to allow public demonstrations without prior approval.

But on April 1, in an address to the Congress, Stroessner signaled the need for a crackdown on all dissent. He branded as illegal and subversive all agitation for democratic rights and called members of the National Accord grouping "resentful people and deserters." He promised his government "will not weaken or back down."

The repression that has followed is an attempt by the regime to return to the state of total control that it enjoyed for most of the past 32 years. □

Speech by South African union leader

COSATU General Secretary Jay Naidoo explains union's policies

[Formed in late 1985, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) is the largest of the country's democratic trade union federations, composed primarily of Black workers. The following is the text of a speech given by COSATU General Secretary Jay Naidoo at the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, on March 19. It is taken from the April-May issue of the *South African Labour Bulletin*, a bimonthly journal published in Johannesburg. The footnotes are by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

What I would like to set out here today are the broad circumstances in which we as the independent trade unions, and COSATU in particular, operate. I will attempt to locate COSATU in the present political environment and explain the pressures under which a relatively new union movement exists.

In understanding the significance of COSATU it is worth recalling that 10 years ago in 1976 the total paid-up membership in the newly formed independent unions was probably 20,000 at the most. By 1979 it was probably around 40,000. Today in COSATU alone there are now 600,000 fully paid-up members located in every industrial concentration in South Africa.

But for all the strength that we have at present, for all the experience of our worker leadership and more broadly the working class, COSATU still is a relatively new organisation, this notwithstanding the fact that COSATU carries with it all the traditions of militancy and resistance of worker organisations that have come before it.

The tasks that face us are enormous. Millions of workers have to be organised. Many workers disorganised by years of bureaucratic unionism are still joining us. The power of our organisation is still being more effectively rooted and consolidated at local, regional, and national levels.

So although we believe that we have something to say, we also know that we are learning. We are learning from militant sectors of our people — such as the students; we are learning from those communities which are building disciplined grassroots structures; and we are learning from the unity in action with other progressive forces.

Nevertheless we do believe we have something to say, and with this in mind I would like to share some thoughts with you.

COSATU is first and foremost a trade union federation. It is an organisation that unites organised workers. Its roots are on the factory floor. Its starting point is its organisational strength at the point of production — its mem-

bers are the producers of the wealth of our country.

Political struggle

But experience has taught us that it is not enough to simply concern ourselves with factory issues. Nonpolitical unionism is not only undesirable, it is impossible. And this basic truth has become increasingly clear to the organised worker movement. 1985 was probably the most turbulent year in the history of our country. It saw the emergence of levels of resistance to the apartheid state which have never been seen before. It saw a ruling class floundering, a government directionless, and an economy ravaged by inflation and soaring unemployment.

It was against this background that COSATU adopted an explicitly political direction. We do not see COSATU as a political party, but we do believe that COSATU has a responsibility to voice the political interests and aspirations of the organised workers and also more broadly of the working class.

We therefore see COSATU as an active participant in the liberation struggle. We see ourselves as a political force at local, regional, and national levels. And we therefore are forced to confront the following questions.

What sort of politics?

What sort of liberation are we seeking?

Who are our friends and allies in the struggle?

What are we fighting for?

What are we fighting against?

The political policy adopted recently by our Central Executive Committee states:

that workers experience repression, hardship, and suffering not only at their workplaces but in every other aspect of their lives and within the communities where they live. It is therefore imperative that the Federation should play a major role in the struggle for a nonracial and democratic society and that the Federation will not hesitate to take political action to protect and advance the interests of its members and the wider working class.

Clearly we see ourselves as part and parcel of the broad struggle against apartheid and racism. We see ourselves as full participants in the fight for democracy, justice, and peace in South Africa.

Exploitation and working-class politics

And yet our experience as workers has taught us more. Justice for us is not simply a beautiful phrase. It also means social justice, economic justice, and political justice. It means freedom from hunger and poverty, the right to work, the right to proper housing, decent medical facilities, and a meaningful education system that would develop the human

potential of our people.

It is our experience that apartheid racism has gone hand in hand with our exploitation and suffering at the hands of the bosses. Free enterprise has not been something separate and hostile to racism. Despite the desperate attempts by organised business to distance themselves from the present discredited regime, we have learnt one important lesson, that the root and fruit of the apartheid tree is the exploitation of workers in South Africa.

Our most recent experiences at Gencor, Rand Mines, Haggie Rand all confirm this. It takes very little to unmask these monopolies and reveal their ruthless pursuit of superprofits. The last 10 days have come as a shocking reminder that nothing has changed. Many lives of our members have been sacrificed on the mines through the brutality of the mine bosses and repressive organs of the apartheid state: the SAP [South African Police] and army. To us the alliance between big business and the apartheid state is soaked in the blood of the workers.

It is therefore clear that we see ourselves expressing the interests of workers in the struggle for our freedom. We see it as our duty to make sure that freedom does not merely change the skin colour of our oppressors.

We are not fighting for freedom which sees the bulk of workers continuing to suffer as they do today. We therefore see it as our duty to promote working-class politics. A politics where workers' interests are paramount in the struggle.

Alliances

At the same time we recognise that no struggle has ever involved one social force acting alone. We therefore have to look carefully at our society to see who are our allies.

This brings me to the other important aspect of our political policy: "... the independent political interests of the working class shall be waged through ... taking up political struggles through our membership and structures at local, regional, and national levels as well as through disciplined alliances with progressive community organisations whose interests are compatible with the interests of the workers and whose organisational practices further the interests of the working class."

Therefore our experience has taught us, firstly, to avoid isolating ourselves as workers and defining our friends and allies too narrowly, i.e., the danger of workerism; and secondly, to avoid subsuming ourselves in an incoherent mass mood or populist desire for an ill-defined "freedom," i.e., the danger of populism; and thirdly, to choose our allies on the basis of what we know, what has been our

experience as workers, and not on the basis of abstracted principles of what is or is not a "correct" approach, i.e., the danger of impractical but nice-sounding theories.

Thus when we look at our society we can broadly say that our allies fall into two groups. Firstly there are those that we regard as close allies of the workers. These are the unemployed (there are more than 3 million); the rural poor (the landless, peasants, and farm-workers); and the militant black youth. These are our closest allies. We believe that they share with us the desire for real freedom, for meaningful change. It is our experience that they are largely the brothers, sisters, children, and parents of our very own members. Their future and that of the workers are inseparably linked. Like us they want a meaningful transformation of our society.

The second group of allies consists of all those who share with us a hatred of the present system. It consists of all those people oppressed by racism, i.e., the entire black people; as well as all democratic forces amongst the white population.

Of course we may have differences with our allies. But we believe that the widest possible unity is necessary to rid ourselves of the evils of apartheid. We may differ in the type of society we would like to see emerging in this country, but we believe we have enough in common to fight together.

On this platform I would like to address a few words to the intellectuals amongst us. We extend our hand to you. We ask you to put your learning skills and education at the service of the workers' movement. If you are a researcher then do research that would help the workers' movement. Look at unemployment, look at the housing crisis, the transport problems workers face. Help expose the poverty wages paid and the pervasive influence of the big monopolies. If you are a doctor, serve the people, look at the problems of the working class: malnutrition, kwashiorkor, and health hazards at work.

But we believe that the direction of the workers' movement will develop organically out of the struggle of workers on the factory floor and in the townships where they live. Accordingly the role of intellectuals will be purely a supportive one of assisting the greater

generation of working-class leadership.

As COSATU we believe that we have generated a working-class leadership that is competent enough to debate its position and to direct the movement itself.

Other organisations

What I have said up to now is fairly general, but in the real world we live in we have to come to terms with organisations that exist.

COSATU is forging closer ties with democratic community-based organisations. In particular we have a high regard for those communities which are building strong grassroots structures in the form of street committees. We see this as a major step forward and an important principle that is integral to working-class organisation on the factory floor.

We encourage this development and see it as COSATU's policy for members and local structures to play an active role in building such structures. In many areas COSATU locals are becoming a driving force in the growth of solidly based community organisation.

At the third level of our political policy we have chosen, as COSATU, "not to affiliate to any political organisation," but to retain our independence. Nevertheless, our commitment to ending apartheid, the state of emergency, the release of comrade Nelson Mandela and all political prisoners, the unbanning of the banned organisations, the end to the pass laws has given us much in common with a wide range of organisations.

Undoubtedly the most important of these is the ANC [African National Congress], a movement whose stature and influence is growing daily in South Africa. In the light of this, COSATU recently met with a high-level ANC-SACTU delegation in Lusaka.¹ The talks were open and conducted in a friendly spirit. It was recognised that COSATU, as a representative of the working class, is seized with the task of engaging the general democratic struggle, both as an independent organisation and as an essential component of the democratic forces of our country. Further, it is clear that in the specific conditions of our country it is inconceivable that political emancipation can be separated from economic emancipation.

Therefore, while united in opposition to the entire apartheid system, there is a common understanding that victory must embrace more than formal political democracy, and must involve a struggle for a society free from the chains of poverty, racism, and exploitation which would require a restructuring of the present economic system.

Obviously there is much more to say on this point. However the democratic nature of COSATU ensures that we first report back fully to our membership before going into detail on platforms such as this.

1. For the text of the joint communiqué issued following the March 5-6 meeting of delegations from COSATU, the ANC, and the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), see the April 7 *Intercontinental Press*.

It was in 1960 that Macmillan spoke of the winds of change blowing across Africa.² In 1986 those winds have become a hurricane. Even the corridors of parliament have felt them. When Dr. Slabbert resigned, saying he saw no purpose in parliamentary debate, he was merely signifying the decay and political wilderness that even the isolated white political establishment finds itself in.³

COSATU resolves

As COSATU we believe that change is coming. Therefore as workers we have resolved to:

- take the lead in organising and mobilising not only in our factories but our townships,
- bring the lessons of solid organising to our people as a whole and especially to our close allies,
- raise the issues of social, political, and economic transformation now and not leave it to some future unspecified date,
- build workers to gain confidence in themselves and in their ability to lead our struggle,
- understand the dual needs of workers' autonomy and to form disciplined alliances with all progressive forces,
- organise the unorganised and build powerful national industrial unions,
- through our activity and education programmes to develop an increasingly coherent political perspective and programme for our federation.

In carrying out these many tasks we will at all times be guided by the following principles:

Firstly, our political and economic strength lies in building powerful, militant, and democratic organisation in the workplace. This strength will guarantee that worker aspirations will not be suppressed. Such organisation is also the basis for the real democratisation of production.

Secondly, organised workers are not representative of the working class as a whole, but they constitute its most powerful weapon. The better the organisation the more powerful their weapon becomes and the greater will be their contribution to the struggle of the working class and the oppressed people in South Africa.

Thirdly, we must draw all people into a programme of restructuring the economy and society as a whole in such a way that the wealth of our society is democratically controlled and shared by all its people.

Politics for workers is not only the matter of changing governments. For workers it must go much further to break the chains of poverty and exploitation that bind our people at present. It is the struggle to liberate our people so that they can realise their fullest potential as human beings. □

2. A reference to a speech by British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan during a January 1960 visit to South Africa.

3. Frederick van Zyl Slabbert, the leader of the Progressive Federal Party, the main white parliamentary opposition party, resigned both from parliament and party leadership in March.

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Blacks in Britain discuss South Africa

Differing views within Labour Party Black Section

[The following are three documents from the Black Section of the British Labour Party on the character of the freedom struggle in South Africa and of the anti-apartheid movement within Britain. The first two are a position paper and an action proposal resolution, both of which were adopted by a March 8 Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Labour Party Black Section. The third is a position paper delivered to the meeting by Mike Wongsam, a delegate to the Black Section's National Committee from Manchester. We have taken the texts from the April 4, April 18, and April 25 issues of the London revolutionary socialist weekly *Socialist Action*.]

* * *

Black Section position paper

The national committee of 30 November 1985 asked for a paper on the South African/Azania question. This followed the statement, "Isolate South Africa — Freedom for Azania," issued by the executive on 7 August which attracted widespread publicity. In this we gave our full support for complete and inviolable economic sanctions and disinvestment aimed at bringing the racist Pretoria regime to their knees.

We qualified this by saying: "We believe that freedom for the enslaved black majority in Azania will not be brought about solely by (outside) sanctions. Those fighting to break the chains of bondage through the black trade unions and armed liberation struggle must be supplied with financial and material aid." We called on [Labour Party leader] Neil Kinnock to urgently convene a meeting of Labour movement leaders — black and white — to formulate a campaign aimed at:

1. Immediate disinvestment by unions and Labour authorities;
2. A national Labour Party fund to provide aid for Azania's freedom fighters;
3. A concerted programme of pressure inside and outside parliament aimed at securing sanctions and stopping the British government from vetoing such measures at the United Nations Security Council.
4. A national publicity campaign spearheaded by the trade union and Labour Party press aimed at securing support and cash;
5. An immediate end to the sale of South African goods by Co-op stores or their use by Labour-controlled local authorities;
6. An officially backed refusal by trade unionists at ports to handle South African goods or goods destined for South Africa;
7. The unconditional release of political prisoners.

The National Union of Seamen have since announced international action against South African-bound oil. And the Co-op, plus other major stores, have banned the stocking of South African goods. African National Congress (ANC) President Oliver Tambo was a guest speaker at the Labour Party's annual conference.

The Black Section's national committee decided Azania was one of two central issues upon which we should focus major campaigns. The other issue is the black community and black youth struggle.

Azania occupies a key place in international politics at the moment because of the heroic struggle for liberation of its black majority. Black Section's position on this vital question is bound to be different from that of other solidarity groups in Britain like the Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) because, as part of the black diaspora, we identify directly with the Azanian struggle. We see our struggle in Britain as being similar in content to that of African and Asian people worldwide. There is a clearly defined link between our struggle against racism and the battle against imperialism in the Third World.

Our struggle for black self-organisation is intertwined with the fight for genuine self-determination and national independence in the black world and the struggle of black youth — the uprisings [in Britain] from Handsworth and Leicester to Brixton, Tottenham, and South-hall. We are ever-conscious of the fact that British imperialism is the major western capitalist exploiter in South Africa.

How can we as black people active in the Labour Party help to put an end to colonialist domination of the black majority by the privileged white minority in South Africa?

The white working class is thoroughly imbued with colonialist racist attitudes. They enjoy enormous privileges on the backs of the black working class. It is the social revolution of the Azanian majority which will make the qualitative difference in the lives of the oppressed masses. It will restore their national rights and culture and create an Azania free from class, racial, and caste inequalities.

The democratic tasks are to win civil and human rights and equality in the fields of employment, education, press freedom, freedom of movement, culture, and language. The principal national task is to regain the country for its rightful indigenous owners — the African people. There cannot be equality between dispossessors and dispossessed, colonisers and the colonised, exploiter and the exploited.

While the African people are the pivot of the new nation, their main allies are the so-called "Coloured" and Indian peoples. They form the

black political bloc with the African peoples, taking the "Africanist" aspirations as their own. The Indian people have always fought side by side with the African peoples. Indeed, Indian workers have played a key role in the formation of black liberation organisations and trade unions.

Role of whites

A number of "liberal" whites have undeniably stoutly opposed the apartheid state and stood up for the democratic rights of black people. As members of the black diaspora, we can learn from the words of Malcolm X (*Afro-American History*, 1967) on this. He pointed out how white liberals who oppose the armed struggle for black liberation are no allies at all. Furthermore, there is an undoubtedly large "anti-apartheid" movement in Britain. How are we to relate to it?

How to proceed

As black people we have suffered from economic subjugation by white imperialists over many centuries, starting with slavery. Not only have we been subjected to the rape and plundering of our natural resources, we have also experienced the systematic smashing and suppression of our culture and history. We must therefore wage an international struggle as the black diaspora to regain our land, history, culture, and inalienable right to run our own affairs. This is called *the national question*.

Our politics must closely relate to this struggle of black people to overthrow colonial and national oppression as a means of us regaining our true identity. Those black activists steeped in the politics of white colonising leftism must recognise that the national question cannot be negotiated away or subsumed to simplistic interpretations of *the class question*. The two have equal importance to us as black socialists.

For instance, the current tactic of imperialists is to attempt to con us into believing that by getting rid of racialism and apartheid the black masses in Azania will be freed. The reality is that capitalism would remain with a "multiracial" face rather than an exclusively white one. Imperialism, capitalism, colonialism, and white racism are the interlinked enemies of the Azanian people and must always remain the strategic targets of the Azanian revolution. Those who make much play of "nonracialism" overlook the fact that the whites are an oppressing nation.

"(John Brown) was a white man who went to war against white people to help free slaves. He wasn't nonviolent. White people call John Brown a nut. . . . So when you want to know good white folks in history, where black

people are concerned, go read the history of John Brown. That was what I call a white liberal" (Malcolm X).

Many white people, despite their progressiveness, have not been able to fully shed their colonial and racial attitudes towards the struggle, and in particular to take up a correct attitude towards the national question. While supporting the democratic struggles of the black people, they still peddle ideas about "integration," "nonracial democracy," "multi-racialism" — all of them disguised forms of neocolonialism. There is a body of white liberals who, because of their own vested interests, attempt to derail the black struggle from its goals outlined above. We as black people are determined to assert our own leadership of the struggle. This is why we talk about our struggle for *self-determination* and *self-organisation*.

Steve Biko (*I Write What I Like*, 1978) says: "We are concerned with that curious bunch of nonconformists who explain their participation (in the black struggle) in negative terms. That bunch of do-gooders who go under all sorts of names — liberals, leftists, etc. These are the people who argue that they are not responsible for white racism and the country's inhumanity to black people. These are the people who claim that they, too, feel the oppression just as acutely as the blacks and therefore should be jointly involved in the black struggle for a place under the sun. In short, these are the people who say that they have black souls wrapped up in a white skin."

Conclusions

Why "Azania"?

We should use this word because it is the choice of a variety of individuals and groups involved in the black liberation struggles, i.e. Desmond Tutu, black trade unions, the top-selling black weekly paper, *The Sowetan*, the Azanian Peoples' Organisation (AZAPO), and the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC). Black nations like Zambia, Ghana, and Zimbabwe have changed the name of former colonial countries as the first symbolic sign of the overthrow of imperialism.

Who do we support?

This is a thorny question with a simple answer. In their dealings with members of the Azanian liberation struggle, national committee officers have met with representatives of the ANC and PAC. We shall continue our support for all of Azania's black liberation movements.

One of the problems with the AAM has been its sole promotion of the ANC despite a constitutional commitment to the same "nonsectarian" position as us. This has led to confusion — many black people in Britain believing there is just one group fighting to emancipate Azania. It has also suppressed, in a neocolonialist way, the historical role played by the PAC and other groups in the Black Consciousness Movement (of which Steve Biko was the leading member).

For instance, the PAC headed the fight against the notorious "Pass Laws." This came

to a head with the massacre of black youth at Sharpeville in 1960. The first political prisoners on Robben Island were members of the PAC.

Nonetheless, it must be stated that the ANC is the oldest black liberation movement — founded in 1912. The PAC split from the ANC in 1959 over the national question. Unlike the ANC, membership of the PAC is open solely to black people.

As well as supporting all black liberation movements, we must support the release of all political prisoners. For instance, when we call for the release of Nelson Mandela, of the ANC, we must remember there are hundreds of other black people in prison who belong to many other political organisations. The PAC's Zephania Mothupeng has been behind bars for more than a decade.

Ultimately, it will be for the people of Azania to decide which movement is to be their legitimate representative in government. We must not be bullied, hectored, or cajoled into supporting just one group at this juncture. We will strive to support all of them equally, providing platforms, funds, and publicity for their struggle inside and outside the British labour movement.

The Anti-Apartheid Movement

There is much controversy over the AAM among black activists. Problems arise because it is seen as a white, middle-class, liberals' organisation. The more aware activists are concerned about its exclusive support for the ANC — though the AAM denies this is true. More disturbing is the AAM's image as a white-dominated movement that refuses to take up issues of racism in Britain and thereby make itself relevant to domestic black struggle.

Because of these flaws, a breakaway group called the City of London AAM has been formed. They are part of the Fight Racism, Fight Imperialism tendency embraced by the Revolutionary Communist Group. Our role should be to regain black leadership of an issue which belongs to us and has been hijacked. We can do this by opening up a debate which has become stagnant and sectarian.

The priorities and agenda are currently decided by influential white race "spokesmen" like AAM chair Bob Hughes MP. White liberals have a stranglehold on the issue. This is particularly apparent when white speakers are fielded to talk on behalf of the ANC and the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO).

On a warning note, our support for the armed struggle will pose problems with white liberal allies as more white people are killed in Azania. We will be under pressure to condemn violence (cf. Tottenham) or the killing of "innocent" victims of "terrorism." Similar pressure has been put on Irish activists supporting the struggle for the liberation of their country. The link between the struggle of the black diaspora and the struggles in Central America, Palestine, and Ireland must never again be lost on us as oppressed people who will draw winning

strength from unity.

Trade Unions

One of the most positive developments over the past few years is the growth of the black and nonracial independent trade unions in Azania. In particular, we warmly welcome the birth of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) on 30 November 1985. Unfortunately, these unions have not been given adequate support by British trade unions or the AAM. We are determined to change this state of affairs by giving publicity and support to these unions.

Labour Party Black Section (LPBS)

a. The LPBS will build support and organise a contingent on:

- the lobby of parliament on Wednesday, 19 March 1986.
- the local demonstrations on Saturday, 22 March 1986.
- the national demonstration on Saturday, 28 June 1986.

b. The LPBS will fight for all local councils to adopt declarations like Lewisham's "Declaration Against Apartheid" and ensure that such declarations are implemented.

c. The LPBS will organise (or help organise) a tour of LPs [Labour Parties], TUs [trade unions], and black organisations of a COSATU speaker, and other organisations such as PAC, BCM, etc.

d. The LPBS will launch a fund drive to raise the finances for a speaker from AZAPO or another Black Consciousness organisation to tour Britain.

e. The LPBS will initiate a united organisation in the LP which builds solidarity within the LP for Azania (along the lines of the Labour Committee on Ireland).

f. Found a Labor Party fund to provide aid for Azania's freedom fighters.

Action proposal

This conference, mindful of the titanic struggle being waged by our sisters and brothers in racist South Africa, expresses its unflinching resolve to give them support in every possible way.

We recognise the huge importance to black people worldwide of the fight by the Azanian black masses to liberate themselves from white supremacist rule. Not only must apartheid be dismantled, but black people must gain their rightful place as the rulers of the Azanian nation.

We, nonetheless, reject the view of some people in the British labour movement that the battle for freedom in Azania is purely an issue of class. This is a crude and simplistic reductionist approach which obscures the key issue of race. We salute the courage displayed by those struggling for freedom through the liberation movements like the ANC, AZAPO, NFC, PAC, and UDF, as well as the mighty potential for helping to bring the apartheid regime to its knees shown by trade unions like the NUM and

COSATU.

We agree to:

1. Support all black organisations actively engaged in the fight against the racist apartheid regime in South Africa.

2. Support the release of *all* Black political prisoners.

3. Seek to organise active support in the black community for the struggle in Azania either by ourselves or in conjunction with other groups supported by the black sections national committee. We will support and build all local or national actions organised by these groups.

4. Endeavour to raise funds to pay for black speakers from Azania to tour labour movement platforms.

5. Support the establishment of a Labour Campaign for Azania.

6. Call for the Labour Party, labour authorities, and trade unions to organise actions, boycotts, protests, and rallies in support of the black struggle in Azania.

We express our complete support for the black armed struggle in Azania. Sanctions alone will not bring freedom.

Paper by Mike Wongsam

The struggle unfolding in South Africa has presented the solidarity movement, the organisations in the black community, and the socialist movement in general with one of the richest and most vital points of debate in years. It is certainly understandable why this should be so. Southern Africa is like no other African country — indeed it is like no other country.

In order to arrive at a correct conclusion as to how to proceed in the situation, the question must be approached from two points of departure. Firstly, one has to understand *historically* what the struggle is all about. Secondly, one has to understand what it is necessary for the masses to achieve in terms of organisation, politicisation, and leadership. These two points of departure analysed in their *concrete detail* will throw light upon and reveal the tasks which face the revolution in Southern Africa.

In order to correctly assemble the argument, it first has to be raised to a sufficiently high theoretical level. Firstly one has to thoroughly understand the nature not only of apartheid itself, i.e. *abstractly*, but of the apartheid state in Southern Africa as it exists in its concrete reality. That is, a state constructed and organised from top to bottom on institutional racism.

Therefore, the *nation* that the apartheid state is based upon is one in which black people are excluded from the most elementary civil and political rights. For black people to be able to have access to these most elementary rights requires the construction not merely of a new legal framework but the construction of a new nation state which guarantees to everybody the rights now enjoyed exclusively by the white minority population. This is nothing short of the construction of a *new nation*.

This is different from the anticolonial revolutions which took place in countries subjected

to colonial domination by an imperial power. They took place in the aftermath of the development of revolutionary Pan-Africanism, in countries where there was a stunted economic development and hence a weak working class unable to take the leadership of the national liberation struggle. The masses were subject to the most momentous general experiences, much more generalised than the experiences of the working classes in the advanced imperialist countries. But these experiences nevertheless were particular insofar as they were directed against a foreign imperial power represented by a few colonial administrators and policemen.

Independent working-class organisation was ruled out in the majority of these countries because of the stunted economic development, but the masses transcended this stage of development by becoming intensely politicised. This was the achievement of revolutionary Pan-Africanism. The masses achieved a level of political theory and culture that was equal to the task of liberating almost a whole continent from colonial subjugation within the space of some 30 years.

The result is of course the picture of Africa as it is seen today. The legacy of the inability of the working classes to take the leadership of these colonial revolutions is precisely that despite their liberation from direct colonial rule, sometimes having major effects in the imperialist countries themselves as with the Caetano dictatorship in Portugal, they remain under the yoke of neocolonialism. That is, despite the political and cultural renewal inaugurated by the African revolution, the countries of Africa remain economically dominated by imperialism.

That is not to say that the African revolution hasn't had a tremendous effect upon the struggle of the black masses worldwide. Quite the contrary. The effect of the African revolution, of revolutionary Pan-Africanism has produced a great leap forward in black consciousness both throughout Africa and in the imperialist countries themselves. Indeed, revolutionary Pan-Africanism consummated the great social transformation in the USA started by the civil rights movement, and led to the greatest explosion of black culture in history.

Limits

The course of the revolutions in Africa however were limited by their very success. Because they didn't need to produce a leadership with a class theory and culture more enduring than the experience of colonial revolution in Africa, they have not effected any substantial political advance of black people in countries with powerful workers' movements. The advances made by black people in the USA, for instance are due primarily to the civil rights movement, which had its own dynamic growing out of American conditions and the black experience there. This is in contrast to the effects of the Russian revolution worldwide, or the Chinese revolution in Asia, or Cuban revolution in Central America.

These previous African revolutions did not

have to contend with a colonial settler nationality, which in Southern Africa numbers some five millions and constitutes a permanent feature of any South African nation state imaginable in the future as much as it does in the present. This settler nationality, now embattled, is prepared to go to any lengths to protect its privileges even in the face of the now foreseeable collapse of its ability to rule.

Youth

South Africa has the most developed, and now one of the most powerful working classes in the entire world. It consists of one of the most revolutionary working populations to be found anywhere. Its youth constitute a whole politicised generation coming up out of the experience of Soweto.

This combines with one of the longest surviving national liberation movements, with a continuity going back as far as 1912. All these factors indicate that the South African toiling masses have to not only achieve class consciousness, not only become politicised in terms of its independent political organisation, but also must elaborate a revolutionary theory and culture which much be radically different from that of the previous African revolutions. The experience of the masses in South Africa is so much more *generalised* than that of the African masses of Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Angola, etc., that there is an *historical break* between the previous African revolutions and the South African revolution.

This indicates why the development of the doctrine of *nonracialism* has taken place. Nonracialism is first of all *not* a liberal philosophy designed primarily to appease whites in South Africa as to the compromising nature of the new nation which will emerge out of the struggles being fought out now. It is an eminently revolutionary strategy which has come about because of the conditions which face the national liberation movement there.

Class

To the policy of white racial supremacy practised not only by the bosses and their police, but also by the white racial trade unions, the independent trade unions have advanced the doctrine of nonracialism, which says that all workers have an equal right to representation by and in their own organisations. The newly formed and powerful trade union confederation COSATU has taken this as the basis of its own class theory, and as such represents the most advanced stage reached by the most revolutionary working class anywhere in the capitalist world.

All revolutions involve the sweeping away of the old, vile, and bankrupt organisation of society and its replacement by a new and more universal system of representation and participation. The revolutionary process therefore involves the break up and collapse not only of the apparatus of rule of the old regime but also the hegemonic position of the old ruling class.

The hegemony of the ruling class in South-

ern Africa is so precarious that it can be maintained over the white working class only by guaranteeing the privileges of the white working class at the expense of a disenfranchised and exploited black working class. This has become so precarious in recent years with the growth of the independent trade union movement that the apartheid government has had to try to establish its hegemony over the coloured and Indian populations with constitutional reforms designed to give these populations a semblance of political representation, again at the expense of the majority population.

The failure of this strategy has not only served to emphasise the embattled position of the government, but also testifies to the strength of the independent trade unions in proving that they are the supreme defenders of the rights of all workers in South Africa. Moreover, as institution after institution begins to see the ANC as the legitimate spokespeople of the struggle to create a new nation and the only force in society that aspires to guarantee the rights of all members of society, this further serves to reinforce the weakness of the Pretoria government.

The truth of the matter is that the hegemony of the Afrikaaner ruling class is crumbling, and the hegemony of the national liberation movement is being steadily and relentlessly built. The national liberation movement is no longer an oppositional force fighting for better conditions for blacks, for more access to exclusive restaurants and all-white public beaches, but poses itself as an alternative government with a *national* policy.

This is different from a policy of appeasement, which would have to convince whites that while the colour of the faces of the personnel in the government would change, nothing else of substance would change. Such a policy of appeasement could not lead to a truly non-racial society. For a truly non-racial society to exist in South Africa there would have to be a government elected by the majority, i.e. a black government. But also, there would have to be a genuinely revolutionary transformation of South Africa itself. For instance, the cities would have to be desegregated, the land would have to be owned by those that work it, there would have to be a universal education system, etc.

State

The only forces existing in South Africa at the moment that have a policy even remotely approaching this are the ANC and the independent non-racial trade unions. The independent non-racial trade unions have to be the social basis on which the ANC comes to power, and therefore, when the new nation state is constructed it will have to be a *workers' state*.

From these considerations it can be seen that the singular judgement that black people are engaged in a struggle against racism and *therefore* must organise as black people, i.e. attain political race consciousness, is only a superficial and narrow judgement of how to proceed in the concrete situation of South Africa. In the Black Sections movement in Britain, black

self-organisation is an absolutely correct course of action since the struggle revolves vitally around the fight for the right to adequate democratic representation inside the Labour Party. If it wasn't on the basis of black self-organisation then black representation wouldn't be democratic, and without the struggle it also couldn't conceivably be adequate.

Unity

It is quite different from what is taking place in South Africa. There, the struggle assumes the form of the fight for the majority of the citizens to determine and form the government, to an equal right to the ownership of land and wealth, and for the right to a full and equal participation in all affairs of the nation and the state. This involves the black masses assuming

the responsibility of leading a whole nation which is wider than itself, and this responsibility also offers it the opportunity to significantly advance the political consciousness of black people and the toiling masses worldwide.

The unity of the black struggle worldwide is therefore more complex and far richer than the appearance of it as seen over the short time span taken from the 1950s to the present day. When looked at historically, it reveals itself as being composed of contradictory historical elements and mediated national circumstances.

The South African revolution can inaugurate the next phase of development, and as such does much to reveal the essence of the black struggle as well as lighting a torch for the toiling masses of the world in the march towards socialism.

10 AND 20 YEARS AGO



June 14, 1976

Claiming he was doing it to help the Lebanese people in a period of extreme crisis, Syrian President Hafez al-Assad ordered an invasion of Lebanon May 31. Radio Damascus claimed that the "assistance" of Syrian troops in northern Lebanon "led to the establishment of law, the calming of the situation and a stop to all types of fighting."

The truth is that Assad's invasion will not help solve the crisis in Lebanon, it will not help save lives, and it increases the danger of a new Middle East war.

The new Syrian move to back the rightist forces in Lebanon's fourteen-month-old civil war has aroused vehement opposition among the Muslim majority there and its Palestinian and leftist allies.

New York Times correspondent Henry Tanner reported in a June 3 dispatch from Beirut that a general strike called to protest the Syrian invasion "was nearly 100 effective" in the city's Muslim-controlled districts. "Stores, groceries and even sidewalk stands and money changers, who are among the hardest businessmen here, were closed," Tanner said.

Assad has two basic objectives in Lebanon, neither one of which has anything to do with the interests of the Lebanese or Syrian masses. He wants to preserve a balance of power favorable to the Christian rightists, and he wants to assert his control over the Palestinian liberation movement.

From Assad's point of view, the old discriminatory governmental system in Lebanon had many advantages. This system, which was devised by the French imperialists as a prop for their rule, guaranteed the Christian minority — and the Maronite sect in particular — dominance in the government. The Maronite rightists, as a result of their shaky position, could be counted on to be deferential to their more

powerful Syrian neighbor and not to challenge its policies. The same would not necessarily be true if the Muslim-Palestinian-leftist coalition were victorious in the civil war.

Assad wants to maintain a weak and divided Lebanon in order to maximize his regime's influence there.

WORLD OUTLOOK

PERSPECTIVE MONDIALE

(Predecessor of *Intercontinental Press*)

June 10, 1966

In a May 23 dispatch from Seoul printed in the European edition of the *New York Herald Tribune*, Arthur J. Dommen reveals that he obtained the text of an American note to the South Korean government involving a secret deal for mercenaries to be used in Vietnam.

"According to the note handed the Korean government March 7, the United States promise includes 'the complete equipping of three regular divisions and plans to expedite the modernization of 17 army divisions and one marine division.'

"The United States also promised to provide 'all equipment, including weapons,' and to bear the financial costs of new Korean troops sent to Vietnam."

Dommen notes that the South Korean government has already sent 23,000 troops to Vietnam and has indicated it will send another division this summer. "The Korean government also has under study a plan to dispatch Korean Air Force pilots and crews to Vietnam."

The cost for the mercenaries is not indicated in the note, but Dommen estimates it will be in the hundreds of millions of dollars.

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Shultz visit boosts dictatorship

Warm support for Chun Doo Hwan dismays opposition

By Will Reissner

On an overnight visit to South Korea on May 7, U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz went out of his way to express Washington's support for the Chun Doo Hwan dictatorship.

Shultz's visit came at a time when opponents of the South Korean regime have been staging mass protests demanding direct presidential elections.

Under the constitution imposed by Chun after he seized power in a 1980 military coup, a new head of state will be chosen in 1988 by a 5,000-member electoral college.

Supporters of democratic rights in South Korea, fearing that the electoral college will select Chun's hand-picked successor, launched a campaign in March to collect 10 million signatures on petitions demanding direct elections in 1987. South Korea has 40 million people.

Since the petition drive was initiated, tens of thousands of people have taken part in massive rallies in Pusan, Kwangju, Taegu, Taejon, Chongju, Inchon, Masan, and other cities in support of the direct elections demand.

The driving force behind the petition campaign has been the bourgeois opposition New Korea Democratic Party, led by Kim Young Sam and Kim Dae Jung.

In Seoul, Shultz made a point of praising Chun Doo Hwan while snubbing Kim Young Sam and Kim Dae Jung.

Shultz expressed praise for Chun for starting a "process of motion in government institutions" that was "highly desirable."

He also hailed the South Korean military for its handling of national security.

In refusing to meet with Kim Dae Jung and Kim Young Sam, Shultz brusquely dismissed their significance, claiming "they attract a lot of attention but they are not the leaders of the [New Korea Democratic] party." Both Kims are subject to government restrictions on their political activities.

Kim Young Sam responded, "I'm afraid Shultz has the wrong impression of Korea. His remarks have reconfirmed U.S. support for a dictatorial government. We're not asking him to support us, only that the U.S. refrain from backing a dictatorship. I'm afraid Shultz's visit is going to worsen already bad anti-U.S. sentiment."

Three days after Shultz's trip to South Korea, some 50,000 people gathered in the city of Masan on May 10 to back the direct-elections petition campaign.

Many participants in the Masan rally wore yellow and carried yellow placards, the color used during the campaign in the Philippines

that led to the ouster of the Marcos dictatorship.

Addressing the Masan crowd, Kim Young Sam warned that Chun Doo Hwan could not escape a fate similar to that of Ferdinand Marcos if he continues to ignore the mass campaign for democracy. "This is the last chance" for Chun, Kim Young Sam stated.

He warned that Shultz's support for Chun "is causing anti-American feelings to grow sharply among students, workers, and intellectuals."

The other major opposition leader, Kim Dae Jung, was blocked by the authorities from traveling to Masan to address the rally in person. Kim Dae Jung, who is legally barred from all political activity, has been physically prevented from attending any of the protest gatherings in recent months. But addressing the Masan crowd by a tape recording, he, too, criticized Shultz's visit.

The massive turnout in Masan was not only a rebuke to the U.S. government, it was also a signal that the protest movement was not intimidated by government repression.

A week earlier, a similar rally in Inchon had been broken up by South Korean riot police using clubs, tear gas, and armored cars. Fighting between protesters and police lasted for hours in that port city, 20 miles west of Seoul.

The sixth anniversary of the May 18, 1980, insurrection in the city of Kwangju and the subsequent massacre in which South Korean troops murdered hundreds of Kwangju residents was the occasion for a new surge of anti-government demonstrations around the country.

On May 15 protests took place on at least 30 college campuses throughout South Korea,

with prominent slogans against U.S. interference in South Korea's affairs.

In Kwangju itself, as residents gathered on May 18 to mark the anniversary of the start of the uprising, police carrying shields threw tear gas canisters whenever crowds tried to congregate. Some 5,000 people resisted the charging policemen but were unable to hold a rally.

Earlier in the day, about 1,000 people attended a memorial service in the Kwangju cemetery where many of the massacre victims are buried.

The Kwangju events have become a symbol of U.S. complicity with the murderous Chun regime. The South Korean paratroopers and infantrymen who suppressed the uprising had been attached to a joint U.S.-South Korean command headed by U.S. Gen. John Wickham, who released the South Korean troops for use in Kwangju.

On May 20, as 1,000 riot police moved to break up an antigovernment campus rally, a freshman at Seoul National University doused himself with gasoline and shouted, "Go away U.S. imperialists" and "police get out," as he went up in flames.

Li Dong Su was the third Seoul National University student to set himself on fire during protests against the Chun regime this year. Two other students immolated themselves on April 28.

The day after Li burned to death, students staged a sit-in at the U.S. consulate and U.S. Information Agency offices in Pusan, the country's second-largest city, shouting, "Yankee go home."

The U.S. embassy called in South Korean riot police to storm the building and dislodge the protesters. □

LCR member released from French jail

After three months in prison, Martine Toulotte was released May 20. Toulotte, who was arrested February 21 on charges of "harboring criminals," was the subject of a broad defense campaign in France.

The charge against Toulotte was that she had given shelter four years earlier to alleged members of the Lebanese Revolutionary Armed Factions, a group the French government accuses of carrying out terrorist actions.

None of the alleged members of the Lebanese group had been under suspicion for any crime when Toulotte was in contact with them.

Upon her release, Toulotte told the French weekly *Rouge*, "there was no reason to put me

in prison, but neither was there any reason to release me" because "nothing new transpired between my arrest, my one trip before the judge on March 24, and my freedom."

Toulotte added: "The only new thing was the support campaign. It was thus decisive." She told *Rouge* that while in prison she received dozens of support letters each day from throughout France and around the world.

Toulotte, a member of the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR — French section of the Fourth International) in Grenoble, has been an activist in the women's liberation and anti-racist movements as well as a trade union activist. □