

INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS

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Millions in South Africa Defy State of Emergency



100,000 demonstrators marched June 14 in New York against apartheid.

Ernest Harsch/IP

Biggest U.S. Anti-apartheid Rally Ever

Philippines
Interview With
Peasant Leader

Nicaragua
Sandinistas Implement
Plan for Autonomy

Reagan pushes 'contra' aid, tries to derail Contadora talks

By Doug Jenness

As the U.S. House of Representatives prepares to renew discussion on a \$100-million aid package for the Nicaraguan counterrevolutionaries, President Ronald Reagan is churning out another round of attacks against Nicaragua's Sandinista government.

The president told a group of Republican candidates and elected officials on June 6 that if the *contra* aid proposal is not adopted it could "well result in the creation of another Libya on our doorstep." He charged Managua with providing weapons and logistical support to revolutionary movements in Latin America and having links to "terrorists." "Agents" of the Libyan leader Muammar el-Qaddafi, he asserted, were "in and out of Managua all the time."

During a nationally televised news conference on June 11, Reagan declared, "It's time for an up-and-down vote on freedom in Nicaragua, an up-and-down vote on whether the United States is going to stop Soviet expansionism on the American mainland while the price is still not too high and the risks are still not too great. We must act now in a bipartisan way to do the right thing, to rescue freedom in Nicaragua and protect the national security of the United States."

The White House's stepped-up efforts to win congressional support for the *contra* aid measure have occurred amidst warnings of increased Soviet involvement in Nicaragua.

Administration officials have charged that the Soviet government has resumed direct arms shipments to Nicaragua. They cited the arrival of a Soviet freighter in Nicaragua in early May, which they claim unloaded some military supplies. But they have been unable to point to anything unusual about this shipment except that it came directly from the USSR to Nicaragua. In the past 18 months Soviet arms sent to Nicaragua have been delivered to Cuba and then picked up by Nicaraguan boats.

Reagan officials are also attempting to make an issue of a Soviet photo reconnaissance plane that they claim has been flying missions over Nicaragua to help the government there. This is the first time, the administration charges, that such an aircraft has been based in Nicaragua.

The *contra* aid proposal that is to be taken up by the House of Representatives later this month was approved by the Senate on March 27. That vote came within days after the White House trumped up a charge that the Sandinistas had launched a massive invasion of Honduras.

A similar aid bill had been rejected by the House on March 20 by a vote of 222 to 210. An attempt by Reagan to get the House to vote on *contra* aid again in April failed.

Some House members are now trying to put together a compromise that would make assistance to the *contras* contingent on adopting a big economic aid package for Central America. Congressman David McCurdy from Oklahoma, who recently returned from a trip to the region with a bipartisan group of House members, has suggested to Republican leaders the possibility of a \$500 million package that would assist the *contras* as well as the governments of Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Costa Rica.

McCurdy's proposal would make this aid available to the *contras* only after an attempt is made to have direct talks between Washington and Managua.

According to the June 7 *New York Times*, McCurdy said the four Central American presidents the congressional delegation spoke to "felt that to release pressure on Nicaragua right now would be a mistake." But, he stated, the leaders of these "democratic governments are in desperate need of economic assistance to demonstrate that voting is more productive for the average person than shooting."

Bleeding operation

Reagan's proposed increase in funding for the mercenary army is aimed at reinforcing the bleeding operation against the Nicaraguan people. Washington hopes that, over time and with sufficient pressure, divisions will be created and deepened among Nicaragua's working people and that confidence in the Sandinista government will be weakened. Pentagon strategists are looking for conditions that could offer an opening to overturn that government.

The Sandinista armed forces have dealt the *contras* some severe blows in the past year. Moreover, the Sandinista military has gained more experience and has been substantially strengthened. Consequently, the *contras* are now even further than they were before from gaining a territorial foothold in Nicaragua from which they could declare the formation of a provisional government and appeal for international support.

But the mercenary gangs, who conduct raids from Honduras, have not been defeated and still cause serious damage — both in human lives and economically. The Nicaraguan government has been forced to continue devoting substantial economic and military resources to defending the revolution.

According to the June 4 issue of the Sandinista daily *Barricada*, government forces were involved in 850 military engagements with the *contra* raiders in the first five months of this year, killing or wounding some 2,500 mercenaries. Nearly 15,000 Nicaraguans have died as a result of the *contra* war in the past five

and a half years.

Barricada reported that the *contras'* poor showing in military confrontations with Sandinista troops has led them to increase terrorist actions against civilians and against cooperative farms, clinics, schools, and construction sites. Between January 1 and June 1, the *contra* terrorists kidnapped an estimated 750 peasants. They assassinated some 300 people, mostly peasants who refused to join the *contra* bands.

Moreover, a number of volunteer workers from other countries have been victimized. In May eight West Germans helping to build new housing were kidnapped and held for 25 days by *contra* thugs before international pressure forced their release. Other internationalist volunteers have been raped and murdered.

Right to coexist

Nicaraguan working people are simply fighting for the right of their revolutionary government to peacefully coexist in the world with countries whose governments oppose its policies.

They are struggling to get the *contras* off their backs so they can carry on with improving their health, education, and housing and advancing the economic development of their country.

In addition to military defense, this fight to live in peace is also being conducted in the diplomatic arena. The Nicaraguan government has pursued discussions with the U.S. government, as well as with its Central American neighbors, whenever possible.

The Sandinista government's great desire and need for a respite from the war and its decision to offer concessions if necessary to achieve it have guided its approach to what has become known as the Contadora process. This process, which purportedly aims to achieve a peace accord in Central America, was launched in January 1983 at a conference on the Panamanian island of Contadora by four Latin American governments.

The four countries in the Contadora Group are Panama, Mexico, Colombia, and Venezuela. In addition, nine other countries are included in the process — four in the Contadora Support Group (Argentina, Brazil, Peru, and Uruguay) and the five Central American nations (Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras) that are to be parties to the treaty if agreement is reached.

The Contadora Group came up with a draft treaty in September 1984 that called upon the signers to withdraw foreign military advisers and ban foreign troop maneuvers on their soil, halt arms imports, end all support to guerrilla groups, reduce troop levels, and permit on-site verification of these commitments.

Nicaragua was the first country to announce that it was ready to accept the treaty "in its totality, immediately and without modifications." The Reagan administration, however, announced that it found the draft unacceptable because it would have barred the Pentagon from continuing military maneuvers in Honduras. It pressured the other Central American

governments not to sign it.

The Nicaraguan government's decision to sign the proposed accord meant that it was agreeing to major concessions. These included halting Soviet arms imports, sending Soviet and Cuban military advisers home, reducing the size of its army and scrapping part of its weaponry, and permitting an international verification commission to go anywhere and talk with anyone.

When the Contadora talks led to another draft treaty in September 1985, the Nicaraguan government stated its agreement with most of it but left for further negotiation the provisions on troop reductions and U.S. military exercises. Nicaraguan officials proposed that further discussions on these points be postponed, however, in order to concentrate on stopping U.S. aid to the contras.

In January 1986 all 13 Contadora participants accepted a declaration to simultaneously work on the Contadora treaty and press for ending U.S. aid to the contras. In pursuance of this pledge, the foreign ministers of the eight Contadora and Support Group countries met with U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz in Washington on February 10 to appeal for an end to aid to the contras.

The Reagan administration, however, turned a cold shoulder to this request and redoubled its drive to get Congress to beef up help for the contras.

Nicaragua offered more concessions including the suggestion that it would accept something less than an outright ban on U.S. military exercises in Honduras.

In April the other Contadora participants retreated from their January commitment to work against U.S. contra aid while discussing the treaty. At a conference in Panama, all but Nicaragua agreed to sign the treaty based on the September 1985 draft. A deadline of June 6 was set for the signing.

The discussions had appeared to reach an impasse. Then on May 24-25 in Esquipulas, Guatemala, the presidents of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, and Nicaragua met for the first time since the July 1979 overturn of the Somoza tyranny in Nicaragua. They agreed to not be held to the June 6 deadline nor to any other specific deadline so that the talks could continue.

On the day following the meeting, Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega publicly presented a list of 14 types of offensive weapons that Nicaragua offered to negotiate limitations on.

Another obstacle

Another obstacle to reaching agreement on an accord, however, gained greater prominence at the Esquipulas meeting. Newly inaugurated Costa Rican President Oscar Arias pressed hard for the treaty to include verifiable procedures to guarantee democratic government in Nicaragua.

Following the conference, Honduran President Jose Azcona suggested that if Nicaragua does not democratize itself, it should be expelled from the Organization of American States. The question now, he said, is whether "a Marxist-Lenin-

ist country can coexist with the democracies."

On June 2 in Managua, Ortega blamed Washington for attempting to sabotage the Contadora process. "The United States," he said, "is encouraging certain Central American governments to propose, as a decisive issue, the definition and acceptance or nonacceptance of a given type of democracy. . . . What is the U.S. government doing now? It is again raising the subject of democracy in order to be able to say that since Nicaragua does not accept the type of democracy that other Central American countries have, no peace agreement can be concluded through Contadora."

The Reagan administration's goal remains getting rid of the Sandinista government. It considers the example of Nicaragua's working people

overturning capitalist rule and establishing their own government to be a grave "security" threat to U.S. ruling-class interests in the region.

For this reason, Washington is dead opposed to an agreement in Central America that would restrict its ability to organize the contra war against Nicaragua. It has attempted to blow up the Contadora talks whenever they have even come remotely close to imposing such limits.

The Nicaraguan government, however, does have a genuine interest in achieving peace, and it has offered many serious concessions to help advance that goal. But Nicaraguan leaders have made it abundantly clear that as long as the U.S.-organized contra war continues, they cannot agree to an accord that will disarm the Nicaraguan people in the face of this attack. □

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Editor: Doug Jenness.

Contributing Editors: Livio Maitan, Ernest Mandel, George Novack.

Managing Editor: Ernest Harsch.

Editorial Staff: Steve Craine, Will Reissner.

Business Manager: Patti Iiyama.

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Millions defy state of emergency

General strike, commemorative actions mark Soweto anniversary

By Ernest Harsch

In defiance of the most draconian repressive measures yet imposed in South Africa, millions of workers throughout the country stayed away from their jobs June 16. They did so to protest the apartheid regime's banning of virtually all forms of public political expression, as well as to mark the 10th anniversary of the 1976 youth rebellions that broke out on that date in Soweto.

Because of strict press censorship, there have been few reports on the precise extent of the June 16 strike. The regime itself admitted that 90 percent of all Black workers in the Johannesburg area stayed away from their jobs. The Eastern Cape region was brought to a complete standstill. Most reporters estimated more participation in this action than in a similar protest strike on May Day, when some 2 million workers struck.

There were also reports of clashes between protesting youths and police in Soweto and in Black townships around Port Elizabeth, Cape Town, and Durban.

The June 16 strike, which was called before the June 12 imposition of the state of emergency, was backed by the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), the largest union federation; the United Democratic Front (UDF), a broad coalition of anti-apartheid groups with a combined membership of 2 million; and the National Education Crisis Committee, which coordinates the fight against racist education policies.

There have been other indications besides the strike that South Africa's oppressed Black majority is resisting Pretoria's latest crackdown.

In Cape Town, a group of women from the Crossroads shantytown was arrested in front of the parliament building June 12 while protesting the state of emergency.

In New Brighton, a Black township near Port Elizabeth, hundreds of Blacks ignored a ban on outdoor funerals in the area and staged a march from a church to a cemetery to bury two victims of the riot police.

On June 15 and 16, Bishop Desmond Tutu led church services in Evaton and Johannesburg to commemorate the more than 600 Blacks killed by the police in 1976. He openly called for the lifting of the state of emergency.

Pretoria itself has given few details about the continuing protests, but it did admit further unrest in KwaNdebele, a rural reserve that has been the scene of a significant anti-apartheid upsurge in recent weeks.

President Pieter Botha proclaimed the state of emergency with the aim of crushing such

widespread popular mobilizations.

Even before it was officially announced at noon on June 12, security police had begun conducting raids against the homes and offices of political activists, unionists, church figures, and other anti-apartheid leaders. Wielding shotguns and submachine guns, they swept through Black townships around Johannesburg, Pretoria, Pietermaritzburg, Port Elizabeth, Cape Town, and Durban.

By the next day, the Detainees' Parents Support Committee, which aids political prisoners and their families, reported that it had the names of some 500 people who had been seized. The committee's own offices in Johannesburg were raided, with police confiscating affidavits by former political prisoners charging police torture.

Within a few more days, the estimates of the number of detainees had risen to between 2,000 and 4,000.

Although it is now a crime to publish detainees' names, a few have become known, including: the Rev. Smangalis Mkhathshwa, secretary-general of the South African Catholic Bishops Conference and a leader of the UDF; Pirosshaw Camay, secretary-general of the Council of Unions of South Africa; Aubrey Mokoena, head of the Release Mandela Committee, a UDF affiliate; and Saths Cooper, president of the Azanian People's Organisation. Members of the End Conscription Campaign, a coalition opposing conscription of white youths into the military, have also been picked up.

A previous state of emergency, which was in effect from July 1985 to early March, applied to certain parts of the country. But the current one covers all of South Africa. Its provisions are also more sweeping. The police and army have full powers to detain and search without charge or warrant. Detainees can be held indefinitely, without right to any outside contact. Entire areas can be sealed off. The promotion of strikes, boycotts, or any other protest action is illegal. Police are empowered to fire into crowds if they fail to disperse otherwise. The police also have legal indemnity from prosecution for anything they do under the state of emergency.

In short, the Botha regime has given itself a blank check to detain, torture, or kill anyone it pleases.

And it wants to do so in secrecy. Not only is it a crime to report on protests and acts of repression, but also to quote "subversive" statements, defined so broadly as to include any criticism of the government. Reporters have

been told that it is even illegal to refer to the government as a "white minority regime."

In an effort to justify the state of emergency, government officials claimed that leaders of the June 16 protests had planned to organize uprisings and arson attacks in every major city, including assaults on government buildings and white residential areas. It was therefore necessary to have "a showdown with the forces of anarchy and revolution," as the government-run radio put it.

But it is not arson attacks that the Botha regime is fundamentally concerned about. What it fears above all is the tenacity and determination of the oppressed majority to fight for its rights. That has been demonstrated repeatedly over nearly two years, as wider and wider sections of the population have been drawn into struggle. This has involved not only Blacks, but also a layer of whites. And in recent months the upheaval has to a growing extent spread from the main urban centers into the countryside.

Increasingly, as well, the outlawed African National Congress (ANC) has come to be recognized as the leadership of this struggle. Its flags, banners, and slogans predominate.

Nothing the regime has tried so far has succeeded in halting the growth of this movement. Botha's various "reforms" have failed to dampen Black discontent. Instead, they have tended to encourage further Black demands, while at the same time stirring vociferous opposition among ultrarightist white political groupings.

Repression has been no more successful, despite the serious toll it has taken (nearly 1,700 people killed since August 1984). During the previous, partial state of emergency, political ferment actually spread to new parts of the country. In early June, the regime announced a ban on all demonstrations and commemorative actions until the end of the month, but the UDF, COSATU, and other groups openly urged their supporters to defy the ban.

By cracking down even harder than it has before, Pretoria clearly hopes that this time it will make some headway. But the June 16 protests show the difficulties it faces.

Many leading activists, moreover, had anticipated the state of emergency, going into hiding in the days before it was proclaimed.

In deciding to crack down, the apartheid regime took into account the political price it would have to pay abroad. "The government," Botha declared, "is well aware of the fact that stricter security action will elicit strong criticism and even punitive measures from the outside world."

But, according to Beyers Naudé, secretary-general of the South African Council of Churches and a leading critic of the apartheid regime, "The government feels it will be able to ride out the storm, because they are confident when it comes to the crunch that the United States, Britain, and [West] Germany will back them."

In a June 13 statement, U.S. President Ronald Reagan failed to directly denounce the state of emergency and instead called on "all parties to exercise maximum restraint." Later, asked specifically if he condemned the crackdown, Reagan replied, "Well, let me say we regret it." He also repeated his opposition to economic sanctions against Pretoria.

A meeting of European Economic Commu-

nity foreign ministers in Luxembourg June 16 likewise rejected proposals for the imposition of new sanctions.

Nevertheless, the demand for sanctions has featured prominently in many of the anti-apartheid protests that have been taking place around the world. More and more people are agreeing with the statement made by ANC Secretary-General Alfred Nzo at a New York news conference June 13:

"There is now no escape from the fact that the international community has no other option but to impose mandatory and comprehensive sanctions against apartheid South Africa. Anything else means to doom our people to the escalating state terrorism of the South African regime." □

central Cape Town. Most refused to move.

In fact, Crossroads continued to grow. It has since spawned several satellite shantytowns, called Nyanga Bush, Nyanga Extension, Portlands Cement Camp, and KTC, which have collectively come to be known as New Crossroads. The greater Crossroads area became home to more than 100,000 people.

With the beginning of the current countrywide upheaval against the apartheid state in 1984, many activists and residents of Crossroads became attracted to the United Democratic Front. UDF affiliates such as the United Women's Organisation, the Western Cape Civic Association, and the Cape Youth Congress won a significant following in the shantytowns. In March, several thousand high school students rallied there, with speakers urging support for the outlawed African National Congress (ANC) and South African Communist Party.

The police repeatedly moved in against these activists. They were also able to manipulate divisions within the Crossroads leadership in order to further their crackdown.

Following Pretoria's acknowledged willingness to "upgrade" the original shantytown — now known as Old Crossroads — a small layer of petty exploiters had emerged there. They took control over the allocation of housing sites and charged rents. They also instituted a protection racket to extort money. This layer is headed by the self-styled "mayor" of Old Crossroads, Johnson Ngxobongwana, a former commander of the shantytown's home guard.

These gangsters and profiteers feared that the rise in political activism could undermine their lucrative position. So they sought to counter the UDF's growing influence. Ngxobongwana ordered the closing of a health clinic run by UDF supporters and urged the authorities to build police stations in the shantytown. He also oversaw the creation of an armed vigilante force, variously known as the "fathers" or as the "witdoeke" ("white scarves" in Afrikaans, for the strips of white cloth they use to identify themselves). These vigilantes beat, kidnapped, and murdered activists. Nine former members of the original Crossroads residents' committee, who had resigned in protest of Ngxobongwana's despotic reign, were forced to flee to the outlying shanties.

On May 17 Ngxobongwana's vigilantes launched a major assault against the "comrades," as anti-apartheid activists in the region are known. The first targets were the Nyanga Bush, Nyanga Extension, and Portlands Cement settlements. Groups of vigilantes, sometimes numbering several hundred, swept in with knives, sticks, guns, and other weapons. They shot and stabbed residents indiscriminately. The "comrades," who also armed themselves, fought back in self-defense.

The police, despite their claims of "neutrality," actively sided with the vigilantes. As long as the vigilantes had the upper hand, the police simply stood by. But whenever it appeared that the "comrades" were making gains, police units would intervene with gunfire and tear gas

The battle for Crossroads

Police-backed vigilantes destroy much of shantytown

By Ernest Harsch

In a prelude to the apartheid regime's state of emergency, reactionary vigilantes — with direct police support — launched an open reign of terror and destruction in the Crossroads shantytown just outside Cape Town.

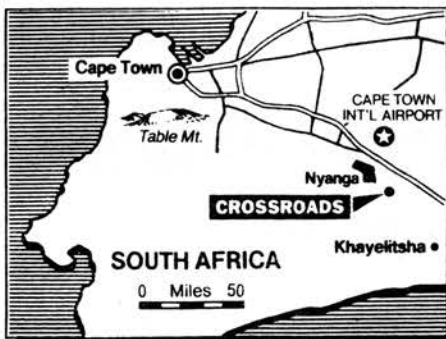
Within just a month since the first large-scale attacks in mid-May, the toll has reached devastating proportions: More than 60 residents, many of them anti-apartheid activists, have been killed. A majority of the shacks in the sprawling shantytown complex have been burned out, leaving more than 70,000 Blacks homeless. With the onset of winter in South Africa, disease is spreading among the unprotected refugees.

Seizing on the fact that the vigilantes are themselves Black, drawn from a section of the Crossroads population, the apartheid regime has sought to portray the conflict in Crossroads as an example of senseless "Black-on-Black" violence. According to this view, the police are simply intervening to restore "peace and order." But it is the police who have directly promoted these clashes, encouraging and assisting the gangs of Black vigilantes.

In doing so, the regime has had two main goals: to rid the shantytown of its most militant and effective anti-apartheid activists, and to end Crossroads' status as one of the country's best-known symbols of popular defiance.

According to apartheid policy, Crossroads is not supposed to exist. It is located near a city where relatively few Africans are legally allowed to live. Most are permitted to reside in the Cape Town area only in the officially sanctioned African townships (Langa, Nyanga, and Guguletu) and only as long as they are employed in the city. The rest of their families are supposed to live in the impoverished Transkei and Ciskei reserves, hundreds of miles away.

But in defiance of these regulations, Crossroads was established in February 1975. African workers and their families (many of whom were in the city illegally) began to erect their



own shacks of corrugated iron sheeting, wood, and other materials.

A genuine community of some 20,000 people soon developed. Although Crossroads had no running water, electricity, or other services in its early years, its residents did manage to build their own schools, churches, and health clinics. Visiting Crossroads in December 1978, I found another important attribute as well: its people felt much freer there than they could have in the more closely regulated and policed official townships.

The apartheid authorities tried to get rid of the shantytown. Police frequently raided it, and bulldozers knocked down shacks. But the people of Crossroads organized themselves to fight back, forming an elected 30-member residents' committee and a neighborhood defense force called the home guards. They won support from anti-apartheid organizations elsewhere in the country, as well as from abroad.

Thanks to this struggle, the residents of Crossroads won an important victory in late 1978. The regime was forced to abandon its demolition plans and to extend to Crossroads a degree of official recognition. This opened the way for the installation of some water taps and other services.

But there were limits to Pretoria's concession. While some residents could legally stay, many were supposed to move to a new African township called Khayelitsha, 25 miles from

to drive them back.

The vigilantes systematically torched the settlements. By the end of May, some 30,000 residents had been left homeless and at least 44 killed.

Following this destruction, the authorities quickly moved in. Barbed-wire fences were put up to prevent squatters from returning. "There is no possibility that the people can go back to Crossroads," declared Christiaan Heunis, a key cabinet official.

Responding to the regime's claims that it still intends to upgrade Old Crossroads, UDF leader Allan Boesak stated, "The government wants a small, controllable Crossroads. This is a mass, forced removal."

During a momentary let-up in the fighting, anti-apartheid activists regrouped in the KTC camp, which remained outside the control of Ngxobongwana's forces. Community leaders issued a statement noting, "On Friday May 23 the police moved into KTC squatter camp in full force, harassing the community. The residents of KTC see the police presence as the

prelude to a massive offensive upon us."

That offensive came on June 9. Although the "comrades" were aided by activists from the nearby African townships — including some guerrilla fighters armed with automatic weapons — the vigilantes won the upper hand, again with direct police support. Much of KTC was burned, and tens of thousands more made homeless. Another 20 people were killed in the fighting.

Although the residents of Crossroads have suffered a serious defeat, their struggle for the right to live where they want is far from over. Some refugees have already begun erecting new shacks in the vicinity, and many residents of the burned-out shanties have vowed to return, despite the continued threats from the police and vigilantes.

"Let's resist on all fronts," a broadcast to South Africa over the ANC's Radio Freedom declared. "The clarion call, 'Hands off Crossroads,' must reverberate throughout the country." □

nation to attack, advance, and give the enemy no quarter.² These calls have been answered with increasing and dramatic vigour.

The seeds of people's power are beginning to germinate and spread their roots. People's committees, street committees, and comrades' committees are emerging on a growing scale as popular organs in place of the collapsed racist stooge administrations. People's courts, people's defence militia, and other popular organs of justice are, in many cases, challenging the legitimacy of the racists' machinery of justice and their uniformed forces of repression.

Our organised working class has created a mighty new trade union federation — COSATU — and has demonstrated its strength in the 2-million-strong May Day strike.

The schools and universities continue to be simmering flashpoints for freedom. The youth stand poised to strike organised blows for liberation from their occupied bases. The forthcoming 10th anniversary of June 16 will fan the flames of resistance to slave education and reinforce the surge towards a free South Africa.

The fires which have been raging in our cities for the past two years are spreading to more and more areas of the countryside. The starving millions in the bantustans are demonstrating their anger against these hated institutions and the puppets who are committed to running them on behalf of Pretoria.

The terror unleashed on the people by the racist army and police in the black ghettos has totally failed to destroy their will to resist. Instead, under the leadership and inspiration of the people's army, Umkhonto we Sizwe, new ways are continuously devised to deal with the enemy's onslaught. The automatic gunfire is no longer always one-sided. The racist army and police are now also falling under a hail of bullets. Modern weapons are beginning to replace the stone in the hands of militants. The white communities in the cities and on the farms are also beginning to experience the unavoidable consequences of armed struggle.

The power of the black consumer boycott has been dramatically demonstrated in a number of areas. The refusal by the people to pay house rents is spreading, and the authorities are powerless to enforce payment of the massive accumulated arrears.

Division and disarray are growing daily more acute in the enemy camp, as white business feels the pinch of international isolation and increasingly exposes its inability to stem the tide of the people's resistance. This is leading to a rising toll of desertions from the previously monolithic white laager.³ Increasing numbers among the white community are beginning to accept that no solution is possible without the ANC.

There are signs of demoralisation in the enemy's armed forces, and a growing number of black soldiers and police are shedding the

DOCUMENTS

ANC's 'Call to the People'

Urges support for June 16 protest actions

[The following is the text of a statement by the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress (ANC) to the people of South Africa. It was read by ANC President Oliver Tambo and broadcast May 21 and subsequent days over the ANC's Radio Freedom, based in several African countries. The text has been provided by the ANC; the footnotes are by *Intercontinental Press*.]

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Dear Comrades and Compatriots,

We are today addressing you in the wake of one of the most brutal and wanton acts of aggression by the Pretoria regime against African independent and peace-loving states in the region.

On Monday, May 19, the racist regime launched a barbaric attack against Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Zambia, killing and maiming people and destroying property. This is the regime's crystal clear response to the negotiations initiative by the Commonwealth. The regime relies for its survival on armed aggression within and outside South Africa. Massacres and assassinations are its means of livelihood. Our people have had to accept this reality and take the only course open to them — the course of resolute struggle for peace in southern Africa through the destruction of the apartheid system and the creation of a democratic people's South Africa.

It is against this background that the National Executive Committee of the ANC makes the following "Call to the Nation," whose central message is that we move from ungovern-

bility to people's power.

The mass offensive is reaching new levels in ever widening areas of our country. More and more of our people are being awakened to action in organised contingents against apartheid's evil forces. Inspired by the leadership of the ANC and its allies, the people are continuing to show unending revolutionary inventiveness and creativity.

In April 1985¹ we called for:

- The strengthening and uniting of the trade union movement as a weapon in defence of workers' economic interests and in the struggle for national liberation.
- The replacement of the collapsing government stooge community councils with people's power.
- The creation of mobile defence units and the finding of ways to obtain arms as part of the process of strengthening the people's army, Umkhonto we Sizwe.
- The withdrawal of more and more blacks from the machineries of apartheid and for those in uniform to come over to the side of the people.
- The whites to move away from apartheid and to support the liberation struggle.
- The strengthening of our underground presence and the intensification of the armed activities of Umkhonto we Sizwe.

On January 8th, 1986, we called upon the

1. For the text of this ANC statement, see the June 10, 1985, *Intercontinental Press*.

2. For the text of this speech by Oliver Tambo, see the Feb. 24, 1986, *Intercontinental Press*.

3. Afrikaans word for a wagon encirclement.

uniform of apartheid. Those who continue to carry out its orders and who work with and for the enemy are shunned by the communities and can find little rest living among the people.

These impressive achievements must become the launching-pad for further advances. The second half of 1986 must see an ever greater escalation of the offensive on all fronts, an offensive based on mass resistance, on an intensified armed struggle, and on growing refusal to obey racist authority. More particularly:

Let us in an organized way spread the mood of total civil disobedience, including an organized campaign leading to nationwide refusal to pay all taxes and rents.

Let us make the national general strike called in observance of the 10th anniversary for June 16th the mightiest demonstration yet of our people's resolve to bring the ruling class to its knees. Let every mine, factory, farm, and white home be without labour. Let every university and school be emptied of its youth. Let every shop close its doors. Let every community strike a blow for freedom.

Let us declare freedom of movement throughout our land and set aside a day on which we burn our badges of slavery — the passes. We have already forced the regime to sound a retreat on the old-style *dompas*. Now let us resist all other attempts by Botha to deny us free access to any part of our united South Africa, whether by means of new identity documents, bantustans, resettlement camps, group areas, or other racist devices.

Let August 9th — the 30th anniversary of the women's heroic march on Pretoria⁴ — be a day on which the whole nation moves with our women in the march towards freedom.

Let us mobilise everywhere to smash the bantustans and to isolate the puppets who continue to collaborate with apartheid. The few bantustan office-bearers who are aligning themselves with the democratic movement are showing the real way forward.

Let us hammer more nails into the coffin of the tricameral "parliament." Let those who continue to serve Pretoria as the so-called representatives of our Coloured and Indian people withdraw from those bodies or be made to feel the wrath of the people.

Let us intensify our armed activities at all levels. More and more contingents of our people must be armed. Efforts must be redoubled to obtain arms from the enemy and from any other source. Let us influence our people in uniform to surrender their arms to the people's defence militia everywhere so as to meet more effectively the assault by the enemy's armed forces and the treacherous vigilantes and "impis" [armed thugs] which they employ. Our people's army, strengthened by the emerging popular militia, must intensify and spread its armed actions across the country. □

4. On August 9, 1956, some 20,000 women converged on the seat of government in Pretoria to protest the extension of the pass laws to African women.

United States

Biggest ever anti-apartheid rally

Union-led demonstration calls for end to U.S. ties

By Brian Williams

NEW YORK — Approximately 100,000 people marched and rallied here on June 14 in the largest anti-apartheid protest yet to take place in this country. The rally demanded an end to all U.S. ties with the apartheid regime and commemorated the 10th anniversary of the Soweto rebellion.

The action was organized by the New York Anti-Apartheid Coordinating Council, a broad-based, union-led coalition of more than 200 organizations formed last September. Many labor organizations in the city endorsed the demonstration.

The timing of the protest was quite significant. It occurred two days after the South African regime banned all protests by declaring a nationwide state of emergency.

"Apartheid has got to go," "Remember Soweto," and "Jail Botha, Free Mandela," were some of the many chants that resounded through the streets of New York City as Black, white, Hispanic, and Asian marchers proceeded to Central Park. The action drew people of all ages, but in its majority was young. Marchers funneled in from nine assembly points around the city, converging on the park from both the north and south.

Assembling at the United Nations building, march organizers say, were 40,000 demonstrators, grouped in labor, women's, Central American, student, and other contingents.

The labor contingent was the largest. Among the unionists represented by signs and banners were truck drivers and transport workers, garment and textile workers, electrical

workers, teachers, hospital workers, auto workers, postal workers and government employees, communications workers, machinists, ironworkers, taxi drivers, actors, and even "Parking Meter Collectors Against Apartheid." A busload of United Auto Workers members from Atlanta, Georgia, joined the march, as did workers and others from dozens of cities.

Hundreds of activists involved in Central America solidarity work marched behind banners demanding, "Boycott South Africa, not Nicaragua," "No aid to *contras* in Nicaragua or Angola," and "U.S. out of Central America and southern Africa."

Many college and high school students participated in the protest. Marching behind a banner "Youth Against Racism" were New York City high school students who have set up their own chapter affiliated to the French organization SOS Racism — Hands Off My Buddy.

From Harlem several thousand Blacks rallied and led a spirited march that linked up with hundreds of Puerto Ricans from East Harlem's "El Barrio." Also in this contingent were Dominicans and Salvadorans. Together they marched into the park from the north.

"The purpose of this occasion is not just to commemorate . . . but for the purpose of taking action which will bring about drastic change in our government's policies toward South Africa," stated Cleveland Robinson. Robinson is the chairperson of the New York Anti-Apartheid Coordinating Council and secretary-treasurer of District 65 of the United Auto Work-



Auto workers' banner in June 14 New York demonstration.

Ernest Harsch/PI

ers.

Noted entertainer Harry Belafonte read a message received from Winnie Mandela.

"In my tragic country," she told the rally, "1986 is one of the painful historic periods of resistance to apartheid. . . . In 1976 on the 16th of June, Soweto, our ghetto exploded. . . . Ten years later we are burying more dead, defenseless children, mothers, fathers. . . . We are irrevocably determined to wage the struggle for liberation of our country and the creation of a just, democratic, nonracial society."

Archbishop Desmond Tutu also sent a message to the rally, which was presented by his daughter Mpho Tutu. "Our country is burning and bleeding. . . . We are on the brink of a catastrophe. . . . We are waiting for the international community to act now, to act decisively. This is our last chance," he explained.

The featured guest speaker was Alfred Nzo, secretary-general of the African National Congress. "Soweto demonstrated that oppression and peace cannot exist side by side," declared Nzo. "The regime failed in its murderous mission in 1976. It will once again fail in 1986."

Nzo explained the internationalist perspective of the ANC. "We are marching side by side with the people of Nicaragua, Cuba, El Salvador, Palestine, Namibia, and all people fighting for a better life."

Thomas Van Arsdale, president of the New York City Central Labor Council, welcomed the ANC leader to the United States. "Our trade union movement has been involved in this struggle for freedom and justice in South Africa for many years," stated Van Arsdale.

Barry Feinstein, president of Local 237 of the Teamsters union, said that the only way to bring peace to South Africa is to disavow the Pretoria regime and recognize the ANC as the true leader of South Africa. He attacked Reagan for spending "hundreds of millions of dollars to aid so-called freedom fighters in Nicaragua" while he refused to "lend his signature to help 24 million South Africans who yearn to be free."

A message of greetings and solidarity from the half-million-strong South African trade union federation COSATU was presented by Amon Msane, a shop steward at the 3M Company in South Africa. "Today we started digging the grave of apartheid, and on June 16 we will be making it deeper and preparing the coffin to bury South African apartheid once and for all," said Msane.

Benjamin Hooks, executive director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, sounded a similar theme: "We've got to march like we did in the 1960s. We've got to turn this country upside down and downside up."

Other speakers included Theo-Ben Gurirab, secretary for foreign relations of the South West Africa People's Organisation; Democratic Party politician Jesse Jackson; Manhattan Borough President David Dinkins; and Randall Robinson, executive director of TransAfrica.

At the end of the rally the anti-apartheid coordinating council vowed to continue organizing future protests against apartheid. □

Canada

Two actions hit apartheid

10,000 demand government sanctions against Pretoria

By Michel Dugré

[The following article is taken from the June 16 issue of *Socialist Voice*, a fortnightly newspaper published in Montreal that reflects the views of the Revolutionary Workers League, Canadian section of the Fourth International.]

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"Apartheid no! Sanctions yes!" chanted over 10,000 anti-apartheid demonstrators as they wound their way through Toronto streets May 31 behind a huge banner of the African National Congress, "Sanctions, Sanctions, Sanctions!"

The demonstration, the most massive anti-apartheid mobilization in Canada's history, was the high point of the eight-day Arts Against Apartheid festival which literally turned Toronto into "Anti-apartheid City." Thousands of people turned out to rallies, meetings, and interdenominational church services with Bishop Desmond Tutu and artists like Harry Belafonte.

At the May 31 Queen's Park rally, addressed also by UAW-Canada President Bob White and Toronto anti-apartheid activist Lennox Farrell, Tutu demanded the Canadian government carry out immediate and total sanctions against the racist regime in Pretoria. He carried the same message to a session of the Ontario Legislature.

Despite steady rain, in Montreal over 1,200 anti-apartheid demonstrators took to the streets with a similar message June 1.

During his Montreal visit, Tutu spoke to a meeting of leaders of the Quebec Teachers Federation (CEQ), the Quebec Federation of

Labor (FTQ), and the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CSN). On June 2 he opened the week-long CSN convention.

"I have come before your very powerful trade union to say will you please help by exerting pressure on your own government to impose immediate sanctions on South Africa," he told the 2,000 delegates. "I want you to ask your government to follow Denmark. If Denmark can do it [impose sanctions] why not Canada?"

"There is no evidence that the Canadian government has changed its position," Tutu told a later press conference. "But if Canadians make it clear what they want, the government can't ignore them."

However, following Tutu's appeals, External Affairs Minister Joe Clark, using the excuse that the Commonwealth countries should act together, said that Canada was not prepared to carry out immediate sanctions.

While Ottawa refuses to act, the South African regime is deepening its repression and has banned all public protest around the June 16 anniversary of the 1976 Soweto uprising in which over 500 Blacks were killed. Tutu and other Black leaders have announced the ban will be defied.

They need our solidarity. In New York, other U.S. cities, and Toronto June 14, anti-apartheid activists will be marching again. The Toronto demonstration organized by the Toronto Anti-Intervention Coalition is calling for both sanctions against South Africa and an end to Canadian complicity with U.S. intervention in Central America. On June 15, anti-apartheid forces from Hamilton, Toronto, Montreal, and other cities will be marching on Ottawa to demand "Sanctions now!" □



Monica Jones/Socialist Voice

Toronto demonstration was largest anti-apartheid action in Canada's history.

Palestinians face new attacks

Lebanese camps besieged, rights curtailed in Jordan

By Steve Craine

Since May 19, Palestinians in three refugee camps in the suburbs of Beirut have once again been under siege. By June 5 the three-week death toll had passed 100, as Palestinians at Sabra, Shatila, and Burj el-Barajneh camps defended themselves against artillery, rocket, and tank attacks by the Amal militia and elements of the Lebanese army.

Beginning exactly one year earlier, a month-long assault on the camps by the same forces left 600 dead and more than 2,000 wounded. Although the fighting this year is less intense thus far and the Palestinians have been able to defend themselves more effectively, there is no sign of it stopping soon.

Several cease-fire agreements have been reached, only to be broken again within hours or even minutes of their signing. Amal has called in reinforcements from its fighters stationed in other parts of the country, and Syrian army convoys have resupplied the attackers.

Amal is an organization based among the Shiite Muslims of Lebanon. Its militia is one of several armed groups in the country that function independently of the government and its army. In its attack on the Palestinian camps Amal is being supported by the largely Shiite Sixth Brigade of the Lebanese army. The Progressive Socialist Party (PSP), a political organization that represents mainly the Druse people, has expressed support for Amal in this conflict.

The political rights of both the Shiites and the Druse are restricted by Lebanon's so-called confessional system instituted in the 1940s by the French imperialists to guarantee Maronite Christian domination of the government.

Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yassir Arafat warned that there was the danger of a new massacre in the camps. (At two of the three camps — Sabra and Shatila — Christian rightist militias slaughtered hundreds of Palestinians in September 1982 with the assistance of Israeli occupation troops.)

On June 1 Arafat offered to send an envoy to meet with Amal leader Nabih Berri to find a way to end the bloodshed. He stressed that while the PLO-Amal fighting was going on, the Israeli military had stepped up its attacks on Palestinian camps in southern Lebanon.

The reasons for the current fighting and many earlier intermittent attacks on Palestinians in the Beirut camps are the same as a year ago.

The leaders of Amal have expressed concern about what they claim to be a rebuilding of PLO strength in Lebanon. This is despite the fact that for more than two years Amal troops have maintained checkpoints around the camps from which they can effectively control the

passage of arms and personnel.

From the superior defense being mounted by the camps this year as compared with last, it is clear that the PLO's fighting strength has grown.

One Lebanese source told Jim Muir of the *Christian Science Monitor*, "The camps have already produced a new generation of fighters since the 1982 massacres. Lads who were then 11 or 12 are now of fighting age, and they are there." Muir also reported that both supporters and foes of Arafat acknowledge a higher degree of political unity behind the Arafat leadership of the PLO in the camps now than there had been last year.

This is not pleasing to the Syrian government, which has backed Arafat's opponents in the PLO, nor to Amal's Nabih Berri.

Amal's perspective

Berri, while widely viewed as representing the oppressed Shiites, is a capitalist politician and a cabinet member in the imperialist-imposed government. He uses his base among the Shiites, who are now the largest single religious group in the country and among the poorest, to advance his career within the context of the discriminatory political system.

Although the Shiite masses of southern Lebanon fought along with Palestinians to oust the Israeli occupiers in 1984 and 1985 and Berri's Amal played a part in that fight, Berri now views the PLO as more of a threat to his political ambitions than the Israeli army.

Amal has declared that its purpose in fighting PLO influence in Lebanon is to prevent a return to the situation prior to the Israeli invasion of 1982. Amal leaders, along with some other Lebanese political forces, claim the PLO had established a "state within a state" before 1982, especially in southern Lebanon and in West Beirut.

They accuse the Palestinian refugees of provoking the 1982 invasion, thus reinforcing the imperialist argument that the invasion was justifiable self-defense. This stance puts Amal in the position of policing Lebanon for Tel Aviv to prevent any attacks on Israeli territory.

To bolster his support among his Shiite constituency, Berri also tries to blame the Palestinian refugees for the miserable conditions most Shiites live under. He claims the refugees have displaced some 5,000 Shiite families from the Burj el-Barajneh camp now under attack. He thus seeks to pit the two poorest and most oppressed sectors of the population in Lebanon against each other.

In opposing a return to the situation prior to June 1982, the leadership of Amal is enforcing the verdict of the Israeli invasion on the PLO. The massive use of Israeli military might suc-

ceeded in destroying the PLO base of operations in Lebanon, dispersing the organization and seriously weakening its fight for a Palestinian homeland.

Since its expulsion from Lebanon, the PLO leadership has been trying to develop alternative bases of operations. Its new official headquarters is in Tunis, 1,500 miles from Palestine.

Hussein cracks down

In the past three years the organization tried again to build a base on the borders of occupied Palestine — this time in Jordan. But the PLO's freedom of operation in Jordan was never what it had been in Lebanon, and now even this is under increasing attack.

Since Jordan's King Hussein broke off cooperation with the PLO in February 1986, Palestinian institutions in Jordan have been restricted and shut down by his government. These institutions have been especially important to the PLO because the relative ease of travel between Jordan and the West Bank put the PLO in closer contact with the important segment of the Palestinian population living under Israeli occupation.

In the last two months, at least eight officials of Fatah, the main PLO component, led by Arafat, have been expelled from Jordan. In addition, Hussein's government has interfered with travel and communications between Palestinians inside and outside Jordan.

The PLO's Popular Organizations Office in Amman was shut down in early April. This office had provided support for mass organizations of Palestinians living in Jordan. Another office, which provided for coordination between PLO and Jordanian security forces, was also closed.

Amman's recent crackdown on political opposition of all kinds has centered on attacks on the many Palestinians living in the country. Responding to demonstrations against the U.S. bombing of Libya in April, the government raided al-Yarmuk University in Irbid, killing several students and arresting hundreds. Most of the victims were Palestinians. Later police raided the al-Wahdat refugee camp in Amman, arresting PLO members and student activists. Eighteen Palestinians were reported injured and some 300 detained.

The Jordanian government has also encouraged the splitting activities of some PLO members who supported Hussein against Arafat following their break in February. One such pro-Hussein dissident, a lower ranking PLO official named Attallah Attallah, made several attempts to take over the PLO offices in Amman.

Although he was expelled from Fatah and the PLO on April 24, Attallah, also known as Abu al-Zaim, convened a meeting of what he called a "general military council" of Fatah and declared that it had "expelled" Arafat and other top PLO leaders. It is widely believed that this meeting was organized with assistance from the Jordanian authorities.

Hussein's and Amal's attacks on the PLO are both directed against the ability of the Palestinian people to fight for the restoration of their national rights. □

FSLN begins implementing autonomy plan

A pilot autonomous zone in Yulo announced

By Cindy Jaquith

MANAGUA — "Enough of words. We don't need to keep talking about autonomy, but to implement it," said Sandinista leader Tomás Borge. He was speaking at a May 17 rally in the Miskito village of Yulo, in Northern Zelaya Province on the Atlantic Coast.

Borge, Nicaragua's minister of the interior and president of its National Autonomy Commission, announced a major new step toward establishing regional government autonomy on the Coast. He reported that the National Directorate of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) has decided to declare Yulo a pilot autonomous zone.

Yulo lies about 25 miles west of the port city of Puerto Cabezas. Under the pilot project, the village will receive land and begin exercising the right to determine use of its natural resources, elect its own municipal officials, and carry out agrarian programs.

What autonomy is

An autonomy project for the whole of the Atlantic Coast has been under discussion since late 1984. It springs from the aspirations of the Coast population — made up of Indian, Black, and Spanish-speaking Nicaraguans — to overcome the legacy of racial discrimination, economic backwardness, and political isolation imposed on the region by the U.S.-dominated regimes that ruled Nicaragua until 1979.

The project envisions the establishment of autonomous regional governments that will implement national government policy in accordance with the historical needs of the Coast. They will develop the region's natural resources, cultures, and languages and promote the participation of Coast residents in all aspects of Nicaraguan national life.

Tens of thousands of *costeños*, as the Coastal peoples are called, have participated in assemblies to discuss a draft document for how autonomy will work in practice. A final, edited proposal will go to Nicaragua's National Assembly to be voted on as law.

By setting up an autonomous zone in Yulo, Borge told the May 17 rally, "we are committing ourselves to establishing the first concrete steps toward autonomy. We're not going to wait until any law is approved. We're going to test out that law before it's authorized."

First anniversary of cease-fire

The May 17 gathering commemorated the first anniversary of the opening of a dialogue between the Sandinistas and Miskitos who had taken up arms against Nicaragua's revolutionary government in the early 1980s.

Those talks led to cease-fires between some



Miskitos clean up abandoned church building in Atlantic Coast town of Wasparam.

of the armed Miskito groups and Sandinista troops.

More armed Miskitos continue to join the cease-fire, attracted by the autonomy process and increasingly repelled by the U.S.-backed mercenary forces they were allied with, who are led by National Guard officers of ex-dictator Anastasio Somoza.

The Miskitos who are observing the cease-fire remain armed and are grouped in the organization called Pro-Peace KISAN. Their forces number about 300 soldiers.

Symbolizing the changed relationship of forces the cease-fire and autonomy represent, troops of Pro-Peace KISAN and the Sandinista People's Army organized a joint defense of the Yulo rally. Borge shared the platform with Pro-Peace KISAN commanders and a leader of the Moravian church.

Armed Miskitos who still reject the cease-fire are in the group known as Pro-War KISAN, based in Honduras. Their forces are estimated at more than 1,000 men.

Two former chiefs of Pro-War KISAN — who had just decided to join the cease-fire — were introduced at the Yulo rally by Borge. They had decided "not to give up their arms," he explained, "but to put them to work for peace."

The Sandinistas are not calling on armed Miskitos to silence themselves or surrender,

Borge emphasized, but rather to join the fight against the U.S.-backed mercenaries who are determined to deny peace to the Atlantic Coast.

"Let's struggle against the National Guard criminals, against those with hatred in their hearts, and against the Yankee puppets," said Borge.

In the crowd were other members of Pro-War KISAN, who had come to observe the proceedings. "Our hearts are open to you, our homes are open to you," Borge declared, urging them to join the cease-fire and the autonomy process.

Situation on Río Coco

It was Pro-War KISAN, in collaboration with Somozaist mercenaries and U.S. military personnel, that forced 12,000 Miskitos to cross from Nicaragua into Honduras in late March of this year. The Indians had been living on the Nicaraguan banks of the Río Coco. They fled into Honduras after a sustained propaganda campaign by Pro-War KISAN, which declared it was going to invade the area and that a Sandinista "bloodbath" would result.

The Río Coco communities had only recently been reconstituted as part of the autonomy process. In 1982 the Nicaraguan government evacuated all Miskitos from the river dur-

ing an intense period in the mercenary war. The right to return to the river was one of the most pressing demands of Miskitos. The Nicaraguan government granted the demand, and by March some 18,000 had gone back.

The kidnapping of 12,000 of the Miskitos represented a setback. Borge said in April that the decision to allow them to return to the Río Coco had been "an audacious move," but one

that corresponded to a legitimate demand.

What happened, he continued, was that the return proceeded more rapidly than planned. The pace of the autonomy process on the Coast "didn't match the speed with which the *costeño* people reestablished themselves on the waters of the Río Coco." He called for accelerating the autonomy project in response. □

DOCUMENTS

Difficulties on Atlantic Coast

Interior Ministry official assesses Río Coco kidnapping

[The following interview is taken from the May 8 issue of the English-language edition of *Barricada Internacional*, published weekly in Managua.]

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The group gathered in the narrow red dirt road leading to the Miskito village of Yulo, west of Puerto Cabezas, created an anomalous scene. Young men in camouflage uniforms from the military service stood next to equally young indigenous soldiers with long hair and red bandanas; both groups were guarding their respective leaders. Heads of the pro-peace faction of the indigenous organization KISAN and of the Nicaraguan army and Interior Ministry stood in the road, conversing pleasantly through an interpreter, smiling for the photographers.

The scene evidenced the more relaxed atmosphere that has existed in the northern Atlantic region since a handful of armed indigenous leaders began to hold talks with the government a year ago. But all is not well in Zelaya Norte. Six weeks ago a more violent faction of KISAN provoked the mass exodus to Honduras of 12,000 Miskitos who lived along the banks of the Río Coco.

Subcommander Salvador Pérez, Interior Ministry regional delegate, spoke with *Barricada Internacional* about KISAN and the fear that peace may not be as close as it seemed at one time. Pérez has been working on the Atlantic Coast for the past six months. "I came with an academic view of the indigenous question," he confessed, "but I've learned that there are no set formulas, that things aren't always what they seem to be." These are excerpts from the conversation.

Question. As early as February, the Interior Ministry reported that KISAN and the CIA had plans to disrupt the return of Indians to the Río Coco and that their troops were infiltrating those villages. What actions did the army take when it became aware of the situation?

Answer. Out of respect for the Miskito people's wishes, we don't have a military presence in the communities along the Río Coco. This is a commitment we have not broken, even though we knew that the KISAN leaders,

accompanied by U.S. advisers, circulated in the communities.

We knew about the CIA's plans in December, and since then we have called on the KISAN leaders to reconsider and not launch any action which could affect the civilian population, as occurred in 1981 during "Operation Red Christmas."

We had managed to come to some degree of understanding with Wilfredo Martínez (alias Siskart), head of the indigenous groups in the outskirts of Waspam. But when KISAN's top leadership transferred him, we realized that they had no intention of protecting the communities.

Given this situation, in mid-March the Nicaraguan army dislodged KISAN from Buena Vista, on the outskirts of Kum and Wasla. There was no combat in the communities, and no civilians were affected. It was an operation to dislodge their troops, not to wipe them out. When the indigenous troops fled, we didn't pursue them.

We had underestimated how much KISAN had intimidated the people with four months of anti-Sandinista propaganda aimed at instilling terror.

In Kum, Wasla, and Bilwaskarma, KISAN claimed the army's attack on their bases was proof that we wanted to massacre all Miskitos, who could only be safe on the other side of the river.

In the other communities upriver — in the

majority of which we have never done political organizing — the people were pressured with arguments that went from God's wrath to threats that the Sandinistas would torture and kill their relatives. The result was that thousands of Indians crossed the river on March 25. It may not have been at gunpoint, but it was no less a kidnapping. We had never thought that they could take so many people, but better that than a bloodbath.

Q. What are you doing to prevent the same thing from happening with the remaining 6,000 Miskitos along the Río Coco?

A. We have two options: militarize the area and stop KISAN right there, but involve civilians; or relocate the Miskitos to an area where we can guarantee their safety. But neither of the options is consistent with the plan we are committed to carrying out on the Atlantic Coast, which is to provide a revolutionary, political solution to the problems of the indigenous people.

The Miskitos want to stay in their communities on the banks of the Río Coco. They don't want to go to Honduras or to be relocated, and we are going to respect that desire. To the greatest degree possible, we will provide food, construction materials, medicine, education, transportation, and agricultural tools to all those who stay at the river. We can't guarantee that KISAN won't eventually carry off the rest of the people, but we won't fall for the CIA's provocations, nor militarize the zone.

Q. Given the recent events, wasn't it an error to allow the people to return to a war zone that is so hard to control?

A. The decision to allow the Indians to return to their communities along the Río Coco demonstrated the government's desire to answer the Miskitos' legitimate demands and was an important step toward the consolidation of the autonomy process for the Atlantic Coast, begun in December 1984.

When the return to the river was announced last May, a different situation prevailed in Zelaya Norte. A cease-fire had been signed with several MISURA leaders, the other indigenous forces were breaking up because of infighting among the leaders and the blows dealt them by the army, the government had held talks with Brooklyn Rivera, and KISAN didn't yet exist.

This was intolerable for those opposed to the revolution. The CIA planned the creation of KISAN last August, specifically to disrupt the return to the river and impede the autonomy process, among other things.

We aren't neglecting our responsibilities to the Indian people, but the solution to the problem doesn't depend only on us. For a long time we have been proposing to the Honduran government that the entire border area be demilitarized. We believe this would be the most responsible action we could take, because it would guarantee the protection not only of the Indians, but also of all the Nicaraguan and



Honduran *campesinos* who have been trapped in the counterrevolutionary war.

We have taken this proposal to the OAS [Organization of American States] and to Contadora, but in the end it depends on the willingness of Honduras.

At the same time, we are talking with the United Nations High Commission on Refugees about how to facilitate the repatriation of those Nicaraguans who want to return, and peace commissions have been formed by community and religious leaders, which visit the refugee camps to explain the real situation in Nicaragua.

Q. How does all of this affect the autonomy process?

A. It has been a heavy blow to the process, basically because we foresee that after the mass kidnapping KISAN will step up its activities. They will seek to increase their ranks with young people from the communities, and they can count on weapons, logistical support, and advisers from the CIA.

Switzerland

Farmers solidarize with Nicaragua

'Our struggle is the same as theirs'

[The following interview is reprinted from the May 10 issue of *La Brèche*, French-language fortnightly newspaper of the Socialist Workers Party (PSO), Swiss section of the Fourth International. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

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Sunday, April 13, at Romont, about 150 people, a majority of them farmers from the region, took part in an evening meeting with Chantal Bianchi, the companion of Maurice Demierre, the Swiss cooperative worker murdered in Nicaragua by the *contras*.¹

Swiss farmers in solidarity with Nicaragua! The fact may seem surprising, but when they speak about their solidarity, it expresses profound truths, about the injustice of the war waged by Reagan as well as their struggle here for the right to separate recognition as producers who are indispensable to the daily life of our society.

La Brèche met with two of them, Charles and Martin, members of the Union of Swiss Producers (UPS).²

1. Maurice Demierre, a volunteer from Brothers Without Borders, was killed by Nicaraguan counter-revolutionaries on February 17 in an attack in which five Nicaraguan peasants were also murdered. His death provoked widespread outrage in Switzerland, with pickets and silent marches in many towns. — *IP*

2. The UPS is an independent organization of working farmers, in contrast to the Swiss Union of Farmers (USP), an official and paragonymal body.

A climate of war is not the most ideal for carrying out consultations on autonomy and resolving the indigenous people's problems. Nonetheless, the autonomy process will involve all the people on the Atlantic Coast. The process will go on among the Miskitos who have stayed in the country, the Sumos, Mestizos, and Creoles of Zelaya Norte, and the entire population of Zelaya Sur.

Q. Would an escalation of the war by the pro-FDN KISAN affect the talks with those who are propeace?

A. That's difficult to tell, but I don't think so. On the contrary, I think the defense and mutual collaboration agreements will solidify. By now dialogue has become a permanent process on all levels in Zelaya Norte.

It is virtually the form of government in the region. We're not only talking to the armed indigenous leaders, but with the natural community leaders, religious leaders, the autonomy and peace commissions, and the people in general. We don't make any decision without first consulting those who might be affected. □

Question. How have Swiss farmers come to feel solidarity with Nicaragua?

Charles. The initial mover here was Maurice Demierre. I knew him for a long time. He learned to work the land among us. We were very friendly. He had taken part in the UPS and he had been a conscientious objector. We knew his integrity and that he was not afraid.

When Maurice was in Nicaragua, he wrote to us, explaining what he was experiencing. We knew that he spoke the truth. He told us that the best way of being in solidarity was to continue the struggle at home.

Martin. In the Christian circles there is a lot of discussion about the problems of the Third World. We knew that Nicaragua was an oppressed country where the people could not say and do what they wanted. I was in Colombia and I saw the land owned by the big landlords.

Everywhere, not being able to work the land is the biggest tragedy: industrialization eliminates the farmer. And over there, the peasants cannot even have the land. They are exterminated; they are made to die of hunger.

Maurice was very well known in the region. He worked on different farms. The people know of his honesty, and what he said made it possible to understand things here.

Maurice was the best example of concrete aid that respects people, that begins from their experiences. Too often people have wanted to impose our European methods, and this de-

stroyed the autonomy of those regions.

Maurice had this patience to adapt to people. And here, what he said made things move forward, without being rude to people. We said: if you want to believe that Reagan is right, then you have to consider Maurice a liar. And anyone who would dare to think that would have to be a pretty sorry specimen.

Q. Do people perceive that Nicaragua is not a Third World country like the others, but a revolution that distributes land to the peasants?

Charles. Giving the land to those who work it — if that can be done it's wonderful. But I have a little fear, because the big lions never loosen up, at least not without biting.

Martin. Over there the movement is strong enough to force a change. It is the strength of the grass roots; the people are stronger than the governments. Everywhere it is the same problem. They sneer at the workers on the land. They want to empty the countryside, industrialize everything. And where does that lead? There was action in solidarity with the peasants of Andalucía [in Spain]. It is a fertile region, but the land is held by the big owners, and the peasants find themselves unemployed. Even in the United States today, the small farmers are driven to the wall, and some commit suicide.

Charles. I came to understand that Maurice was involved in a revolution. But most of the people have never understood it. They see very well, however, the injustice that goes so far as to kill peasants.

Martin. You have to put yourself in the position of thinking like the farmer. It is very contradictory. The farmers are scorned, like the other workers, for the profit of the banks, the intellectuals. They can see that things are going badly, but they think that their neighbor is the one who will be eliminated, not them. Their consciousness must be awakened, because they do not know how long it will take for this to happen to them too.

Q. In the final analysis, in your view solidarity also means making the small farmer conscious of his situation and is not simply an act of charity.

Charles. It's anything but an act of solidarity-charity. Our struggle here is the same as over there: to defend our well-being, our land, without always being pulled around by someone, a bank to which you have to pay interest.

Martin. To be recognized for the function we farmers have in society, it is necessary to try to defend the whole collectivity instead of each one trying to always produce more. Because how long does that work? To produce more, you must invest, then buy new land and pay interest to the bank. The cost of farming rises endlessly, while the small farmer is closer to the land, easier to maintain and to defend.

Solidarity creates links among the peoples. What is important is to get away from the offi-

cial lines, the big aid organizations. To create a direct solidarity with grass-roots groups, saying the hell with governments whether they be left or right. Establishing sister cities, like they did at Delémont with Trinidad in Nicaragua, is excellent.

Q. You took part in the action of selling bananas from Nicaragua. Did this action give you the chance to explain what is happening in Nicaragua?

Martin. The village here has 200 inhabitants. We took four cartons. The milkman agreed to sell them in his store. They are all gone already. The women wanted to have them for the Lent soup, to replace the apple that they ordinarily use. But there were not enough of them. We explained the action in terms of sympathy for Maurice and in terms of solidarity with Nicaragua. There were not big

discussions, but happily things changed.

Some feel Reagan wants to destroy Nicaragua. Others do not want to accept that, in fact, through fear for their situation. They say to themselves: if it is true, we are going to have to turn our backs on America, and they don't want to turn their backs on it. It is a way of ridding themselves of the problem. But these people are not candid.

Furthermore, this concerns Reagan, not the whole American people. I know that many Americans are in solidarity with Nicaragua. I have always been revolted by injustice, starting back in school when the principal wrongly punished us. In Nicaragua, the freedom of people is in danger.

Q. Thank you for having agreed to speak to us about your involvement in the solidarity work. □

Ireland

'Nicaragua must survive'

Miguel D'Escoto addresses Dublin solidarity rally

By Mairtin MacDiarmada

[The following article is reprinted from the May 1 issue of *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, a weekly published in Dublin by Sinn Féin, the political party that is in solidarity with the Irish Republican Army.]

* * *

"What is the future of the world if there are not free countries like Nicaragua to stand up and say 'freedom or death'?"

This was the message of Nicaragua's foreign minister, Fr. Miguel D'Escoto, to a packed public meeting in Dublin this week.

Five hundred people crowded into Trinity College's Edmund Burke Hall to hear D'Escoto on Monday, April 28th. With up to 200 more having to be turned away, the meeting was a clear demonstration of Irish solidarity with the Nicaraguan people.

John Carroll, vice-president of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, chaired the meeting and extended the solidarity of the Irish trade union movement to Nicaragua. The first speaker he introduced was Inez McCormack of the National Union of Public Employees in the six counties:

"What is this dangerous country, this little country that is such a threat to the biggest country in the world?"

"It's a dangerous society because it's an attractive society, a popular, democratic society. America must destroy a society which can say that the revolution will be the servant of the people not the servant of capital."

National self-determination

Fr. Dennis Carroll of Booterstown, in greeting Fr. D'Escoto, referred to the evolving at-

titude of the Dublin government on foreign policy:

"Seventy years ago, very brave men and women defied an empire about 400 yards from here.* They issued a Proclamation stressing social justice and self-determination. Their defiance was quickly and brutally extinguished. However, the aspiration of James Connolly and his comrades for social justice and national

*A reference to the 1916 Easter Rebellion in Dublin. — IP



Nelson Blackstock/IP

Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto.

independence rises up to mock the present trend to follow Thatcherite London and Reaganite Washington."

Carroll refuted allegations that the Catholic church was being prosecuted in Nicaragua:

"Oscar Romero was not murdered in Nicaragua nor was Jean Donovan. But innocent men, women, and children are being killed every day in Nicaragua by the contras with the support of the United States."

Standing ovation

Miguel D'Escoto was welcomed to the podium with a standing ovation from the crowd. He said that he has always wanted to visit Ireland:

"I know about the solidarity in Ireland for our struggle. I know about your history, and I know that your history makes you, more than any of our friends in Europe, able to understand what it is that Nicaragua is going through and what it is that motivates our struggle."

He spoke of the enormous damage being inflicted on the already weak Nicaraguan economy by the attacks from the U.S. as well as the thousands of deaths at the hands of the contras:

"Ronald Reagan is the biggest tormenter and practitioner of terrorism in the world today. We represent a 'threat' to them because demanding to be treated on a basis of recognition of our sovereign independence is seen by them as a threat."

Courage

D'Escoto said that, since the revolution of 1979, Nicaragua's example had given courage to other peoples in Latin America. At the inauguration of the president of Uruguay, the Nicaraguan envoy had been greeted by tens of thousands of people while George Shultz, the U.S. Secretary of State, had to delay his arrival because of demonstrators!

Referring to Shultz's view of diplomacy, D'Escoto said that he "explained away the neo-Nazism of the contras as diplomatic pressure."

D'Escoto concluded that Nicaragua would not succumb to the doctrine that might is right:

"People ask us what the future holds. We say what is the future of the world if there are not countries like Nicaragua to stand up and say 'freedom or death'?"

New campaign

The meeting ended with the announcement of a new Irish solidarity campaign, Nicaragua Must Survive, part of a combined worldwide effort to provide moral and material support for Nicaragua.

Further information can be obtained from the NMS Campaign, c/o Kevin Gaughran, ESBOA, 43 East Street, James Place, Dublin 12. □

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The revolution runs a turbulent course

A decade of social strife and class conflict

By Ernest Harsch

When the Libyan revolution began in 1969, the people of that country had previously known almost nothing but abject poverty and imperialist oppression. Libya was one of the most economically underdeveloped and socially backward countries in the entire Arab world. This put a decisive stamp on the nature of the revolution and of the social conflicts that have accompanied it.

At that time, many Libyans still identified primarily with their own particular tribe, kinship group, or religion. They did not fully view

This is the second of a series of three articles on the Libyan revolution. The first described its origins, the attempts to lessen imperialist domination, and the government's economic development policies. The third will examine Libyan foreign policy and the imperialist drive to turn back the revolution.

themselves as part of a broader Libyan nation and were sometimes in conflict with members of other groups. In the countryside local tribal leaders retained considerable influence over day-to-day life. Even urban residency was largely organized along tribal lines, including in Tripoli, the capital.

The continued importance of tribal ties and institutions, which were highly patriarchal, also reinforced the severe oppression of women in Libyan society. Libya was even more backward in this regard than many other Middle Eastern countries at the time. Women faced segregation in most spheres of life, were subject to forced marriages, were denied education, and had few, if any, rights.

Much of Libyan social and economic life was also essentially precapitalist. This was despite the fact that Libya's oil industry had grown rapidly and large sums of money from oil exports were flowing into the country. The vast bulk of all Libyans were still engaged in subsistence livestock herding or agricultural cultivation or were otherwise self-employed. Class differentiation remained limited, especially in the countryside, where no class of big landlords had ever developed and where there were few farmers who produced for the market.

According to the 1973 census, of a total of 55,451 owners of urban or rural businesses, only 3,470 actually employed any hired labor. And even many of these employers had less than five employees working for them.

There was no financial or industrial bourgeoisie to speak of, just a layer of commercial traders who sold to the internal mar-

ket. Before the beginning of the revolution, most financial and manufacturing institutions had been in the hands of non-Libyans (imperialist corporations, Italian settlers, or businessmen from other Arab countries). With the nationalizations during the first few years after the 1969 coup, most of these enterprises came under Libyan government control. The remaining capitalist enterprises in Libya were mostly foreign-owned, above all the imperialist oil companies, which generally operated in direct partnership with the Libyan government.

Although the Libyan working class was still young, it was growing. In 1970 there were just 7,000 workers in manufacturing, but within two years this had risen to some 30,000. Overall, the Libyan labor force in 1972 was 477,000, of whom nearly 300,000 were wage workers or salaried employees (out of a total population at that time of about 2 million).

After agriculture, however, the largest single source of employment for Libyans was the public administration, followed by trade, restaurants and hotels, and teaching. The industrial working class itself was not large. The capital-intensive oil industry employed less than 8,000 Libyans (including management personnel). Besides the 30,000 employed in manufacturing, a similar number worked in construction. Many of these, moreover, were employed in small enterprises; just a few years earlier, in 1965, there were only 15 manufacturing establishments in the whole country that employed more than 100 workers.

At the time of the monarchy's overthrow in 1969, Libyan workers had only a very limited history of struggle and unionization. The company-run union federation claimed just 30,000 members. The working class had created no political organizations of its own. To an extent, tribal identification tended to blunt the development of a class outlook.

It was in this social context that Libya's revolutionary process unfolded. The key tasks facing this democratic revolution have been to free Libya from imperialist domination, overcome the legacy of underdevelopment and backwardness, modernize social and political life, build a unified nation, and spur the further growth of the country's producing classes.

During more than a decade and a half, the people of Libya (who now number 3.5 million) have made some significant progress in this direction, although it has been uneven. Libya's extensive oil wealth has facilitated rapid improvements in the living conditions of most Libyans, as well as the first steps toward modernizing agriculture and developing some industries. But at the same time, Libya's work-

ers and peasants have been able to leave only a limited imprint on the revolution's course and on the policies of the government.

'The middle road'

From the outset, Muammar el-Qaddafi and other members of the governing Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) professed nationalist and anti-imperialist views. They condemned the plunder and oppression of Libya by U.S., British, Italian, and other imperialist interests, as well as the ousted monarchy's abject subservience toward them.

The proclamation of the new republic on Sept. 1, 1969, reflected this orientation: "With one blow from your heroic army... the darkness of ages — from the rule of the Turks to the tyranny of the Italians and the era of reaction, bribery, intercession, favouritism, treason, and treachery — was dispersed. Thus, from now on, Libya is deemed a free, sovereign republic under the name of the Libyan Arab Republic."

These aspirations were expressed in a number of concrete measures during the first years of the revolution, including the expulsion of the U.S. and British military bases and the nationalization of much of the oil industry.

With the stated goal of achieving national unity, the government likewise took action to root out vestiges of support for the monarchy and to undercut the power and influence of the local tribal leaders. Public administration was reorganized to try to minimize the old tribal divisions. "Tribal allegiances," Qaddafi declared, "weaken national loyalty."

Qaddafi and his colleagues also proclaimed themselves to be "socialists." As a Dec. 11, 1969, draft constitutional declaration put it, "The State intends to achieve socialism through social justice which prohibits exploitation. The State endeavors to dissolve peacefully class differences and attain the society where sufficiency and justice predominate."

At times, RCC members termed this "Arab socialism" or the "socialism of Islam," which they said was opposed to both capitalism and communism.

In 1972 Qaddafi explained, "We want to progress and rid the people of poverty, hunger, backwardness, and ignorance. We call this socialism... Theoretically speaking, socialism means here that nobody should have a lot of capital and be very rich and able to exploit the people... Briefly, socialism means social justice. It is the middle road. It is the way to close gaps between the classes."

The stance of the RCC members on social questions was thus linked to their view of how to achieve national unity. Just as tribal divi-

sions had to be obliterated, they maintained, so too did class divisions. This petty-bourgeois orientation sought to deny the reality of the class struggle in Libya. In practice, it has involved both actions against exploiting layers and restrictions on working people themselves.

Certain "national capitalists" (actually small businessmen employing just a few workers) were still encouraged through much of the 1970s. But various government measures restricted their scope of operations and prevented their growth into a significant layer of capitalist exploiters. Following the nationalizations of many foreign-owned enterprises, the government acquired a dominant role over much of the economy. Most new investments were made by state corporations and agencies.

Meanwhile, labor actions were not permitted. Following a week-long strike by dockworkers in March 1972 to press for higher wages and better working conditions, the government decreed that all strikes were illegal. It proclaimed a system of mandatory arbitration to deal with labor disputes.

After the collapse of the old company-run unions with the monarchy's overthrow, new unions were eventually built. But these were set up under the auspices of the Ministry of Labor and were directly tied to the Arab Socialist Union (ASU), a political party that the government sponsored for a short period in the 1970s. These unions were not permitted any real independence. Qaddafi stressed that their task was to carry out "ordinary administrative duties." Nor were the unions allowed to discuss any political questions. "The trade unions have nothing to do with politics — at no time and at no place," Qaddafi declared.

This approach was paralleled by broader limits on democratic rights. Student strikes were also prohibited following some university student protests in early 1972 sparked by government efforts to impose direct control over student organizations. Any political activity outside the ASU was deemed to be treasonable.

In 1973 Qaddafi proclaimed a "cultural revolution" against those who "propagate poisonous ideas" and "foreign" ideologies. This was aimed, he said, at "purging the country of those who are politically sick, including those preaching capitalism, communism, and Muslim Brotherhood."

Scores of people were detained for a time, including university lecturers, lawyers, writers, and employees of government ministries. Some were supporters of right-wing groups like the Muslim Brotherhood, while others had previously belonged to the radical nationalist Baathist current or professed Marxist views.

Aside from these few small political currents, however, the government faced little domestic dissent, and thus had no need at that time for more sweeping repression. Its anti-imperialist actions — combined with wage hikes, rent cuts, free education and health care, and other social measures — won it considerable popular support. The large and often enthusiastic rallies that government supporters were able to organize attest to that.



Qaddafi addressing a mass rally in mid-1970s.

Some room for political discussion was also permitted, though within strict guidelines. Compared with the situation under the monarchy, many more Libyans were beginning to be drawn into active political life.

The ASU itself failed to elicit any real popular interest and was allowed to fall dormant shortly after it was launched. New "people's committees," elected by the residents of particular villages and neighborhoods, were encouraged instead. These provided a platform for some public discussion of local problems and policies.

According to a visitor to Libya, quoted in the April 1974 U.S. monthly *MERIP Reports*, "Popular committees, if we can judge of what we saw of their inception [July 1973], were doing a bang-up job of mobilization and were not operating especially among only the youth or urban areas. We heard about and read reports from the smallest villages, encampments, and from the oldest folk — from all levels of people."

Advances for women

Women, too, were beginning to awaken. They have taken important steps in combating the severe sexual repression they face in Libyan society.

Historically, the position of women in Libya

was one of total subordination. Not only were they denied most basic democratic rights, but they were also physically segregated and isolated from many social and economic activities. According to Marius and Mary Jane Deeb:

For centuries, two worlds have coexisted in Libya ... the man's world and the woman's world. ... The relations between those two worlds took place according to a strict code of behavior, and husbands and wives spent little time together during the day. Within each world men and women led separate lives, praying, eating, and socializing with members of their sex only. Women "belonged" to men: first, to their fathers' family, tribe, or clan and then to their husbands'. To have their own separate identity, life, or career was unthinkable.¹

Since the beginning of the revolution, women have benefited from the general advances in education, many more of them entering primary and secondary school than under the monarchy. Female university enrollment has increased fivefold, although women university students are still outnumbered by men three-to-one.

Changes in the labor laws have made it

1. Marius K. Deeb and Mary Jane Deeb, *Libya Since the Revolution: Aspects of Social and Political Development* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1982), p. 52.

easier for women to enter the labor market. One article of a 1970 law stipulated that there be no wage discrimination between men and women performing the same work, if they have the same qualifications. Two other articles provided for nearly two months of paid maternity leave and specified that women can take off up to an hour of work a day, with pay, to breast-feed their infants. Another provision of the law required any establishment employing more than 50 women workers to provide a nursery for preschool children.

Yet women remain a small part of the work force, particularly in industry. Because of conflicting statistics, it is difficult to gauge how many women are actually employed. Officially, the proportion of women listed as working was about 7 percent in 1985. Yet many women workers, particularly in the countryside, are not recorded as such in the official census tallies. According to the Deebes, women may actually comprise some 20 percent of the total economically active Libyan population, a proportion that may reach as much as 46 percent of the rural working population.

Among the obstacles women face in becoming employed are persistent social prejudices against women taking part in public activities alongside men, as well as the burdens of home and family. Few child-care facilities are available in Libya, and women are expected, by custom, to perform most household chores. Libyan families are also quite large, averaging between five and six children each. Contraceptives are available, but their use is not encouraged; abortion is illegal.

In 1972 the government outlawed forced marriages. But a young woman's father, or legal guardian, retains a legal right to approve or disapprove a marriage. And women still do not have the same rights to divorce that men do, although in recent years Qaddafi has been urging changes in the divorce laws to allow women more rights.

A law was passed in December 1975 giving women the right to set up their own political, social, and cultural organizations.

A budding counterrevolution

Throughout the first five years or so after the monarchy's overthrow, there was little overt opposition to the new government or to the revolutionary process. But by the middle of the 1970s such opposition began to surface.

It came from procapitalist forces that were opposed to the government's preponderant role in economic life and to its considerable spending on social benefits for the Libyan masses. It also came from conservative layers, such as tribal and religious leaderships that were alarmed by the advances of women and the formation of the "people's committees."

These elements were likewise hostile to the anti-imperialist aspects of the government's foreign policy, including the growing economic and military contacts it began to establish with the Soviet Union and other workers' states in that period. Directly or indirectly, these counterrevolutionary currents received encouragement and support from abroad: from



Women volunteers undergoing military training.

the imperialist oil and other companies operating in Libya, from Washington and allied imperialist intelligence agencies, and from neighboring proimperialist regimes, such as the one in Egypt.

The sharpest domestic source of opposition to the revolution came from certain layers of merchants and businessmen who were growing rich off the inflow of oil money. The administrative apparatus — which included many holdovers from the days of King Idris — became infested with corruption, nepotism, and profiteering.

As a report in the Nov. 23, 1974, Paris weekly *Jeune Afrique* described it,

Despite the statized economy, 80 percent of which is nationalized, all sorts of brokers, agents, and managers representing foreign commercial companies (and some Libyan businessmen represent dozens of companies) have entered the golden age. With imports reaching \$3 billion to \$4 billion this year, they handle several tens of millions of dollars [of trade]. It is true that part of this is skimmed off by a particularly ravenous public treasury. But the gold mine is attractive enough for the rush of high officials toward the private sector to become generalized.

These wealthy merchants, corrupt officials, and aspiring capitalists grew increasingly frustrated over the government's numerous restrictions on their activities, and looked for ways to throw off those controls.

Meanwhile, other pockets of resistance to the revolution also existed. In the eastern province of Cyrenaica, certain tribal leaders retained their loyalty to King Idris, who was living in exile in neighboring Egypt. They kept in touch with the former king through assistance from the Egyptian regime.

Right-wing opposition currents found a hearing among sectors of the university student population. In some mosques, religious figures began to speak out against aspects of government policy, under the guise of defending Islamic "traditions." Most seriously, the incipient counterrevolution found allies and supporters within the military hierarchy, and even

within the government itself.

These political and social tensions reached a crisis point from mid-1975 into 1977. Several coups were attempted, the most serious of them based in Benghazi, Libya's second-largest city and the capital of Cyrenaica. Student demonstrations erupted there as well, leading to clashes with supporters of the revolution in which a number of people were killed. Several terrorist and sabotage actions were likewise carried out in that city, including the burning of a church and the bombing of the harbor; among the five men arrested and later executed for those actions, one was an Egyptian.

The governing Revolutionary Command Council blew apart in 1975, seriously threatening the revolution's future. Of the 11 RCC members at that time (one of the original 12 had died in a car accident shortly after the 1969 coup), only five were left in power by the end of that year.

Four RCC members were directly implicated in an August 1975 coup attempt. Two of them were placed under house arrest, while the two others, Maj. Omar el-Mehishi and Abdul Menim el-Houni, fled to Egypt, where they were granted political asylum. Mehishi, in particular, had condemned the radical direction of the Libyan revolution, calling the large development projects "uneconomic" and accusing the government of engaging in foreign "adventurism," an apparent reference to its support for liberation movements abroad. He likewise criticized the government's decision to purchase arms from the Soviet Union.

Two other RCC members also departed, one "retiring" and the other fleeing to the United States.

By the end of 1975, the RCC had been reduced to Qaddafi, Abdul Salam Jalloud, Khawaldy Hamadi, Abu Bakr Younis, and Mustafa Kharroubi. All five are still in prominent leadership positions today.

Although the reactionary layers in Libya that opposed the revolution were small, they

could count on support from the imperialists and their regional allies. And the split in the RCC revealed how vulnerable the government actually was to such pressures.

'There can be no truce'

The political crisis of the mid-1970s marked a turning point in the Libyan revolution. To safeguard its own survival and that of the revolution that it rested upon, the Qaddafi government struck back at its counterrevolutionary opponents, particularly merchants, real estate speculators, corporate managers, and other wealthier layers. In doing so, it also leaned more heavily than before on the Libyan masses.

The period of encouragement for "national capitalists" was over. This was reflected in a series of speeches by Qaddafi and other Libyan officials, as well as in Qaddafi's *Green Book*, in which he outlined his main political, social, and economic views.

Speaking to the Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry in December 1978, Qaddafi proclaimed, "Contractors have realised large profits after the revolution as a result of massive projects, since the country had earlier been devoid of developmental activities in all fields. The 10-year period given by the revolution to merchants, contractors and others for making gains was also sufficient for the maturation of ideas which led to the appearance of the *Green Book* and its theses. There can be no truce after this period."

Direct state repression against rightist currents mounted. The death penalty was prescribed for anyone seeking to change the government or belonging to a banned organization. The first executions since the 1969 takeover were also conducted, mainly involving rightist saboteurs and military personnel involved in coup attempts.

In early 1978, a number of imams and other religious figures who had used prayer meetings to voice rightist criticisms of the revolution were purged from mosques in Tripoli, Benghazi, Tajura, Khums, and other towns. Qaddafi intervened more forcefully in religious affairs to advance his own interpretation of Islam and to undercut the authority of the *ulama*, the established Muslim clergy.

The government nationalized virtually all foreign trade in late 1978. Import-export concerns with transactions larger than \$30,000 were closed in favor of state-run trading monopolies. But this ceiling was soon raised to \$70,000 per transaction after the appearance of serious shortages made it clear that the government was unable to immediately take the place of all such foreign trading enterprises.

In the following years, action was taken against big domestic merchants, middlemen, and even some retail traders. Wholesale trade was nationalized, as were private trucking concerns. Scores of state-run markets and stores were built around the country. These moves destroyed much of the merchant class and eliminated certain forms of profiteering and price-gouging. But the precipitate and sweeping manner of their implementation also

brought disruptions in retail distribution, leading to sporadic shortages and long lines.

A new housing law was enacted in May 1978, abolishing rents and limiting home ownership to one house per family. Although former owners were paid some compensation by the government, this struck a devastating blow at further real-estate speculation, which had become a major form of private capital investment.

The Oct. 20, 1979, *New York Times* reported from Tripoli, "The private construction industry had collapsed the previous fall after builders got wind of what was ahead. Those hit hardest were Libyans who had put their money in real estate. One landlord lost 38 pieces of property to squatters."

To obstruct capital flight, strict currency controls have been imposed. In 1980 the government wiped out currency hoarders and dealers by changing the money overnight. Those who brought in piles of old dinar notes were only allowed to receive 1,000 dinars (US\$3,700) in the new currency. In a further step to hinder unauthorized transactions, most salaries are now deposited directly into state banks, with withdrawals limited to 3,000 dinars a year.

A major anticorruption campaign was launched in 1980. The heads of state-run trading associations and banks, senior customs officials, military officers, the director of the state-run airlines, and other prominent officials — several hundred of them — were arrested on charges of embezzlement and fraud. To publicly expose their dealings, the trial proceedings were televised.

Army and militia

Steps were also taken to weaken opposition, or potential sources of opposition, within the regular armed forces, which had shown themselves to be particularly susceptible to counterrevolutionary pressures. "The army is a potential threat," Qaddafi said in a 1980 interview, "since it can impose itself and oppress the people."

Other armed units were built up to counterbalance the army, including elite units such as the Presidential Guards and the Deterrent Battalion. "Revolutionary committees" were set up within the army to detect and isolate coup plotters and to reinforce support for the government's policies.

At the same time, in face of constant threats of military aggression from the imperialist powers and their regional allies, the armed forces were strengthened. Military conscription was instituted in the late 1970s. There is now an army of 58,000, a navy of 4,000, and an air force of 8,500, all equipped with some of the most modern armaments available. In 1978 the Women's Military Academy was set up in Tripoli to train women volunteers for the army (7,000 have been trained so far).

The Libyan government began in 1977 to build up a popular militia. Qaddafi has in recent years stressed the role of the militia more and more, stating that the goal is to have hundreds of thousands of Libyans under arms.

"The army must disappear," he said in August 1985, "and be replaced by the armed people."

That is still far from the reality, however. As of 1982 the militia numbered some 45,000, although it has undoubtedly increased somewhat since then.

Workers — or 'partners'?

In a speech on Sept. 1, 1978 — the ninth anniversary of the monarchy's overthrow — Qaddafi unexpectedly called on Libyan workers to march on private and public enterprises to take them over. By the end of that year workers' committees had been formally installed to manage some 180 enterprises, including industrial and commercial concerns, as well as hotels and state farms. More enterprises were affected in the following years, although the crucial oil companies and banks were exempted.

One immediate result of this measure was a purge of management personnel, some of whom had previously been wealthier merchants or had been engaged in corrupt practices. But beyond that its significance remains unclear. There have been virtually no reliable accounts available abroad of how these workers' committees function or what their precise role is. The government's own statements are contradictory.

According to Qaddafi, the takeovers were conducted under the slogan, "Partners, not wage-workers." This refers to a section of his *Green Book* in which he postulates the creation of a society in which no one will profit at the expense of others and in which workers will no longer receive wages but a portion of their production or a share of the profits. At times he has spoken as if this were actually the case. "In Libya there is no Libyan who works for another Libyan for a wage," Qaddafi claimed in October 1985. "There are no wages at all in Libya."

But a few months later he acknowledged that, in fact, Libyan workers "are working for a wage. . . . The second chapter of the *Green Book* has not been applied up to now."

One aspect of the views on labor expressed in the *Green Book* — which is frequently cited as the basis of official policy — has been to justify the denial to workers of their rights as a class. Since they are supposed to be "partners" indistinguishable from all other Libyans, any manifestation of specifically working-class interests is portrayed as a selfish act detrimental to the welfare of Libyan society as a whole. "Class rule is forbidden," Qaddafi declared in December 1985. "Partisanship is forbidden. For all these things weaken the people's willpower. . . . The important thing is that we do not accept domination neither of the workers, of the peasants, nor of the students."

In reality, the specific interests of the workers and peasants lie in further advancing Libya's democratic revolution, not for their own benefit alone, but for that of all the country's oppressed and exploited. The government's attempts to foist an artificial unity of views and interests on all sectors of Libyan society weakens the revolutionary struggle, in

part by holding back the development of a working-class outlook and orientation that can better strengthen the revolution and drive it forward.

Despite the hindrances on the Libyan working people's political and organizational advancement, they have nevertheless gained greater social weight over the course of the revolution. Because of the many development projects launched around the country, the size of the working class has increased. Precise figures are hard to come by. But calculating from figures in the government's 1976-80 economic development plan, probably more than half a million Libyans were employed in the cities and countryside in 1980, compared with less than 300,000 in 1972. Membership in the General Federation of Trade Unions, the sole, government-sponsored union body, stood at 380,000 as of 1976. There are also several hundred thousand workers from other countries employed in Libya.

People's congresses

To build greater popular support for its policies, the Qaddafi government has been boosting the role of the local "people's congresses."

These bodies, called Basic People's Congresses, are organized by place of residence. They meet periodically to discuss local and national problems and issues. All Libyan citizens are allowed to attend, although in practice only men generally do. Each Basic People's Congress — of which there are now about 2,000 nationally — selects a People's Committee to implement decisions and raise issues with the appropriate authorities.

The local congresses and committees were given national standing and authority in January 1976, with the first meeting of the General People's Congress. There have been several each year since then. The General People's Congress is composed of delegates from the local congresses, as well as from the trade unions, student organizations, professional bodies, and other national associations.

At a session of the General People's Congress held Feb. 28-March 2, 1977, the Revolutionary Command Council was formally dissolved and its five remaining members constituted as the congress's General Secretariat, with Qaddafi chairing. The congress approved the composition of a new General People's Committee to replace the former cabinet, and government ministers were renamed secretaries. At the close of the congress, the country was renamed the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. The latter term is an Arabic word coined by Qaddafi, meaning roughly "state of the masses."

The local and national congresses primarily serve as public forums at which officials explain their policies and make proposals, while delegates raise grievances and formally adopt new laws and policies. The questions debated at the congresses have ranged from national economic development policies to local issues such as the location and staffing of health clinics.

Though the local congresses have a popular

base, the People's Committees elected by them are generally composed of engineers, doctors, and other professionals.

Reporting on a session of the General People's Congress, *Washington Post* correspondent Thomas Lippman wrote in the Nov. 22, 1976, issue of that paper that "the wide open atmosphere of the congress appears to be genuine as far as it goes. There is no disguising the zeal of the delegates as they rise to complain about this or that, to question some policy decisions, or to criticize a ministry for failing to follow through on promised projects."

These congresses bear some similarities to the system of tribal assemblies that existed at the local level in Libya prior to the Italian colonization. Tribespeople were able to discuss many issues of concern to them, and were able to have some influence over the decisions made by the chiefs.

Qaddafi acknowledged this source of inspiration in a speech to a December 1985 General People's Congress session. Welcoming a delegation from North Yemen, he stated, "Yemen is originally a Jamahiriya by its nature; the people are armed by their nature and the authority is with the tribes. The tribes are similar to people's congresses, which means they are people's tribal congresses."²

Since Libya's tribal structures survived well into this century — and still retain a degree of influence in parts of the countryside — the local and national people's congresses have been able to tap into this tradition to win popular support. Similarly, the establishment of the popular militia draws in part on the inspiration of the tribal guerrilla armies that fought against the Italian colonial authorities in the 1920s and early 1930s.

'Watchdogs of the revolution'

Libyan officials maintain that the people's congresses are the final authority in Libya today and that they have replaced the government as such. This is clearly not the case.

Although Qaddafi has relinquished all formal posts (he is now referred to mainly by the description "leader of the revolution"), he and his colleagues from the former RCC play the key roles in determining policy.

Since 1977 the government has functioned through separate "revolutionary committees" composed of selected political activists. Their role, according to one Libyan official, is to "agitate people to take revolutionary decisions in the people's committees. You could call them the watchdogs of the revolution."

Headquartered in the palace of former King Idris and headed by Major Jalloud, an ex-member of the RCC, these committees wield considerable power. They function not only within the people's congresses, but also inside military units, schools, and enterprises. They can propose or veto congress candidates. They have their own training camps and arms supply

2. Qaddafi has also described the Jamahiriya system of people's congresses in different ways, sometimes likening it to "the anarchy of Bakunin" or claiming that it has "superseded" Marxism.

and have the power to arrest and try people. In 1984, for example, the "revolutionary committees" sentenced to death and publicly executed two students from al-Fatah University in Tripoli; the students, from formerly wealthy trading families, had been accused of engaging in counterrevolutionary activities.

The "revolutionary committees" function, in effect, as both a government-sponsored political organization and as a special arm of the repressive apparatus.

Unresolved conflicts

A decade after the political crisis of the mid-1970s, many of the social tensions and conflicts that existed at that time still persist to some extent. In certain respects this is inevitable, given the character of Libyan society, the turbulent changes set in motion by the revolution, and the pressures the country is under from the world capitalist market and from the imperialist governments.

The trade nationalizations and other economic measures introduced in the late 1970s have left a strong residue of resentment and hostility among some middle-class layers. Others, while they may not have been directly affected by those moves, are nevertheless dissatisfied over the restrictions on their ability to engage in profitable business dealings and to accumulate wealth.

A certain amount of such economic activity continues to take place illegally. There is a black market in some imported goods, as well as in foreign currencies. Some officials in the public administration and in state-run corporations have been able to take advantage of their positions to engage in graft, embezzlement, and nepotism. Qaddafi has often referred to such corrupt officials as a "bureaucratic bourgeoisie."

In its drive against potential middle-class opponents, the government has at times gone to extremes, alienating sections of the population that supported the revolution or could have been won over to it. In April 1984, for instance, Qaddafi called for the nationalization of bakeries, barbershops, and carpet stores. This caused such an uproar that he was soon forced to back down.

Religious, tribal, and regional divisions also remain factors in Libyan life, and have sometimes been used to reflect political opposition to the course of the revolution.

In the mountainous Nefoussah region just south of Tripoli, there is reported to be significant opposition to the government among the Berber people of the area, who belong to the Kharedjite sect of Islam. Supporters of the rightist Muslim Brotherhood have been active at the university campuses and have been implicated in several terrorist attacks.

Tribal influences have also played a role within the people's congresses themselves. In January 1985 Qaddafi charged that "some reactionary and tribal people diverted the course of the people's authority and prevented elections to popular committee posts directly by the masses by working behind the lobbies."

There has been considerable resistance to further advances by Libyan women. No

women have been named to prominent positions of authority. And out of more than 800 delegates at the General People's Congress in February 1984, for example, only one was a woman. That session rejected a proposed extension of women's divorce rights. It also rejected a proposal by Qaddafi that all female students be given military training (as was the case for male students). But after a mass demonstration in Tripoli on March 12, 1984, by female high school students demanding military training, a special session of the congress then reversed itself and approved the measure.

The impact of the world economic recession, especially the sharp drop in the price of oil — on which Libya depends for almost all of its revenues — has caused some difficulties for the population as a whole. After a decade of steady improvements in their living standards, Libyans suddenly had to confront austerity measures.

The government announced a series of such measures in April 1982: the canceling of student grants; the slashing of foreign travel al-

lowances by more than half; a freeze on state-sector wages and in some cases a reduction of up to 20 percent; and a cut in food subsidies. As a result, food prices have risen and there have been occasional shortages in the state markets.

Since 1984 tens of thousands of foreign workers have either been expelled from Libya or prompted to leave by higher taxes and restrictions on the amount of money they can send out of the country. Since they were part of the working class in Libya, their expulsions have deepened divisions between Libyan and non-Libyan workers and weakened the social power of the Libyan working class.

Officials have also been discussing the possibility of mass layoffs of Libyan employees.

As part of the imperialists' drive against Libya, they have clearly been hoping that such austerity moves will seriously undermine support for the revolution and thus provide greater opportunities for intervention to topple the Qaddafi government. That is why they have been seeking to tighten economic sanctions

against Libya.

There is certainly some discontent in Libya over the economic situation; people's congress discussions are often marked by complaints over high prices. But there have been no signs of any significant political repercussions so far. As the July 1984 issue of the London monthly *Middle East* noted, while the government's policies had "alienated the Libyan middle class and the Libyan religious establishment," it still retained "the support of the poor and the underprivileged."

One indication of this has been the absence of the kind of strikes and urban uprisings provoked by food price hikes elsewhere in North Africa in recent years, as in Egypt, Tunisia, and Morocco.

As Libya's economic difficulties mount — alongside stepped-up imperialist military pressures — political discontent within Libya may become greater. But up to now, the big majority of Libyan working people continue to support the revolution and the gains it has brought them. □

Ireland

A view of Republican movement's evolution

Interview with British supporter of Irish freedom

[Martin Collins, a leader of the Labour Committee on Ireland, which is affiliated to the British Labour Party, toured six cities in the United States in March and April to build support for an end to British rule in Northern Ireland and for Ireland's reunification.

[Collins is the editor of *Labour & Ireland*,* the magazine of the Labour Committee on Ireland. He is also a columnist for the British weekly *Socialist Action* and edited *Ireland After Britain*, a book of essays by leaders of the Irish freedom struggle and the pro-withdrawal wing of the British Labour Party.

[The Labour Committee on Ireland has a membership of about 500, including 12 members of the British Parliament and 6 members of the European parliament.

[The committee has brought leaders of Sinn Féin — the largest Irish organization fighting for a reunified Ireland — to Britain to address trade union gatherings and meetings at Labour Party conferences.

[There is also a women's group in Britain, Women for Ireland, which focuses its efforts toward the feminist and women's movements and has been campaigning against the strip searching of women political prisoners in Northern Ireland and in Brixton jail in London.

[While in New York, Collins was inter-



IRA fighter in Northern Ireland.

viewed by *Intercontinental Press* on April 3. The bulk of that interview — dealing with questions such as why Britain remains in Ireland, Collins' view of the November 1985 Anglo-

Irish Accord, and the possibilities for building a mass movement in Britain for British withdrawal from Ireland — was published in the May 5, 1986, issue of *IP*. We are printing the remainder of the interview below.]

* * *

Question. What is the impact on British opinion of bombings carried out in Britain by Irish nationalist groups? Does it increase the sentiment for British withdrawal from the conflict? Or does it foster a sense that the Irish freedom struggle is being conducted by madmen who cannot be talked to?

Answer. According to opinion polls, 53 percent of the British public favors withdrawal from Ireland, although that sentiment is very confused and based on many different starting points.

In general, bombings in Britain do not make a positive contribution to changing British public opinion on Ireland. What has an impact on British opinion is the political struggle.

Politically, the most disastrous period of armed actions in Britain was in 1974, at a time when the Republican movement in Ireland was politically on the defensive while militarily on the offensive.

In that year there was a series of bombings in Britain, including pub bombings in Birmingham in which 19 people were killed. The Birmingham pub bombings led to a wave of repression in Britain and the isolation of the Irish

*For subscription information write to Labour Committee on Ireland, BM Box 5355, London WC1N 3XX, England.

community and the Irish struggle, which was not overcome until the 1981 hunger strike.

The election of hunger striker Bobby Sands to the British Parliament from Northern Ireland had a profound impact on British opinion. In fact, his election and subsequent death could be described as a shock to British society, which had been constantly told that the Irish Republican Army was nothing more than a gang of thugs and terrorists without any support in the community.

Q. Within the Republican movement there is a current of opinion that believes that only when the war is brought home to Britain will people there get tired of occupying Northern Ireland. What do you think of that view?

A. For a long time there has been a debate within the Republican movement about the respective roles of the political and military struggles and about which one will force the Brits out of Ireland.

The biggest threat that the nationalists have presented to British rule in recent decades was during the hunger strike in 1981.

A nationwide campaign in support of the demands of the hunger strikers was organized, which involved many thousands of people on both sides of the border dividing Ireland. In the 26 counties of the South, as well as the 6 counties of the British-occupied North, there were big demonstrations in support of the prisoners. Two of the hunger strikers won seats in the Parliament in the South.

That was the biggest nationalist upsurge seen in Ireland at any time since the end of the war of independence in 1921, and it was created by a political campaign around the demands of the prisoners with politics in the driver's seat.

Its impact in Britain was not caused by a military offensive but by a political offensive by sympathetic people in Britain.

Q. What is your view of the changes that the Republican movement has been going through in recent years?

A. I think that the Republican movement — and more specifically Sinn Féin — has been going through a very interesting transformation.

Historically, the social program of the Republican movement rested on the interests of small producers and small farmers, the classical petty bourgeoisie.

Their model of a New Ireland called for a network of cooperatives based on small farms, small industries, and small producers. It was hostile to any state planning measures on the level of the nation as a whole.

The Republican movement's tactics flowed directly from that social base and program. Acting in secret, an elite military core, with a subsidiary political wing, would set the date for the rising and would draw other sections of Irish society behind them through the force of example.

Democracy was seen as a dangerous thing because the more democratic the movement

was, the more the working class could influence it socially. The existence of a strong political organization was seen as a similar danger.

The thing that differentiated the Republican movement from those landowners and businessmen who favored independence from Britain was its insistence on military struggle against British rule.

There were businessmen who wanted independence because they wanted to break down the trade barriers that penalized the development of the Irish bourgeoisie and the Irish economy. And there were landowners who wanted to end the flow of rents to England and to break the subservience of Irish agriculture to the British economy.

But these sectors of society were not willing to take part in the armed struggle against British rule.

The Republican movement also gained strength from its identification with the Catholic church, which was oppressed by the British and represented the people. The church was seen as a legitimate instrument of defense of the people against British rule.

All these things — the social base and program, the mistrust of democracy, the primacy of military struggle, the identification with the church — defined the character of the Republican movement through the ages. It is interesting to look at how the H-Block hunger strike changed this, and at the basic transformation that is taking place in the social character of the Republican movement.

The main gains that came out of the hunger strike were the gains that Sinn Féin learned through its involvement in the mass movement in defense of the prisoners.

The fact that supporters of the armed struggle functioned in coalitions with broader forces in a democratic manner had a salutary effect on all concerned.

The role women played in the struggle in the North led Sinn Féin's leadership to accept the demand of women for an autonomous Women's Department of Sinn Féin, articulating the demand of women to play a more central role in the formulation of policy.

The existence of the Women's Department not only enabled women to play a greater role within the Republican movement, but also brought the demands of women as a whole before the movement.

This culminated in the decision at the 1985 Sinn Féin *ard fheis* [national convention] that the organization would support a woman's right to choose in relation to abortion.

Similarly, the traditional Republican movement, with its petty bourgeois program, had been very hostile to the trade unions, even viewing them as competitors for the allegiance of the Irish people.

During the H-Block struggle, the Republican movement was trying to build its influence in the 26 counties of the south of Ireland. And one arena it turned its attention to was trying to build the national H-Block campaign in the trade unions.

As a result, Republicans began to play a role in the trade union movement, to support the

unions as mass organizations of the Irish working class, and the movement began to direct itself to trying to influence the goals of the trade union movement.

As a result of the combined impact of these different aspects of the lessons of the H-Block struggle — on democracy, women's issues, the trade unions, the movement's modes of functioning — the previous and explicit definition of the Republican movement as a Christian Republican movement was replaced by a socialist republican orientation.

Sinn Féin's view of a united, democratic, and socialist Ireland is one in which there would be clear central authority to initiate planning on the level of Ireland as a whole, to deal with the Loyalist counterrevolution, to deal with the problems of Ireland's economy.

Progressively the traditional petty bourgeois program has been pushed to the back by the gains of the mass struggle.

The Republican movement has also returned to its traditional international roots and outlook. The Republican tradition has always been strongly internationalist, with early Republicans looking to and learning from the American revolution, the French revolution, the German revolution, the waves of democratic struggles against the aristocracy that ran right through Europe.

In the past, however, the Republican movement often reduced the struggle to armed struggle for national liberation and therefore ended up supporting some European fascist movements that used arms, as well as the Zionists, despite their oppression of the Palestinians.

In recent years the Republican movement has progressed a great deal in its international outlook and now looks to the Palestine Liberation Organization, the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, and to revolutionary forces throughout the world.

There is now a political framework in which they evaluate nationalist armed movements, and the ones they identify with are the ones fighting the same enemies — U.S. imperialism and British imperialism.

Q. To what extent are these changes reflected in the ranks of the movement?

A. Very strongly, I think. There is an old guard waiting in the wings for the chance to politically turn back the clock, but at the moment it is unable to make any headway.

The framework of political identification with the Sandinistas and the Cuban revolution, for example, is something that is now accepted throughout the movement. □

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What the miners' union faces today

Interview with NUM General Secretary Peter Heathfield

[Since the British coal miners' strike ended more than a year ago, 25 pits have been closed, resulting in the loss of over 8,000 jobs. In the following interview, Peter Heathfield, the general secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), assesses the current situation for the union.

[The interview, given in April to Finn Jensen, is reprinted from the June 2 issue of *International Viewpoint*, a fortnightly published under the auspices of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International. Footnotes and bracketed insertions are by *International Viewpoint*.]

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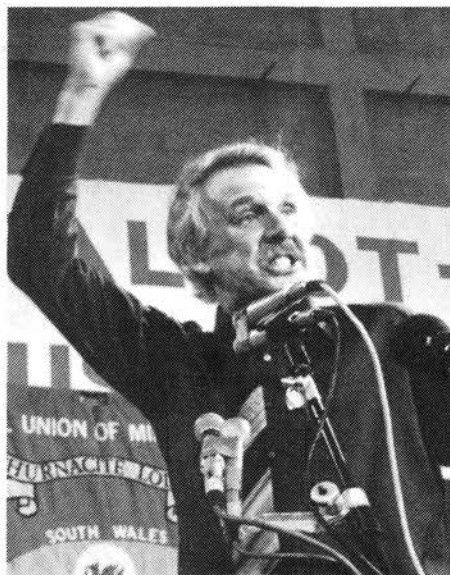
Q. What is the situation in the mining industry and in the NUM now?

A. Looking first at the state of the industry, it's pretty obvious that the industry is once more under attack. The decline in oil prices has virtually ensured that we return to the situation prevailing in the mid-sixties, when coal lost its traditional markets to fuel oil. At that time, oil was almost being given away by the multinational oil companies. The Central Electricity Generating Board [CEGB, the state-owned electricity producer] is talking about converting to oil and linking this with its intention to import 40 million tons of cheaper coal each year.

So the industry is under considerable pressure, particularly when those in charge of it are prepared to apply a pure "market-force approach" to the situation. Energy can't be treated like manufacturing industry, and short-term experiences shouldn't dominate the scene. There are enormous pressures with more threats to employment and talk of further cutbacks. We are still in the middle of a very difficult period.

On the trade union front we are still engaged in a legal confrontation both with the National Coal Board [NCB — the employers of the nationalized industry] and with the receiver who is in charge of our affairs.¹ But I'm not at all pessimistic about the outcome of all this, as it is an attack on well-established conciliation and consultation procedures. Ian MacGregor [the NCB's chairman] is also attacking the miners' pension scheme and the industry's social welfare organization.

Q. Why are the union's funds still being



PETER HEATHFIELD

G.M. Cookson

controlled by the receiver?

A. Because the receiver was appointed by the courts. When he came to see us in November 1985, he said it would only take a few weeks to sort out. And here we are in April and he is still controlling the union's financial affairs!

This has made life very difficult. We are prevented from functioning like a normal trade union. Our expenditure is restricted by the receiver — he only pays those bills he wants to pay, others he just refuses to pay.

The receiver has also initiated action to charge myself, Arthur Scargill [NUM president], and Mick McGahey [NUM vice-president] with the costs incurred in recovering NUM funds from European banks. It is anticipated that this trial will last from 10 to 12 weeks, and inevitably they will find two or three hours of that time to declare the three of us bankrupt. The consequences of that are pretty well known — individually we face enormous problems.

Q. Have you resolved your pay claim with the NCB yet?

A. No, they are being difficult, which rather proves our allegations that their attitude to the NUM's pay claim is determined on the basis of their role as the main recruiting agents for the Union of Democratic Mineworkers [UDM — the scab union set up during the strike]. They have got this queer concept that if miners aren't able to get the wage increase im-

mediately they will flock to join the UDM. That's not the case at all.

Q. How many members does the NUM have today, and how many miners belong to the UDM? How are you going to fight back against the UDM?

A. The UDM stated in the autumn of 1985 that by the end of that year they would have 66,000 members. At the end of 1985 they claimed to have 45,000 members. What is now abundantly clear — we are getting information, details from the receiver — is that it is unlikely that they have more than 21,000 to 22,000 members.

In Nottinghamshire [an area where most of the pits were working throughout the strike], we have 4,500 loyalist NUM members out of a total labor force of 24,500. Miners are rejoining the NUM at a rate of 50 per week, which is relatively slow. But if we are able to get NUM recognition in Nottinghamshire (where the NCB will only recognize the UDM at present), we are confident that there will be some impetus to that switchback.

Beyond the boundaries of Nottinghamshire UDM influence is minimal. Elsewhere there are less than 1,000 UDM members nationwide.

The NUM has around 135,000 to 140,000 members. One of the problems that has emerged from the NCB's attempt to fragment the NUM has been the emergence of nonunionism. There are approximately 2,000 nonunion members now in the industry.

In the last year approximately 25,000 miners have been made redundant, and 25 pits have closed. But we were aware that seven of those pits were going to close in any case through exhaustion and so on. So the coal board has succeeded in taking 18 pits that we felt should have been retained.

There are examples where there was militant trade union organization and the pit was losing money, so the NCB chose to close it. Significantly, it planned to close two of the Kent pits for this reason, but it has withdrawn the closure threat because the pits are now making a profit.

Q. How do you explain that up to 25,000 miners have accepted redundancies instead of fighting to keep their jobs?

A. Many miners left the industry because they weren't prepared to tolerate the new management regime. Others, with the debts that they incurred during the strike, inevitably saw an opportunity to straighten them out, and took

1. During the miners' strike a receiver was appointed by the High Court to take charge of the NUM's funds. This was done after a ruling that the strike was illegal because no national ballot had been taken on the strike action.

advantage of the offer of voluntary redundancy with a lump-sum payment. We think they were rather foolish. It is a short-term expediency and will not help them to overcome the difficulties. But nevertheless people chose that as a way out.

Q. How would you sum up the lessons from the miners' strike?

A. I would say that the principles that motivated us in March 1984 were absolutely right. The strike marked the politicization of a substantial section of the working class in Britain, which was unique in the sense that we were not fighting for more wages or better conditions or employment. We were fighting in defense of jobs and in defense of the mining communities.

The British labor-movement scene at the moment is complicated because of our inability to achieve those objectives. My own view is that had the movement in total rallied around the British miners, Rupert Murdoch wouldn't have emerged.² The whole pattern of industrial relations would have been advanced rather than retarded as it is at the moment.

You can see the attacks on trade unionists, on teachers, on printworkers, and on organized labor within the public services — that is continuing. We said during the strike that it wasn't a struggle for the miners. It was a struggle for the face of trade unionism in Britain. And there are a lot of people within the movement that are now acknowledging for the first time that we were right.

The miners' dispute presented a tremendous opportunity for the whole labor movement to fight back against Thatcherism, but it didn't take up the challenge. So we face enormous problems. But it is not a question of being dispirited, downhearted, or despondent, because I am absolutely confident that in the course of the next two years the tide will turn and we will reassert our influence and authority on the economic scene.

Q. How do you think we could ensure that a future Labour government implement socialist policies, for example, stopping the building of nuclear power stations and increasing coal production?

A. What is important is that we get a Labour government that is committed to public enterprise. We are already discussing with the Labour Party around a new plan for the coal industry. So we would anticipate that an incoming Labour government will reverse the present trend and bring to the industry a measure of stability that has been missing since 1979. Sadly, on the question of nuclear energy, most of the nuclear stations that are coming on stream now were authorized by the former

2. Rupert Murdoch, the owner of the News International Group of newspapers, has sacked 5,500 printworkers.



Jean Fargo/IP

One of hundreds of solidarity marches held for miners during 1984–85 strike.

Labour government.

One cannot ignore the military involvement in the development of nuclear energy, because it is common knowledge that plutonium is being exported to America for nuclear warheads. No doubt it is coming back in the form of cruise missiles. We hope to call for a moratorium on the development of nuclear energy, leading to phasing out nuclear power altogether.

Q. Why is it that Thatcher and the right wing of the labor movement still want to get rid of Arthur Scargill and smash the NUM?

A. The miners' strike cost the British government around 78,000 million pounds. Obviously their labor strategy is to defuse militant trade unionism. They see the NUM as being in the vanguard of the British labor movement, and they continue to attack us for obvious reasons.

The suggestion in Ian MacGregor's book, which is being published in the autumn, that he plotted with Margaret Thatcher to plan a strike is not surprising. What is surprising is that for the first six months of the strike Thatcher said she was having nothing at all to do with it — that it was a matter for the National Coal Board to resolve. We said throughout that period that she was deeply involved. That has now been proven.

I suppose the supplementary question that arises from that response is: why did you come out on strike in the knowledge that it was a Tory plot? Our view and the attitude of the executive is if we had not responded we would have been trampled on. It is better to have fought and not won than not to have fought at all. We resisted the pressures they were seeking to impose on us.

We didn't achieve our objective. But we think the strike had tremendous influence on the rest of the labor movement, with the recognition that sooner or later working people have got to defend their gains of the past, defend their interests — or the capitalists will take them away.

Q. The National Justice for Mineworkers

Campaign³ seems to be a big success. It appears as though the NUM wants to build alliances with forces both inside and outside the trade unions and the Labour Party. What are your perspectives?

A. I think it is a question of seeking to extend areas of influence beyond the Labour Party and beyond the Trades Union Congress [TUC — national federation of trade unions].

If we are to make any progress at all there has got to be a lot more political activity in the communities, in the mining communities and elsewhere. We try to build alliances that will protect the interests of working people. As a socialist I would hope that a broad-based socialist alliance will emerge from that kind of development. So we can hopefully develop those kinds of alliances within the trade union movement and within the broad left.

Both Arthur Scargill and myself said in our election campaigns that we wanted the NUM to be a campaigning organization — obviously campaigning on behalf of the miners, but also on the broader issues: the problems faced by ethnic minorities, old people, the sick and injured. We have a role to play, and we feel that other trade unions should be a part of that campaign.

You can't look at working people's problems in isolation. You are not going to resolve all the problems of working people in negotiation with the employers. You need to be a pressure group, influencing those in power who are subject predominantly to the pressures imposed by multinational corporations. You have to fight a campaign across the board, not on one sectarian approach, but on a broad-based front, to bring about changes in society. I wish some other trade unions saw it in the same way.

Q. Women Against Pit Closures (WAPC) is the grouping you're working most closely with. There has been a decline in their activ-

3. The National Justice for Mineworkers Campaign was set up after the strike, with the support of the NUM, to fight for the reinstatement of sacked miners and the reimbursement of sequestrated NUM funds, and to call for a review of all cases where miners are still serving prison sentences.

ities since the strike. Do you think that some of this is due to the fact that WAPC wasn't recognized for affiliation to the NUM?

A. The emergence of women's organizations within the mining communities is an exciting development. The whole of the movement should learn that in struggle, if you have got the family, the women behind you, then you become a formidable force.

In many ways the women's action groups added a new dimension to the struggle. In the mining communities they are still meeting regularly; they are involved in some instances in community affairs and are still busy trying to raise money for the sacked miners. And they are a force to be reckoned with.

It was a disappointment for myself and Arthur Scargill that we didn't succeed in the rule-change conference in getting associate membership for WAPC. Since that time the Scotland region has accepted a proposition that members of the Scottish WAPC should be associate members of the union. And I am sure others will follow soon, so all is not lost.

Many of the women are now involved in political parties. Many are very eminent public speakers still touring the country campaigning on the miners' behalf. I think that it has been an important development for the broader labor movement. From the national union's point of view we want to promote WAPC and ensure that it continues to prosper.

It is significant also that the miners' support groups that emerged beyond the coalfields throughout the country are in many instances still active and most are now associated with the Justice for Mineworkers Campaign.

Q. The NUM made a lot of international contacts during the miners' strike. How many of these are you trying to keep up now?

A. We are trying to administer the union with the impositions of the receiver and difficulties with the NCB. It is therefore very difficult to maintain that sort of relationship with our friends abroad. But obviously the emergence of the new miners' international organization, which we are deeply involved in, will enable us to maintain international relations in that fashion.

There are about 40 to 43 countries affiliated to the new miners' international, and we are hoping for many more in the course of the year. We are planning a major conference on unemployment, in London at the end of 1986. It is an important development for the NUM to be host to such a conference.

We will be planning another international conference for 1987 on peace and détente, which is really a follow-up to the initiative taken by the NUM in 1982 and the Soviet miners in 1983, and that's an ongoing thing. So we have a deep international relationship across the political divide, and hopefully we will continue to be involved in that.

Q. But there have been some discussions inside the NUM around the union's interna-

tional relations. You broke with the Miners' International Federation (MIF) and formed the International Miners' Organization (IMO). Some have called this an East/West division, is that the case?

A. Not at all. I don't see it in those terms at all. We left the MIF because of the difficulties that were imposed on us within that organization. But it is untrue to say that the emergence of a new miners' international was just because of the difficulties that faced us in the MIF.

In reality the new miners' international — to have one miners' international — was a concept of Joe Gormley [former president of the NUM], who felt that the divisions, the political and philosophical divisions, that created two miners' internationals were bad. There were those affiliated to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and those affiliated to the World Federation of Trade Unions. Gormley was of the opinion that a single new miners' international would be stronger and would have more influence.

There is still a lot to do because there are those who want to maintain the cold-war attitude. But the problems facing miners whether they are American, British, French, Chinese, or Australian are precisely the same. So our ability to overcome those difficulties depends on our ability to work together. And I am sure that in the course of the next few years we will be able to do that.

Q. You spoke recently at a labor movement conference in Manchester on South Africa. How do you see the NUM's role in the international class struggle? For example, what are your relations with the NUM in South Africa?

A. We have had a relationship with the Black African miners for a pretty long time. Since the emergence of the new miners' international we have been trying to reestablish contact with Cyril Ramaphosa, the general secretary of the NUM in South Africa. It is pretty obvious that our communications to him have been intercepted. We now know he hasn't received any of the letters we sent him in the course of the past 18 months.

However, a representative from the African National Congress (ANC) visited our national office a couple of weeks ago, and he was returning to South Africa with duplicates of all the letters we had sent to Cyril. Hopefully we will reestablish contact with him.

Throughout my adult life, the NUM has been actively campaigning against apartheid. I can remember in the mid-sixties resolutions being passed at conference for the release of Nelson Mandela. That seems light years away and he is still detained in prison. We have had ANC spokespersons and representatives of the South West Africa People's Organisation at conferences and meetings. So as part of our general strategy, we are helping others that have been deeply involved in the anti-apartheid movement.

Q. What's happened about the coal im-

ported during the strike, for example, from Poland?

A. We had enormous problems, and we still have a difficult relationship with the Polish miners' organization. They continue to argue that Polish coal imports to Britain were not increased during the strike, and it's a downright lie! One thing about Lloyds shipping agency, it tells the truth because it is interested in money — and they were able to name the boats, the ports, and so on. It was all logged. Poland virtually doubled its imports into Britain during the year of the strike.

Q. But Solidarnosc tried to oppose this. Do you have any contact with Solidarnosc?

A. No, we have no relationship . . . no relationship with Solidarnosc. I question whether it is a trade union. It is antistate. Well, we have problems with them, we had problems with them.

Q. Do you think Margaret Thatcher and the NCB would import coal from South Africa, as they have with cheap coal from the USA?

A. Yes, they'd do it tomorrow. They did it during the strike and they will do it again because of business interests. South African coal was brought into Europe during the strike — there were considerable efforts made to camouflage it. In fact it was sent to Scandinavia, blended with other coals, and brought into Britain under a trade name, so it lost its identity. The Danes have taken a very positive attitude on importing South African coal and have completely banned it, which is a very important development. □

Experience of Labour Party in British mining town

A recently published pamphlet, "Campaigning for Socialism: The Chesterfield Experience," is circulating among activists in the British Labour Party and the trade unions. The pamphlet, written by Carol Turner, a member of the Labour Party for 19 years and secretary of the Labour Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, is sponsored by the Campaign Group of Labour members of Parliament. The foreword is by Tony Benn, Labour Party member of Parliament from Chesterfield and a prominent figure in the Campaign Group.

This account of the activities of the Chesterfield Labour Party over the last few years is based on tape recorded interviews with activists from the labor movement in this city in the heart of the Derbyshire coal district.

The Chesterfield Labour Party organized support for the striking coal miners in 1984-85 and has waged a vigorous educational campaign for socialism.

The 28-page pamphlet can be obtained for £0.70 plus £0.18 postage and handling from: Unity House, 113 Saltergate, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S40 1NF or Other Books, P.O. Box 50, London N1 2XP.

300 meet on struggles in Pacific

Kanak leader describes independence fight in New Caledonia

By Kate Blakeney

SYDNEY — More than 300 people attended a recent conference here on the struggle against colonial and semicolonial oppression in the Pacific. The gathering, organized by the Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific Network, heard speakers from Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, the Philippines, the Marshall Islands, Tonga, and the Kanak struggle in New Caledonia. Representatives of the Australian Aboriginal people also spoke.

The theme of the April 25-27 conference was "Australia's Pacific connections — a contribution toward an alternative Australian foreign policy in the region." Many speakers pointed to Australia's political, economic, and cultural domination of the island nations of the Pacific. Important links were also drawn between the struggles of the Pacific peoples and the fight of the Aborigines, the indigenous people of Australia, for their rights.

Wadan Narsey from Fiji expressed the sentiments of many at the meeting when he noted, "We are not interested in volunteers saving our souls, nor do we want handouts. We simply want independence of economy."

One of the best-received speakers was Susanna Ounei, a leading member of the Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front (FLNKS) and editor of its newspaper, *Bwenando*. The FLNKS is fighting for the independence of the Kanak people in the French colony of New Caledonia.

"We've had enough!" Ounei told the conference. "Our fight is not finished. It is growing, and only we the Kanak people can resolve our problems."

Following her presentation, this reporter was able to interview Ounei. I asked her if the recent election victory of the conservatives in France would make any difference to the Kanak struggle.

"Some things won't change," she said. "There will be no difference. We still have to fight colonialism. Things are very bad now with bombings and attacks on our youth. Last November they tried to destroy our radio station [by bombing the office.]"

Ounei acknowledged that such harassment and political repression could become even worse under the new Jacques Chirac parliamentary leadership in France.

Some of the *caldoches* (French settlers), who had moved into the capital city of Nouméa, leaving the Kanaks in control of much of the countryside, were now being encouraged by the French government to return, Ounei explained. They have been promised protection by a strengthening of the security forces. "This is a real provocation for the

Kanak people," she said.

Ounei pointed out that many of those responsible for the attacks on Kanaks were formerly French settlers in Algeria who were expelled nearly 30 years ago by the Algerian people during their successful struggle for independence from France. These people are deeply racist and anticommunist, Ounei said.

Unemployment is high among the Kanak people. Out of a population of 60,000, only about 7,000 have jobs, Ounei said. She explained that under the Pisani plan a certain amount of local self-government had been gained in the three Kanak-controlled regions of New Caledonia. In these regions the FLNKS has developed Kanak schools and various projects to provide employment and "self-government." "We do not believe these regional powers are enough," she added, "but we have used these concessions from the French to develop the consciousness of our people. It is part of our strategy." She expressed concern that now, under Chirac, funding for these Kanak projects would be cut.

Ounei described how the FLNKS has involved Kanak youth in the struggle. The French used to call them "delinquents," she said, "but now they are some of our best fighters and guards. We have taught them discipline in the struggle against colonialism." She pointed to the FLNKS ban on alcohol, which has been strictly adhered to by militants to

avoid unnecessary provocations by the *caldoches*.

I asked if the FLNKS had a policy to encourage women's participation in the struggle. "Women are the grass roots of our movement," Ounei replied. She explained that before colonization by the French, equality had existed between men and women. "We point out to the men that their attitude to women is really a colonial attitude," she said. "We say that they cannot be for decolonization and yet hold that women are not equal."

The FLNKS has begun a serious program of political education for its members, which takes up the question of women, Ounei noted. "We are trying to get rid of a colonial mentality," she said, "and the women's section of our movement is growing all the time."

Ounei commented that she had been struck by the slogans in solidarity with Nelson Mandela and the Black people of South Africa when she returned to Nouméa last November after her tour of the United States. The Kanak youth are especially inspired by the South African freedom fighters, she said.

"What are the perspectives of the FLNKS today?" I asked. "We carry on," Ounei replied. "We will prepare our program, and we fight for it. The French will never give in. We will be the Algeria of the Pacific. We prepare for power, but first we must decolonize." □

Forum hears speakers on the Philippines

By Julie Walkington

BRISBANE — A forum held here May 7 heard two Australian activists who have visited the Philippines since the downfall of Ferdinand Marcos.

The speakers were Deb Shnookal, who had recently returned from a reporting trip for *Intercontinental Press*, and John Hohenhaus from the Australian Telecom Employees Association. Hohenhaus participated in a tour sponsored by the May First Movement (KMU), the principal left-wing union federation in the Philippines.

Shnookal, who had been to the Philippines on two previous occasions, related the history of the struggle against former President Marcos. She also showed slides to illustrate the conditions and protests that led to the mass outpouring that brought down the Marcos dictatorship.

Hohenhaus described the May Day celebra-

tions in Manila in which he participated. He said he had been struck particularly by the fighting spirit of the Filipino people and their readiness to continue to stand up for their rights under Corazon Aquino's government.

Considerable discussion followed the talks, and some of the Latin Americans in the audience commented on what they saw as the parallels and differences with the revolutionary struggles in many Latin American countries.

Attention was also drawn to the danger that the Australian armed forces might get involved in helping defend U.S. military bases in the Philippines. "Our responsibility," Shnookal stressed, "is to do everything we can to ensure that the Australian government does not become embroiled in such a war, which would be a war against the Filipino people, who are simply fighting for their rights and a better life."

The forum was sponsored by the Brisbane branch of the newly formed Socialist League. □

Anti-Libya scare campaign

Kanak struggle, Vanuatu accused of 'terrorism'

By Neil Jarden

[The following article is reprinted from the May 23 issue of *Socialist Action*, a fortnightly newspaper published in Auckland, New Zealand, that reflects the views of the Socialist Action League, New Zealand section of the Fourth International.]

* * *

The newly elected French parliament, dominated by the right wing under new Prime Minister Jacques Chirac, has wasted little time in announcing moves against the Kanak independence movement in New Caledonia.

The most important political and economic powers exercised by the colony's regional governments will be removed and placed in the hands of the High Commissioner (who directly represents Paris) and the Territorial Congress. Three out of the four regional governments are led by the Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front (FLNKS), while the Territorial Congress is dominated by the main local right-wing party, the Rally for Caledonia in the [French] Republic (RPCR).

One of the main areas in which the regional governments were making progress was land reform. Under this, some of the lands stolen from the indigenous Kanak people were being returned to tribal ownership. The regions will lose this power, retaining responsibility only for public works and "cultural activity."

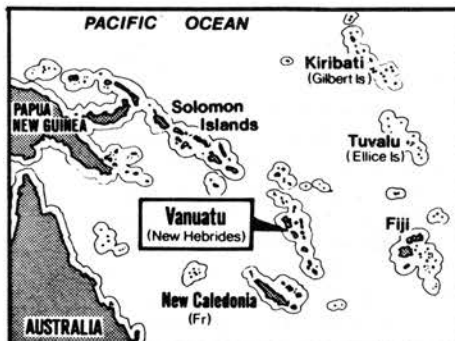
Jean-Marie Tjibaou, leader of the northern regional government and president of the FLNKS's Provisional Government of Kanaky, reacted to the announcements made by the new French Minister of Overseas Territories, Bernard Pons. Tjibaou described them as "a provocation."

"It only confirms what the Algerians have told me: 'Never trust the French, they are all liars,'" he said.

Meanwhile, a great deal of pressure has been aimed against the FLNKS, and other progressive forces in the region, over the question of their links with Libya.

In March the Libyan capital, Tripoli, was the venue for a conference of liberation movements, organised by the Non-Aligned Movement. Most of the world's poorest countries, in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, belong to this organisation. The conference was attended by representatives of some 300 national liberation organisations and countries, including the Vanuaaku Pati (the governing party of Vanuatu) and the United Front for the Liberation of Kanaky (FULK), which is a member party of the FLNKS.

In line with Washington's vicious anti-Libya campaign, much has been made in the imperialist news media, both in this country



and internationally, of the alleged "dangers" of the "Libyan connection" in the Pacific.

One allegation, which appeared in the press in New Caledonia, was that an "alliance" had been formed between the Vanuaaku Pati, FULK, and the Libyan government. The Vanuaaku Pati denied that any such alliance had been set up.

What did upset Washington, Canberra, and Wellington, however, was Vanuatu's response to the U.S. bombing of Libya. Vanuatu declared its solidarity with Libya and announced that it was opening diplomatic relations with the Libyan government. New Zealand Prime Minister David Lange immediately wrote a paternalistic letter to Vanuatu Prime Minister Walter Lini warning him to be "prudent" in his relations with the Libyan government. (New Zealand itself already has diplomatic relations with Libya via the Libyan embassy in Australia, and has growing trade relations.)

Wellington's *Evening Post* editorialised on the dangers of "unsophisticated micro-states" in the Pacific having links with Tripoli. Vanuatu's decision was "cause for concern," it said.

Intense pressure is also being directed

against Kanak independence fighters over their connections with Libya. Eloi Machoro, who was the central leader of the successful Kanak boycott of elections in New Caledonia in November 1984, was cold-bloodedly shot down by the French military in January 1985, shortly after returning from a visit to Libya. FULK leader Yann Celene Uregei, former Minister of External Relations in the Provisional Government of Kanaky and who visited Libya along with Machoro, has been the subject of major attacks in the press recently.

Uregei, along with five other members of FULK, attended the recent Non-Aligned Movement conference in Libya. Now many press reports are suggesting that Uregei has somehow become involved in "terrorism." For example, an article in the May 4 *Sunday Star* claimed that FULK has been "aligned . . . with the Libyan-sponsored International Militant Force. . . . The International Militant Force was formed in Libya last month. The *Times* newspaper has reported Middle East and Western observers as saying international terrorism was the objective of the force."

Meanwhile, the Australian government has refused to renew the visa of the FLNKS representative in Australia, John Peu, who attended the March conference in Libya. Peu is also a member of FULK.

This is not the first time that international spokespeople for the FLNKS have been subjected to harassment from imperialist governments and smears in the news media. Susanna Ounei, currently Director of Publication of the FLNKS newspaper *Bwenando* and who has made speaking tours of New Zealand, the United States, and Canada, was accused by French papers of spreading "lies" overseas about the oppression of the Kanaks. *Bwenando* responded by defending what she was saying as the truth.

The right to independence for Pacific peoples must involve their right to make contacts with whomever they choose. The attempt to smear Kanak militants, the Vanuatu government, and others with imperialism's "Libyan terrorists" hysteria, must be resisted and rejected. □

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Struggle for land reform continues

Interview with vice-chairman of KMP peasant union

[Felicisimo Patayan, vice-chairman of the Peasant Movement of the Philippines (Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas — KMP), was in Managua, Nicaragua, in April to observe the congress of the National Union of Farmers and Ranchers (UNAG).

[While in Nicaragua, Patayan was interviewed by *Intercontinental Press* on April 25. The interview was conducted in English.]

* * *

Question. Could you give a description of your background and involvement in the struggle in the Philippines?

Answer. I am from a peasant family and live in Davao del Norte Province on the island of Mindanao in the southern Philippines. I have been involved in peasant organizing for the past 15 years, and I am presently vice-chairman of the Peasant Movement of the Philippines.

Q. How many peasants are in the KMP?

A. When the KMP was established in July 1985 we had 500,000 individual members.

Q. Was the KMP formed out of existing peasant organizations?

A. Yes, the KMP was able to bring together 48 provincial and regional peasant organizations. Before they came together there was no coordination between the different organizations and no national mass actions could be carried out.

After the KMP was established we were then able to stage coordinated mass actions of peasants to press our democratic demands before the government.

Q. What are your demands?

A. We have five basic demands. One is for genuine land reform. Another is for national agro-industrial development. A third is for a halt to military harassment in the countryside. The fourth demand is for an end to military aid to the Philippines. And the fifth is for the withdrawal of the two giant U.S. military bases in the Philippines.

Q. What is the situation of peasants in the Philippines today?

A. We use the term peasant to mean very small farmers working on somebody else's land and having to pay rent or share the crop with the landlord.

Seventy percent of the 55 million Filipinos are peasants. The average amount of land each peasant works today would be about 4 acres,

which is rented or worked on a sharecropping basis.

Some peasants work a little plot on their own and also work on a neighboring farm for wages. They are farmworkers, but they are also peasants because they live right in the area and farm a piece of land themselves.

Because of these small plots and the rents that have to be paid, there is a very serious problem of hunger in the country.

Let me mention a very special case, on the island of Negros, where sugar cane is the single crop.

When world prices of sugar went down about two years ago, 300,000 plantation workers were out of a job. Feeding their families has become a serious problem.

There is so much malnutrition, hunger, and misery on Negros that every month 25 to 30 infants and children die from the effects of hunger.

Q. Are those who work on the plantations paid laborers or peasants?

A. On Negros the plantation workers, we call them *sacados*, are paid wages. But on the sugar plantations, workers are only paid during the planting and harvesting seasons. During the rest of the year there is no work for them and they get no income.

And wages in the Philippines are very low. That is why so many multinational corporations operate in the country. In the sugar industry there are Dole and Del Monte, which have acquired 55,000 hectares [1 hectare = 2.47 acres].

There are also rubber plantations run by Firestone, Goodrich, Goodyear, and Dunlop, which manage thousands of hectares of land.

There is also Guthrie, an English corporation that is now planting palm oil, which becomes a cheap competitor for our coconut oil industry. It controls 16,000 hectares.

There are also Japanese-capitalized companies. The names are Filipino, but the capital comes from Japan. These companies are planting bananas for the Japanese market.

In the country today, a big portion of our agricultural land that used to produce food for domestic consumption is now turned over to export crops. So that is another cause of our hunger.

Q. Does the Philippines now import food?

A. We import thousands of metric tons of wheat and flour from Canada and the United States, and also rice from the United States.

Q. Could you describe the operations of the

military in the countryside?

A. The intense militarization of the countryside is an additional factor contributing to the people's miseries.

The military carries out three major programs against the people.

The first is forcing people into hamlets for days and even months. Some hamlets are now one year old. That disrupts farming activities. Sometimes people can leave the hamlets to get food from their farms. But mostly their food is harvested by other people while they are in the hamlets, so that adds to the hunger.

Another form of harassment is what we call "salvaging," summary executions. The military arrests people and kills them and then claims they were killed by guerrillas from the New People's Army (NPA).

Sometimes the soldiers strip the houses, even while people are sleeping inside them. A lot of people have been killed in the countryside.

The third form of military harassment is the enforcement of food blockades. During the lean months, the peasants go to the stores to buy rice. But the military, in order to prevent the guerrillas from getting food supplies, restricts the peasants to buying only 5 kilograms of rice per family per week. That's not enough, because families are very large and rice is the main food.

Q. What else do they eat?

A. For their own consumption the farmers raise rice, corn, root crops, vegetables, and fruit. Of course if there are surpluses they market that. But for several years farmers have even had to sell some of their own food crop to pay off high-interest loans to local moneylenders or the rural banks. This is another cause of the hunger and suffering in the countryside.

Q. What types of actions has the peasant movement carried out?

A. The KMP has organized marches, rallies, and demonstrations, especially at government offices connected with our problems — the Ministry of Agrarian Reform and the Ministry of Food and Agriculture.

We also take our complaints to the military people because of the harassment that they impose.

Q. What is the agrarian reform in the Philippines now?

A. The Marcos-era agrarian reform law was very ineffective. It has been on the books for the last 13 years, but only one-tenth of 1 per-

cent of the farmland has been given to the farmers. At the rate the government is carrying out the agrarian reform it would require 400 years for all the peasants to receive land.

Q. What role did the KMP play during the protest against Marcos?

A. Before the elections we were already in the streets, going from office to office to present our demands. We had a strong campaign against poverty, and we demanded the lowering of the cost of fertilizers and pesticides. Also we demanded the lowering of the cost of rice. But this was not given to us.

Q. What was your position during the election campaign?

A. Our group decided not to take part, because we knew very well from our experience with elections during Marcos' time that there could be no honest and clean elections under Marcos. That's one reason why we did not really participate.

In addition, we presented our demands — the five demands I mentioned before — to the opposition. But we were not accommodated. That's the main reason why we decided not to take part.

We are for elections, as long as there is a good assurance of honest and clean elections with no killing, no cheating, no harassment.

Q. When the election happened, and it was clear that Marcos was going to carry out another fraud, did the KMP participate in the protests against this?

A. Even during the elections, we mobilized ourselves to watch the polls and we also organized the people to stay in the polling places. There ended up being two groups in charge of the vote counting: Marcos' COMELEC [Commission on Elections] and the independent NAMFREL [National Movement for Free Elections].

In the real physical counting of the ballots, Aquino won a landslide vote. However, Marcos would not concede to that and had himself proclaimed winner by his own National Assembly. Meanwhile, Aquino had herself proclaimed president by the masses. So we had two presidents.

Our group called for public mass civil disobedience because of the results of the elections. We didn't want to have two presidents. Cory Aquino then was also calling for a campaign of civil disobedience.

At that point our church leader, Cardinal Sin, intervened because a rebellion had broken out in the military.

Juan Ponce Enrile, who was head of the national defense ministry under Marcos, together with Gen. Fidel Ramos, staged a revolt against the Marcos government and holed up in Camp Aguinaldo and Camp Crame.

Enrile and Ramos called on Cardinal Sin to intercede because they already knew that the Marcos loyalists would attack them in these camps.



Filipino peasant working in sugar plantation.

So Cardinal Sin, through Radio Veritas, the Catholic radio station, and on television, called on the people to protect the two camps.

Millions of people were there. Of course, no gun was fired. Marcos' military just retreated because the people, without arms, blockaded the path of their tanks and war materials.

My stand is that Cardinal Sin should not have intervened. It was very risky for the unarmed people. Millions of people would have died if Marcos' military had fired.

We suspect the United States intervened. Philip Habib had arrived. He talked to Ramos, he talked to Enrile, he talked to Cardinal Sin, and he talked to Marcos. Then Marcos left the presidential palace and went on U.S. helicopters to Clark Air Base.

From there the whole entourage — the Marcos cronies also left with him — went to Hawaii. They claimed that it was the combined military and civilians who forced Marcos out. We do not believe that. It was really the escalating vigilance and militancy of the people that pushed him out.

Q. How do you view the current Aquino government?

A. Well, we are not optimistic because right in the cabinet itself there are a number of landlords. We know that with the presence of these people they would not grant us our demand of land reform.

To mention individuals, we have Salvador Laurel, who is vice-president and is also prime minister and minister of foreign affairs. He is a big landlord, a sugar planter.

The minister of defense, Juan Ponce Enrile, who was minister of defense under Marcos, too, is also a big landlord in the province of Cagayan. The new minister of agriculture, Ramon Mitra, is another landlord. And President Aquino herself belongs to a landlord family, the Cojuangco family. They own thousands of hectares of land planted in sugar cane.

In addition, the minister of defense, Enrile, and the chief of staff, General Ramos, were responsible for the hamletting, the military operations in the countryside.

And then there are Enrile's and Ramos' followers, who have been painted by Amnesty International as the most brutal torturers in the country, and they are still there.

Also, the Marcos loyalists and the Ramos and Enrile people are intact in the countryside. The rebellion, the so-called rebellion, occupied only one square mile in Manila. There was no such rebellion in the countryside.

So that's why we are not optimistic about the new government.

Our general task is to organize more, because half a million members is only a very small fraction of the whole peasant population of around 35 million peasants. We have to organize some more and consolidate, meet, make ourselves strong.

Q. Are there other peasant organizations?

A. There are some government-initiated organizations, but at this time some of their members are coming over to the KMP, which is independent and is the most militant and most vigilant.

Q. What can you tell us about the NPA guerrillas?

A. The KMP is an independent, legal organization. We operate in the countryside, where the NPA is also operating. We respect their option to take up arms.

The KMP and NPA operate in the same area, with no problems. They also have a program on land reform. In areas where they are strong, they are already able to give land free to the farmers. Landlords do not go to the areas where the NPA is strong. So there is now land reform in the area.

Q. Do they organize cooperatives or indi-

vidual farms?

A. Cooperatives. Most of their activities are in the form of cooperatives.

Q. How do you view the U.S. role in the Philippines?

A. We are very much against U.S. intervention in whatever form. Whether it is intervention in the political system, in the cultural system, or in the economic system, we don't want it. We have to live as an independent, sovereign country.

We have been under the educational system of the U.S. for a long time. That's one problem. After the revolution we have to remake our educational system and build up our own, although we will retain what is good.

Q. What is your view of Nicaragua, the land reform, UNAG, and the revolution here?

A. We are very much interested in the revolution of Nicaragua. We have been looking at their war, tactics, and strategies that could be applied in the Philippines. We have been reading the books of Augusto Sandino, Carlos Fonseca, and also the book by Omar Cabezas [*Fire from the Mountain*]. We find them very good.

We are watching their program on land re-

form and farm production. We are very much interested in how they do it.

During my short stay here, I had a negative comment on the land reform program, because we were brought into a village in Masaya where people did not have land yet, and they were almost crying because the rains are coming and they don't have land. I remarked that the land reform office is not carrying out the revolutionary line of the *campesinos*. That should be attended to first.

Then my other negative comment is that they are going too fast into the agro-industrial complex. Why not use the money on land reform programs, services to the *campesinos*, like roads, housing, and cooperatives.

I also have a negative comment on the use of machinery. The landlords left their machines there, and now the peasants are using the machines. But there are complaints already that they have no spare parts. And the machines use imported oil.

My view is, why not use the draft animals that the old farmers had been using?

I am afraid they will flood the country with diesels. We had a bad experience in this regard in the Philippines. Diesels are brought into the country, and the multinational corporations are the ones who profit from it.

We also had bad experiences with the heavy

use of chemicals. The ecology has been disturbed. Beneficial insects have been killed while the destructive insects build up immunity. Food in the form of birds, fish, and frogs has disappeared.

Heavy use of chemical fertilizers has killed soil-building organisms — earthworms and bacteria that break down vegetable matter into organic fertilizer. As a result the soil has become too sticky when wet and too hard when dry.

I also worry that they are going into research on hybrids. We have also had a bad experience in the Philippines with hybrids. The hybrids of rice that the International Rice Institute produced are very hungry for chemical fertilizers and are highly susceptible to pests and diseases, so they require a lot of pesticides.

These are comments, not conclusions, because I have only been here for four days.

Q. Is there a solidarity movement in the Philippines with Nicaragua against the U.S. aggression?

A. We are forming that right now. One of my purposes in coming here is to build links between *campesinos* in Nicaragua and *campesinos* in the Philippines so that we can stage an internationally coordinated mass action against Reaganism. □

China

A critique of the new five-year plan

Greater encouragement to market forces

Zhang Kai

[The following article is taken from the March–April issue of the Chinese Trotskyist monthly *October Review*, published in Hong Kong. The English translation is by *October Review*.]

* * *

The seventh Five Year Plan (FYP) (1986–1990) has been adopted by the National People's Congress (NPC). The FYP was formulated amidst differences in the Party leadership on the policy and tempo of reform. China now "seems to be at such a crossroad": "Either take a small step and establish an economic model with the plan being predominant and the market being supplement, or take a big stride and quickly form a socialist market economy" (feature article by Li Minhua, Hong Kong *Wen Hui Bao*'s correspondent from Beijing, April 3).¹ "A big debate is brewing among new and old economists" (article by Cheng Xiang of *Wen Hui Bao* reporting from Beijing, March 31).

1. *Wen Hui Bao* is a Chinese Communist Party (CCP) mouthpiece in Hong Kong.

The FYP was "adopted in principle." This means some questions still await amendment, pending decisions to be made after controversies are resolved in the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) leadership, or pending actual developments later on. This implies reduced planning and increased possibility of loss of control.

Basic tasks of the FYP

The basic tasks of the seventh FYP are: "1. to maintain a basic balance between total social demand and supply, so that the reform can develop smoothly and the basis of a new type of socialist economic structure with Chinese characteristics can be basically established in five years or more; 2. to keep up continued and steady economic growth, and on the premise of controlling the total amount of investments in fixed assets, greatly strengthen key projects, technology reform, and talent promotion . . . ; 3. on the basis of developing production and heightening economic efficiency, to continue to improve the life of the urban and rural people."

The latter period of the sixth FYP saw an imbalance between total social demand and supply, the basic reason being that investments

in fixed assets were excessive. The sixth FYP formulated in December 1982 had set investments in fixed assets of state-owned enterprises from 1981 to 1985 at 360 billion yuan [1 yuan = US\$0.31]. At that time, Zhao Ziyang's report said that "such an arrangement means drawing lessons from the excessive scope of capital construction and inefficiency of investments in the past." Still, the actual outcome reached 530 billion yuan, almost 50 percent more than planned. The pursuit of speedy development and high production value resulted in disregard for efficiency and quality, and further tension in raw materials, electricity, and transport. (For example, Guangzhou suffers from a 40 percent shortage in electricity, and in Nanjing and Chengdu electricity shortages cause stoppage of work two days every week.) Since 1984 there has been a sharp increase in credit funds and consumption funds, which has sped up inflation, foreign trade deficit, imbalance of foreign exchange, and devaluation of the currency.

However, the gross social investments in fixed assets as set by the seventh FYP are 1,296 billion yuan (of which those of state-owned enterprises are 890 billion yuan), 2.6 times the figures of the sixth FYP.

This indicates that the seventh FYP has not drawn lessons from the past, and it is difficult to ensure accomplishment of the basic tasks quoted above.

Insufficient investments in agriculture

Of the investments in fixed assets of state-owned enterprises, capital investments take up 500 billion yuan, of which 375 billion is arranged by the central government and 112.5 billion is arranged by the local government. Of the former, energy, raw materials, heavy industries, transport and communication, the four Special Economic Zones,² and the Guangdong nuclear plant totally take up 73.2%, "other sectors" take up 13.5%, the defense industry and military projects take up 5.4%, but agriculture, forestry, irrigation, and meteorology take up 3.9% (14.68 billion yuan), and science, education, culture, and health take up merely 2.6% (9.98 billion yuan). The latter is expected to be placed mostly in industries.

The investments in agriculture and education are very low. In recent years, Deng Xiaoping has stressed the success of rural reform. However, gross grain production in 1985 decreased by 7 percent as compared with 1984, the main reason being that the income from growing grain is small, and many peasants are thus unwilling to grow grain, and cultivated land has decreased; at the same time, the prices of fertilizer, insecticide, and farming implements have increased. State funds to support agriculture are also appropriated by local institutions.

The situation was reflected in the speeches of some deputies to the National People's Congress. For example, "deputies from the Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Jilin, and Fujian provinces and from Beijing pointed out that the decrease in investments in agriculture and irrigation and the slackening of capital construction in agriculture must be corrected. Li Qingkui from the Jiangsu Province said that the phenomena of 'degeneration of the land, ageing of machinery, deterioration of irrigation, and worsening of the seeds' deserve attention" (New China News Agency, March 31, 1986, dispatch from Beijing). One of the "acute viewpoints" during group discussions and interventions at the NPC was that "the seventh FYP (draft) ignores agriculture" (article by Li Minhua, *Wen Hui Bao's* correspondent from Beijing).

As a result of the criticisms made by the deputies, an amendment was made to Zhao Ziyang's report: "To continue to strengthen agriculture, which is the basis of our national economy, is a key strategic orientation in our modernization construction. We should continue to grasp grain production and strive to assure steady increase of grain production."

The criticisms made at the congress showed certain support to Chen Yun's speech at the

CCP congress last September.³

Despite a certain increase in these years, the educational funds are still meager. According to Hu Zhiwei, former chief editor of the *People's Daily* and presently deputy to the NPC, of the educational funds set by the seventh FYP, "77.7 percent is spent on the personnel, and less than one-third is really spent on improving educational undertakings" (*People's Daily*, April 10, 1986).

The 1982 census showed that 23.5 percent of the population, i.e., 230 million people, are illiterate or semi-illiterate. Liu Bin, deputy director of the State Educational Committee, recently went on a survey to Yunnan and Guizhou provinces and "discovered that 15 to 40 percent of school-age children do not go to school; while old illiterates have not decreased, new illiterates have increased." "At present, funds for primary and secondary schools are very low. There is only 102 yuan per year for every secondary school pupil and 33 yuan for every primary school pupil (1984 figure). This amount covers wages, scholarship, cadres' travel allowances, administrative costs, and school maintenance charges." "Statistics at the end of 1984 showed that there are still 46 million square metres of dangerous school buildings and a shortage of 37 million sets of desks and chairs (about one-fifth for all pupils). . . . Library books and laboratory facilities are even more pitiable" (*People's Daily*, April 8, 1986).

Besides, due to the low wages of teachers (only 20 to 30 yuan every month for teachers in many rural primary schools), large numbers of teachers change their jobs, and the quantity and quality of teachers are low.

The seventh FYP provides that 201.6 billion yuan from the state budget is to be spent in the coming five years on education, science, culture, and health, and nine years' free education will gradually be implemented. Yet, Tao Dayong, professor of Beijing Teachers University, pointed out that "the present problem is that there is not sufficient attention paid to fundamental education in primary and secondary schooling, and educational funds are not enough. . . . The authorities agree to exempt school fees, but are reluctant to exempt 680 million yuan annual sundry fees. Without the exemption of sundry fees, the exemption of school fees is mere empty talk because the school fees can take the form of sundry fees. I still think there should be a big increase in investments in education" (*Ming Pao*, April 4, 1986).

Tempo of industrial and agricultural growth

The FYP sets 4 percent as the average annual growth rate of agricultural output in the next five years (6 percent if including industries on village level). The growth rate for industries (light and heavy industries) is 7.5 percent. It is an 87.5 percent increase compared with the goal of the sixth FYP, but it is only about 60 percent of the actual growth rate dur-

ing the sixth FYP period.

According to the above growth rates, the GNP in 1990 will be 1,117 billion yuan, a 44 percent increase from 1985. If the population of 1990 is controlled under 1.113 billion, then the per capita GNP is about 1,000 yuan, equivalent to about US\$312. It is still a long way from the US\$1,000 predicted by Deng Xiaoping for 2000.

In the article "On the Sixth Five Year Plan" (*October Review*, No. 1 of 1983), I criticized the average annual growth rate of industry and agriculture, projected at 4 percent, to be too low. In fact, the actual development has been much faster than the plan. In industry there is even the danger of extra high tempo: a 14 percent increase of gross value of industrial output from 1983 to 1984 and a growth of 22.8 percent from January to July 1985 as compared with the same period in 1984. Chen Yun signaled the warning: "We cannot possibly continue with such a high tempo, because our present energy, transport, and raw materials cannot meet the requirements of such a high tempo." The central government ordered national industrial departments to an urgent brake. Still, the growth rate for 1985 was 18 percent.

The reason for the excessive tempo of industrial development is: investments in fixed assets are getting out of control; the more the investments, the more increase in light industries and processing industries, and the greater demand for raw materials and stimulation of speedy production in heavy industries.

The present FYP on the one hand desires a slowdown in the rate of growth and on the other hand increases total investments in fixed assets by 1.4 times as compared with the actual figures of the sixth FYP. Such a contradiction will inevitably induce a high tempo of industrial development and intensify the pursuit of growth of output value without regard for quality and efficiency.

Priority for the reform

The first basic principle and orientation of the seventh FYP is "to persist in placing the reform in priority." The tasks and aims of the reform on economic structure as set by the FYP are:

Firstly, "to strengthen the vitality of enterprises, especially the big and medium state-run enterprises, so that they can truly become relatively independent economic entities and become the socialist commodity producers and administrators that are autonomous and responsible for their own profits and losses." While big and medium state-run enterprises practice management at different levels, many small enterprises are run by the collective or by individuals. This means they are run privately, through contracting or leasing. Products become commodities sold in the market, and are produced for this purpose.

Secondly, "to further develop the socialist commodity market and gradually perfect the market system." The perfection of the market system means "to gradually reduce the varieties of resources allocated by the state and

2. Special Economic Zones have been established in various areas of China to attract foreign investments with promises of low taxes, cheap land and labor, and some access to the Chinese domestic market. — IP

3. Chen Yun is a member of the Standing Committee of the CCP Political Bureau.

lower their proportion in the total amount of resources, to expand the market of the means of production, and to systematically open up and set up the capital market, the technology market, and a rational flow of labor power."

The reduction of the role of the state in the allocation of resources, coupled with the "gradual reduction of the scope of mandatory planning," will induce the majority of products to become commodities sold in the market. Their prices will be affected by the law of supply and demand of the market. The FYP proposes, "on the premise of a full consideration of the receiving capacity of the state, the enterprises, and the people, to actively and steadily push ahead the reform of the pricing system, to gradually form a pricing system that more or less corresponds to value and can reflect the relationship of supply and demand, and to gradually form a price management system that combines state fixation, state guidance, and market adjustment of prices."

As for the concrete stipulation of the formation of the pricing system, the FYP says: 1. concerning the means of consumption, besides state fixation of prices for a minority of important commodities, the prices of general commodities will gradually be set free according to the supply and demand of the market; 2. concerning the means of production, adjust the planned prices of important resources and gradually reduce the proportion of products whose prices are set by the state, so that the state prices and the market prices can gradually move closer; 3. concerning the fares or prices of important public utilities and major services, the state will continue to manage them and readjust them according to planning, and the prices of other service enterprises will gradually be set free.

The trend is that the majority of products will become commodities sold on the market, with their prices "more or less corresponding to their value and reflecting the relationship of supply and demand." The idea of "planning being predominant and market mechanism being supplement" may become outdated.

With such an aim, the "premise" of considering the "receiving capacity" of the pricing reform actually means consideration of the extent to which the general people can tighten their belts and tolerate the situation without breaking into general resistance.

The establishment of the capital market means capital can flow freely in the market, collecting interest without any restriction of the interest rate, and loan sharks like those under the capitalist system may revive generally in China (this has appeared in some places in recent years). The stock market may exist. Technology may become a commodity. As for labor power, though the regulation that "labor power is not a commodity" (i.e., nonrecognition of the existence of exploitation) still holds, it has the attributes of a commodity, since it can flow freely and the laborers can be dismissed or can resign.

Though the FYP uses the term "guidance by planning," it does not project how the plan can play a decisive role so as to subordinate the

market to the plan.

Arguments to support 'socialist' nature

Official theory and the FYP crown China's commodity production, commodity economy, and market mechanism all with the label "socialist." The argument is: socialist commodity production is based on the socialist public ownership of the means of production and the labor of unexploited laborers. (See Xu Dixin's *A Concise Dictionary on Political Economy*, 1983, p. 494.) In his report on the seventh FYP, Zhao Ziyang said, "The commodity economy that we want to develop is on the whole a socialist commodity economy which is based on public ownership, practices the principle of 'to each according to his labor,' and is under planning and control."

Let us look at the three conditions proposed by Zhao Ziyang.

1. The question of public ownership.

At present, the means of production in China is under state or public ownership; this is an important condition to indicate that China is a workers' state and not a capitalist country. However, according to the FYP, state-owned big and medium enterprises will distinguish clearly between right of ownership and right of use, and the right of use is exercised by the factory director or manager. As for small state-owned enterprises, many have become operations by the collective or by individuals. The right of ownership, then, only has meaning in terms of property relationships. The right of use has more substantial meaning. Production is aimed for the market; the prices are regulated by supply and demand in the market. Self-responsibility for profit or loss induces production for profit and not for need. Between the enterprises will be competition rather than cooperation. This is induced by the law of the market, especially when commodity production is "fully developed."

In the aspect of gross value of social output, at present, the value produced by state-owned enterprises comprises about half of the gross value. Take 1985 as an example. The State Statistics Bureau figures indicate that gross output value for the year was 1,624.2 billion yuan, of which state-owned industries were 624.7 billion yuan (38.5 percent), collective industries were 233.2 billion,⁴ agriculture was 357.5 billion, village industries were 93.5 billion, rural construction, transport, and commerce were 168.5 billion, and others (including urban construction, commerce, and state-run transport, communication, and commerce) were 128.8 billion. The majority of collective industries have been contracted to private hands, rural land is contracted on long terms for small commodity production, almost all rural (and a large part of the urban) industries, commerce, construction, transport, and ser-

4. The figures on the output of these two types of industries are calculated from "Statistics communiqué on the 1985 economy and social development" and *China Statistics Yearbook 1985* (English edition). Included in the gross industrial output figure are also 3.22 billion yuan from individual industries and 14.72 billion yuan from other types of industries.

vices are run collectively or privately, and state farms take up only 3 to 4 percent in the gross agricultural output value. Since the growth rate of output value of collective and individual enterprises is much higher than that of the state enterprises, if this trend continues, the weight of state-owned enterprises will continue to decrease. The FYP projects that by 1990 gross output value of rural enterprises will increase 100 percent as compared with 1985, yet the growth rate of state enterprises is far less for the same period.

The FYP projects 160 billion yuan of investments in fixed assets of collective enterprises and 240 billion yuan in individual enterprises. The total amounts to 44.6 percent of investments in state enterprises. It is also unprecedented that investments in individual enterprises are included in an FYP. The speed with which private capital has increased these few years is also stunning.

2. The question of "to each according to his labor."

Though this principle is indispensable in a transitional or socialist period, this principle alone cannot automatically guarantee socialism. While the FYP proposes to "overcome and prevent unreasonable, excessive differentiation of income," it also "continues to encourage" some areas, enterprises, or individuals to get rich first. Zhao Ziyang also uses this principle to evade the question of the basis of "labor of unexploited laborers." Instead he advocates "the promotion of free flow of labor."

3. The question of "under planning and control."

If a general market system is "gradually formed," and prices and production regulated by the market become predominant, then the planned economy will be superseded by the market economy. Chen Yun pointed out at the Party congress that "market regulation means no planning, with production carried out according to changes in supply and demand of the market. This means regulation with 'blindness.'"

The status and living of the laborers

Economic reforms should aim at affirming the master status of the proletariat in production. The FYP does not even mention this. In the section "enliven activities of enterprises" under the heading "structural reform," it proposes to "improve the leadership of enterprises, gradually practice the responsibility system of factory directors or managers, and fully exercise the enthusiasm and initiative of the administrators," but it does not mention the working class. In the FYP there is a general reference to the "socialist democracy and legal system," but this decorative phrase does not even appear in Zhao Ziyang's report.

To ensure the smooth accomplishment of the FYP, the enthusiasm and initiative of the laborers must be mobilized. To do this, their living and working conditions must be significantly improved. What has the FYP promised in this respect?

It projects that by 1990 the average annual

net income of the peasants will be 560 yuan, an increase of 41.1 percent from 1985. However, the inflation rate of 1985 was reportedly 9 percent. If this high rate continues, it means the growth of the net income of the peasants is zero.

It promises that the average annual increase in the real wages of workers will be 4 percent. This is about half of the annual growth rate of gross value of industrial output, which is 7.5 percent.

In official reports, the rate of inflation is not high. Unofficial reports, however, indicate that in recent years the inflation rate is two-digit. For example, the State Statistics Bureau announced at the end of February this year that the average net income of peasants in 1985 increased by 11.8 percent, whereas prices increased by only 3 percent. On March 27 it was announced that the general index of average retail prices in 1985 increased by 8.8 percent over 1984. As the economist Qian Jiaqu pointed out, such figures do not reveal the actual situation, for it averages the price decrease of TV sets, refrigerators, washing machines, cameras, watches, etc., with the price increase of vegetables and daily necessities, hence pulling down the rate of overall increase. Cheng Zhiping, head of the State Bureau of Prices, also pointed out that "the prices of subsidiary foods that much affect people's livelihood have increased by as high as 23 percent (from 1984 to 1985); the increase of vegetables is 34.5 percent, aquatic products 37.4 percent, newspapers and books 32.5 percent" (*Wen Hui Bao*, March 28).

The trend in the beginning of 1986 was acute. According to the statistics published by Beijing's *Peasant Daily*, the increase at the end of February 1986 as compared with the end of December 1985 in the main agricultural subsidiary products in about 50 urban and rural markets was over 100% for rice, wheat, soybeans, chicken, apples, and oranges; almost 100% for sesame oil and beef; 90% for pork; 75% for carp; 58% for eggs; 150% for ginger (*Ming Pao*, March 28, 1986). The rate of increase in two months is indeed stunning. The prices are those for the market. At the end of 1985 there were in total 61,000 markets, with a turnover of 70.5 billion yuan. The prices in state-run shops are lower. However, only the prices of rice and cooking oil are controlled. The prices of all agricultural and subsidiary products have been set free. In addition, 75 percent of small state-run retail shops have been turned over to operation by the collective or by individuals. The figures for price changes in state-run shops for the same period are not yet available, but they are certainly affected by the increases in the market.

Such a situation shows that the projected 4 percent wage increase is far from sufficient to cover inflation. The 7.5 yuan monthly living subsidy for every urban resident is only enough to buy two catties [just over two pounds] of meat in the market.

The urban residents have to bear with an increasing cost of living. As for the peasants, the benefits they obtained a few years ago have

mostly been taken back by the state through the high prices of fertilizers, insecticides, daily necessities, and farming implements. Intensified social tension is being expressed in the outbreak of more workers' strikes and work to rule.

Continuous controversies in the Party

The reflection of social tensions and struggles in the CCP is the intensification of differences and controversies. They have been unfolding in recent years.

Existing materials indicate that serious controversies exist in the CCP concerning the question of reform, and in particular concerning the concrete measures, steps, tempo, scope, emphasis, etc. Differences also exist in the top leadership, and were partially revealed in Chen Yun's speech at the Party congress last September. Some traditional theories and positions of the CCP are being revised, and questions still unresolved are expressed in ambiguous terms.

The seventh FYP manifests the above situation. It does not define how planning can be

predominant over market regulation. Its concrete measures are, however, towards the establishment and perfection of a general commodity market. It is still unclear to what extent the FYP intends to reduce the scope of planning and increase the scope of market mechanisms.

Whither goes China? Closer to the socialist goal, or further away? Defending her present basis as a workers' state — state ownership, planned economy, monopoly of foreign trade — or changing them gradually until ultimately abandoning them? The seventh FYP has no definite answer to this, though there are disturbing indications.

The balance and struggle of various social forces in China and internationally will affect China's development. In particular, the Chinese working class will defend its present and historic interests and will not allow its gains to be overthrown in a "peaceful" way. This is one major reason why it is difficult for capitalism to be restored in China.

April 28, 1986

10 AND 20 YEARS AGO



June 28, 1976

South Africa has been rocked by the most massive Black uprising in the country's history. In defiance of police bullets, clubs, and tear gas, tens of thousands of Black students and workers filled the streets of Soweto and other Black townships to express their hatred of the white minority regime's racist apartheid system.

The militancy displayed by the protesters reflects the determination of the African masses to free their continent of the last strongholds of white colonial rule. Together with the deepening ferment in Zimbabwe and Namibia, the Black upsurge in South Africa is an important sign of the rising national and class struggle throughout southern Africa.

The Vorster regime's response to the just demands of the Black population — the wanton murder of well over 100 persons — has revealed to the world even more sharply than before the utterly barbaric and retrograde nature of South Africa's apartheid system.

At the same time that Vorster's police were gunning down Black protesters, Secretary of State Kissinger declared that he would go ahead with his scheduled meeting with the hated racist. Slated to be held in West Germany on June 23 and 24, the talks are the first such high-level meetings between Washington and Pretoria since 1945.

Although confronted with deep unrest at home, Vorster also viewed the meeting as vital and refused to cancel or postpone it. Speaking at the airport in Johannesburg June 19 on his way to the talks, Vorster declared that the meeting with Kissinger was "a very important

one in which I hope to be able to put South Africa's case at the highest level."

WORLD OUTLOOK

PERSPECTIVE MONDIALE

(Predecessor of *Intercontinental Press*)

June 17, 1966

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras — A new and perhaps qualitatively significant action has been carried out by the forces determined to hold back the Latin American revolution at all costs.

On May 27 news reached here confirming earlier rumors that Guatemalan bombers had violated Honduran airspace and had bombed Honduran territory.

The May 28 *El Pueblo* reports that "the people who live on the Honduran side of the frontier believe that this combined military operation, by air and land, was directed against a strong group of Guatemalan guerrillas that had gathered in the mountainous terrain" along the border.

The incidents mark what may be a "first" in Latin America: the combined efforts of two or more governments in actual antiguerrilla military operations.

Up to now, "training" operations have been carried out, involving troops and air and sea power from various countries, invariably including, of course, U.S. armed forces, who not only provide "advice" in the operations but also participate actively.

Just last month, "Operation Central America" was carried out right here in Honduras. It involved ground troops plus sea and air power from Guatemala, Nicaragua, Panama, Honduras, and the USA.

Mass protests sweep country

Demand purge of officials linked to Duvalier

By Doug Jenness

Four months after President Jean-Claude Duvalier fled Haiti, protests demanding the removal of government figures linked to the deposed dictator continue. And the June 7 announcement of a schedule for elections has not succeeded in quelling the mounting dissatisfaction with the ruling National Council of Government.

At the center of these protests has been the demand for the resignation of Finance Minister Lesly Delatour, known as "the American" for his close association with the U.S. government, and government council member Col. William Regala, a longtime associate of Duvalier's.

Since Duvalier's tyranny was toppled in February, Haitians have been pressing for the removal of government and army officials connected to him and for the prosecution and punishment of those officials guilty of murder and torture.

A victory was scored on May 31 when, for the first time in 30 years, a top Duvalier military aide was tried and found guilty of murder. Following a three-week public trial that was broadcast live on national television, Lt. Col. Samuel Jérémie was sentenced to 15 years in prison. More trials have been promised by the government.

About the same time that this verdict came down, the government appointed Philippe Vorbes, a former Haitian soccer star who served as Duvalier's personal athletic trainer, to announce the World Cup soccer matches on Haiti National Television. In protest, the director of the television station, Carlo Désinor, and most of the other staff members resigned. The government hired a private company to keep the station on the air.

After the second-ranking official in the Ministry of Information, Aubelin Jolicoeur, criticized the television employees on national radio, angry demonstrators took to the streets.

During the first week of June a series of protests was held. Roads leading to Port-au-Prince, the capital city, were blocked with tree trunks and piles of burning tires and debris.

According to *New York Times* reporter Joseph Treaster, a crowd of several hundred people on the western edge of the city damaged a bus and threw stones at soldiers.

An Associated Press dispatch reported that more than 2,000 people gathered in Gonaïves, an early center of opposition to Duvalier. According to the AP account, smaller groups of demonstrators in Léogâne and Miragoâne, about 20 miles south of Port-au-Prince, blocked the main road to the capital.

During the protests at least three persons were killed and a dozen wounded. Others were



GEN. HENRI NAMPHY

arrested.

When an army sergeant was shot and killed in the Port-au-Prince suburb of Carrefour on June 4, Col. Regala blamed protesters.

The June 6 *New York Times* reported that youth leader Nelson Frantz gave a different account. He said the soldier was killed "when soldiers and policemen inadvertently exchanged fire after protesters overturned a police car."

According to the *Times*, the Independent Federation of Haitian Workers (CATH), one of Haiti's three union federations, issued a statement June 5 pointing out that it is well known in Haiti that only the military and former members of Duvalier's disbanded security force, the Tontons Macoutes, have firearms. CATH accused Col. Regala of deception.

On the evening of June 5 Jolicoeur submitted his resignation from the Ministry of Information. He also gave up his post as Minister of Tourism. Regala, Delatour, and other officials, however, have not acknowledged the demands of protesters that they resign.

Namphy orders crackdown

Lt. Gen. Henri Namphy, president of the National Council of Government, responded by ordering a crackdown against the protesters.

In a television and radio address to the nation shortly after midnight on June 5, Namphy declared, "We have arrived at a situation involving fires, barricades . . . nearly a civil war. The country is on the verge of anarchy."

Following Namphy's address, Interior Minister Regala announced that the armed forces had received "instructions to react sternly against these serious breaches against the security of the Haitian nation."

On the same day a Reuters dispatch reported

that U.S. government officials voiced fears of communists gaining influence in Haiti. It quoted a Reagan administration official as saying, "For the first time, what you're getting is a lot of communist rhetoric. That was not there before. There are, for the first time, people telling me that Fidel Castro is involved."

In a move aimed at defusing the mounting protests, the ruling council has announced that presidential elections have been scheduled. The plan presented June 7 calls for a decree to be issued later this month on the formation of political parties and for a constituent assembly to be elected in October to draft a new constitution.

In July 1987, Haitians are to choose local representatives and four months later to elect a president. The winner would take office on Feb. 7, 1988, the second anniversary of Duvalier's downfall.

The demand for elections, particularly an elected constituent assembly, has been widely raised by opposition groups since Duvalier's ouster.

'Sidesteps popular demands'

But the timing of Namphy's announcement provoked criticism from many of these forces. Gérard Gourgue, president of the Haitian League of Human Rights, who resigned from the governing council in late March, said that Namphy had "sidestepped the popular demands by presenting his election calendar."

Lafontant Joseph, secretary-general of the human rights organization, argued that the elections would be tainted unless Namphy carries out a fuller purge of Duvalier supporters from Haitian public administration and the army. "If Namphy insists on stalling, soon the people will be calling for his head, too," Joseph said.

Sylvio Claude, a Protestant clergyman and a leader of the Haitian Christian Democratic Party, termed the electoral calendar ill-timed. "It is not a matter of elections now," he stated. "What the people need is justice. Elections are not possible without removing the Duvalierists."

The discontent was so deep that a broad coalition of groups, including unions, student organizations, and political parties, called a one-day protest strike for June 10. Most schools, factories, and stores were closed down on that day in Port-au-Prince and a half dozen other towns.

More conservative politicians, however, praised the election plan. Grégoire Eugène, head of the Social Christian Party, described those rejecting it as "an alliance of communists, recently returned exiles with no support, and politicians who have no natural popularity."

Namphy is attempting to avoid dealing with the immediate demands of Haitians by announcing the elections. But as long as the ruling council fails to take more vigorous steps to root out officials linked to Duvalier and meet some of the Haitian people's economic and social demands, the protests can be expected to continue. □