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# **INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS**

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## **Washington Gears Up for Expanded War in Nicaragua**

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# Washington gears up for expanded war in Nicaragua

By Steve Craine

The Reagan administration has seized on the June 25 congressional vote on aid for Nicaraguan counterrevolutionaries to accelerate its campaign to overthrow the workers' and peasants' government of Nicaragua. Already Washington has taken new steps to put its war machine into gear.

The approval of \$100 million in overt military and other aid for the *contras* by the Democratic-controlled House of Representatives represented a big *political* victory for Reagan, far beyond the direct impact of \$100 million on the U.S. war against Nicaragua. The bipartisan support he mustered for this policy is bringing other ruling-class figures into line behind his program for expanded war in the region.

As Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto told an emergency session of the United Nations Security Council July 1, the vote "constitutes a declaration of war, carries with it dangerous and unforeseeable consequences, and is one more step in the direction of sending United States troops to Nicaragua."

In Washington the vote was viewed as raising the stakes of the war. A "senior Pentagon official" told the *Wall Street Journal*, "It's a very high-stakes game. The president has a chance to prove that Communist regimes can be overthrown." But, another unnamed official told the same paper, "if these guys [the *contras*] are crushed, our ability to help other anticommunists will be seriously damaged."

On July 11 the White House announced a reorganization of the way the *contras* will be supervised by their U.S. masters. Day-to-day management of the mercenary army will be handed over to the Central Intelligence Agency, it said, while the State Department will continue to be in charge of "policy" decisions. Any actions that could prove embarrassing to Washington will supposedly be cleared through the State Department.

Contra actions against Nicaragua were directed by the CIA until 1984 when Congress refused to continue funding its operations in Nicaragua following the CIA mining of Nicaraguan harbors and the exposure of a CIA training manual that urged sabotage and the murder of civilians. Since then the only officially recognized U.S. aid to the *contras* has been \$27 million of "humanitarian" assistance. This has been administered through a special office of the State Department.

Throughout his administration, Reagan has been beefing up the CIA's capacity for covert operations. Since he came to office in 1981, appropriations for this purpose have tripled. Reagan and others in Washington want to be sure the CIA is still capable of overturning governments as it did in such countries as

Guatemala in 1954 and Chile in 1973.

Washington is also preparing the ground in its most important staging area for the contra war — Honduras. Reagan's special envoy to Latin America, Philip Habib, flew to Honduras July 12 to discuss with President José Azcona Washington's plans for the region. According to U.S. officials cited by the *New York Times*, the Reagan administration has made explicit promises to Azcona that it will provide whatever aircraft are necessary to maintain Honduran air superiority over Nicaragua.

Already the Pentagon has spent at least \$100 million and deployed 40,000 troops in a long series of military exercises in Honduras.

On June 30 U.S. Ambassador John Ferch notified the Honduran government that he would soon be replaced by Washington. He had served in Tegucigalpa for less than a year.

Despite official disclaimers, it was widely understood that the State Department considered Ferch unsuited to its needs in directing the war from Honduras. Said one former State Department official, "Now they're looking for another field marshal like [former ambassador John] Negroponte, somebody who can orchestrate the whole thing with the *contras* and guarantee that Honduras goes along." Ferch had been criticized for not trying hard enough to win support for the contra war among Honduran government officials.

Among the contra forces themselves, the House vote has provided a huge morale boost. "You're talking about people who were totally demoralized because they didn't see the supplies coming," said a contra political adviser. "Now we have breathing space."

Congressional approval of renewed funding for the war also put new life in the campaign to sell the war to the people of the United States.

## General strike rocks Chile

By Will Reissner

The success of a two-day general strike on July 2 and 3 highlights the growing isolation of the military regime headed by Gen. Augusto Pinochet that has ruled Chile since 1973.

The two-day action was called by the Civic Assembly, a coalition of 18 professional groups, trade unions, and student organizations. Two months ago the Civic Assembly issued a list of demands on the government that it saw as necessary for a transition to a democratic regime.

Seventeen leaders of the Civic Assembly

In addition to the many congresspeople who switched their votes after earlier rejecting Reagan's aid proposals, other representatives of ruling-class opposition to Reagan's policies have also shifted noticeably in his direction since the vote.

The editors of the influential *New York Times* presented a virtual declaration of war on Nicaragua in a July 10 editorial entitled "The Sandinista Road to Stalinism." In their view, the revolution of seven years ago is now "hopelessly betrayed." The "police state now emerging" there, they claim, is caused by "the regime's loss of popular support at home." The editors are concerned about this because developments in Nicaragua have "embarrassed those [like the *New York Times*] seeking to give them the benefit of the doubt."

Having removed all doubt in their own minds that the Sandinista revolution is "well down the totalitarian road traveled by Fidel Castro," the *Times* editors and many other liberals remove the only argument they had to oppose Reagan's course.

In an earlier editorial, two months before the aid was approved, the *Times* had written, "The character of the Sandinistas cannot be the cause of war." The paper also argued at that time that the failure of the *contras* to generate mass support proved the popularity of the Nicaraguan government.

By the day the House was to take its final vote on the aid bill, the *Times* dropped its longstanding objections to the measure and called for its approval.

Real opponents of Washington's attempt to overturn the Nicaraguan revolution have an important new opportunity to counter the war drive of the government and the liberals like those at the *Times*. A broad coalition of antiwar, anti-apartheid, labor, student, and religious groups has initiated a call for nationwide antiwar actions on October 25.

The initial coalition includes many of the forces that brought together more than 100,000 protesters in the streets of Washington and other U.S. cities in April 1985. Continued mobilizations of this kind are vital to defending the Nicaraguan revolution and the October 25 call provides a much-needed focus for protests. □

went into hiding after the Pinochet government charged them with violating state security laws. Under those laws they can be held legally responsible not only for the strike itself, but also for any consequences resulting from it.

Dr. Juan Luis González, a Christian Democrat who heads Chile's medical association and chairs the Civic Assembly, described the strike as the largest antigovernment action in the country since the Pinochet regime overthrew the elected government of Salvador Allende.

The protest was prompted by General Pinochet's intention to remain in power through 1997. Under a constitution drawn up by

Pinochet in 1980, his present term ends in 1989. He has announced that at that point he will seek another eight-year term in a one-candidate referendum.

Despite one of the largest displays of military force in the capital since the 1973 coup, the strike brought Santiago to a standstill.

Public transportation was almost totally shut down. Rodolfo Seguel, leader of the largest union federation, the National Workers Command, estimated that 60 percent of the workers in some industrial zones of the capital remained at home.

The College of Physicians reported that activity in hospitals was only 10 to 20 percent of normal.

In working-class districts of Santiago, hundreds of barricades of trash, rocks, and burning tires were erected in largely unsuccessful attempts to keep the heavily armed troops and riot police out of the areas.

After nightfall, residents of both working-class and middle-class neighborhoods all over the city set up a clamor by banging empty pots and pans.

The depth of the dissatisfaction with the Pinochet regime was indicated by the strong participation of independent truck owners in the general strike. The owner-drivers were strong supporters of the coup that brought Pinochet to power. But during the two-day action, according to Héctor Moya of Santiago chapter of the National Truck Owners Federation, 95 percent of the truck drivers in the country's central region — which encompasses the three largest cities — kept their vehicles off the streets.

Moya explained the truckers' about-face by characterizing the five-year economic crisis in Chile as "irreversible without a return to democracy."

Reports from cities such as Arica, Concepción, and Punta Arenas indicated that the strike was highly successful in those areas.

More than 1,000 people, two-thirds of them from outlying provinces, were arrested during the work stoppage.

As the success of the strike became apparent, Santiago's military governor banned four opposition radio stations from reporting any news. The Interior Ministry announced that criminal charges had been filed against an editor at the news magazine *Análisis* and a reporter at the magazine *Cauce*.

Six people were killed and more than 50 injured during the protest actions. The brutality of the security forces prompted the Roman Catholic hierarchy to charge them with using methods "that seem excessive and that cause worse damage than what they are trying to prevent."

In an incident that drew international attention, troops doused 19-year-old Rodrigo Rojas and 18-year-old Carmen Quintana with a flammable liquid and set them afire on July 2. Rojas, the son of Chilean exiles living in Washington, D.C., died of his burns.

As the *Washington Post* noted in a July 9 editorial, "The chance death of a 19-year-old with Washington connections has given Americans a rare glimpse of the condition of state terrorism prevailing in Chile."

Then, on July 9, the 2,000-person funeral

procession for Rojas was attacked by riot police firing tear gas and water cannon. U.S. Ambassador Harry Barnes, who attended the funeral, was briefly trapped in the headquarters of the Chilean Human Rights Commission by the fleeing crowd.

As Barnes was escorted through a back door to his car, youths shouted, "Ambassador, help us get rid of Pinochet!"

Barnes' attendance at Rojas' funeral was blasted by U.S. Senator Jesse Helms during a trip to Chile, where he told the state-run television network on July 12 that Barnes had "planted the American flag in the midst of a communist activity."

Reacting to Helms' statement, State Department spokesman Bernard Kalb said Barnes "is carrying out the president's policy," and that

his presence at the Rojas funeral had been approved in advance by the State Department.

Although Washington was instrumental in organizing a disruption campaign to bring down the elected Socialist Party government of Allende and has supported Pinochet's bloody regime for the past 13 years, the Reagan administration is now increasingly worried that a massive popular rebellion is brewing that could overturn the hated tyranny.

While continuing to back Pinochet, the White House is probing possibilities for averting a rebellious movement that could get out of control. Along this line, the July 15 *New York Times* reported, "Mr. Barnes has been instructed to take an active role in trying to persuade Mr. Pinochet to step down as President and turn over power to a successor in 1989." □

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# Revolution responds to new attacks

*Sandinistas mobilize against supporters of mercenary war*

By Cindy Jaquith

MANAGUA — In what government officials here call "the bloodiest terrorist action this year," mercenaries financed by Washington blew up a truck filled with peasants July 3. Twelve children, 12 women, and 8 men were murdered. All 32 were civilians. Eighteen of the victims belonged to a single family.

The peasants were traveling a road in Jinotega Province in northern Nicaragua. The counterrevolutionaries spotted them and detonated a mine by remote control. One victim, Salvadora Gutiérrez, died together with her five-month-old baby. Her husband explained to reporters that out of fear of the U.S.-backed terrorists, Salvadora rarely ever left her home. But on July 3 she decided to make a trip to see her mother.

The same day other mercenaries, also in the pay of the U.S. government, opened fire on the passenger boat that ferries people down the Río Escondido from the town of Rama in central Nicaragua to the port of Bluefields on the Atlantic Coast. A peasant woman was murdered in the attack, and seven other people were wounded.

The Nicaraguan Ministry of the Interior reported that mercenary units have infiltrated the Atlantic Coast recently from both Honduras and Costa Rica. The group Pro-War KISAN, said the ministry, had carried out seven attacks on Sandinista army troops in the Río Coco northern border region. The group MISURASATA had attacked the community of Alamikamba in central Northern Zelaya Province, killing five people.

The ministry also warned that the U.S.-backed mercenaries were planning to assassinate leaders of those armed Miskito groups that have entered a cease-fire and dialogue with the Nicaraguan government. Progress continues to be made in this dialogue. In June, 150 members of Pro-War KISAN deserted and returned to Nicaragua to join the cease-fire. And 4,500 of the 12,000 Miskitos that Pro-War KISAN forced across the border into Honduras in April have now returned to their communities on the Río Coco.

## Attacks follow new U.S. aid

The July 3 slaughter in northern Nicaragua and on the boat to Bluefields occurred less than two weeks after the U.S. House of Representatives approved \$100 million for the mercenaries it claims are "freedom fighters." The Sandinistas declared at the time of that vote that the U.S. aggression against Nicaragua was entering a new and more dangerous stage. They said Nicaragua's revolutionary government would have to change some policies in

order to defend the revolution.

Following the House vote, the government here suspended publication of the pro-U.S. government daily *La Prensa* and denied Catholic priest Bismark Carballo the right to return to Nicaragua. Carballo has been the right-hand man of Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo, the main internal spokesman of the counterrevolution here.

The government said that both *La Prensa* and Carballo had promoted the mercenary war and financial aid for the terrorists, violating Nicaraguan law. The Sandinistas warned that similar measures would be taken against anyone else who abetted Washington's aggression.

On July 2 Catholic Bishop Pablo Antonio Vega, vice-president of the Nicaraguan Episcopal Conference, held a news conference here in Managua.

In recent months Vega has made several trips to the United States, where he has falsely accused the Sandinistas of violating human rights and discriminating against the Catholic church. He has even gone so far as to say that armed struggle against the Nicaraguan government is justified. The Sandinista daily *Barricada* has reported on each of his speeches abroad to alert working people here to the role the bishop is playing in helping legitimize the mercenary war.

But each time Vega has returned to Nicaragua from his trips, he has claimed that the press misquoted him and has couched his pro-war propaganda in more cautious terms.

At his news conference here July 2, how-

ever, the bishop was more explicit. Explaining his view of the *contra* war, he said, "If a people are tormented, beaten down, stripped of their human rights, they have no other recourse but to struggle.

"There is a right to insurrection, including armed insurrection," he continued. "In the face of the facts, the military pressures on the people, this right to self-defense cannot be denied."

Referring to two areas of the country where *contra* forces are quite active, Vega said, "My people in Río San Juan and Chontales aren't challenging anyone for power, but rather defending their human rights in the face of ideological aggression and the snatching away of their boys [by the military draft]." He disputed the recent World Court ruling that it is Washington that has systematically violated the human rights of Nicaragua, calling the decision "biased."

## Vega's view of U.S. invasion

Asked by reporters where he would stand if the U.S. government invaded Nicaragua, Vega replied, "The invasion from the one side will have its reason in the invasion being carried out by the other side. That's not the fault of the church or of the people, but of those who provoked it," he added, referring to the Sandinistas. The real aggression Nicaragua faces, he claimed, is from Soviet "imperialism."

On July 4, the Nicaraguan President's Office released a communication from the government. It announced that a decision had been made to "suspend indefinitely the right to reside in this country of those, like Bishop Vega,



Additional \$100 million in U.S. aid will enable contras to carry out further terrorist attacks.

who do not deserve to be Nicaraguans and whose real place is at the side of Reagan and the mercenary bands that assassinate children."

The communication listed five specific reasons for taking away Vega's residency:

1) That on March 5 Vega had gone to the United States at the invitation of the right-wing Heritage Foundation and spread the lie that the Sandinistas had murdered three priests. The bishop also met with two top commanders of the mercenary army, Enrique Bermúdez and Adolfo Calero.

2) That on June 4 Vega again went to the United States "to extend support to Reagan's request for arms, money, and military advisers for the terrorist forces assassinating the people of Nicaragua."

3) That in a June 24 speech U.S. President Reagan said, "Reverend Father, we have listened to you."

4) That in Vega's July 2 news conference here he "not only justified the approval of the \$100 million for the mercenaries, but also went to the extreme of calling the World Court decision biased . . . and justified an eventual U.S. military intervention in Nicaragua."

5) That "24 hours after the statements of Señor Vega, 12 children, 12 women, and 8 toilers, all of them peasants, were murdered by the mercenaries of Reagan and Vega."

"Given Bishop Vega's repeated antipatriotic and criminal behavior, his disrespect for the laws of the Republic and for the people of Nicaragua," the communication said, he had lost his right to live here. He would be kept out "as long as the U.S. government's aggression lasts."

The communication said Vega was now in Honduras. It said in closing: "The government of Nicaragua will continue guaranteeing the people's right to exercise with absolute freedom their religious beliefs and practices, which have been and will continue to be a vital part of the revolutionary transformation Nicaraguan society is passing through."

#### 'Measures we were forced to take'

Speaking to gold miners July 5 in La Libertad, a small town near the city of Juigalpa in Region V, Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega took up the government action against Vega. Vega was bishop of the Juigalpa diocese.

Because of the U.S. escalation of the war, Ortega said, "We've been forced to take measures we didn't want to take, actions that we didn't take [before] because we don't like them."

"Reagan is going to say that we're persecuting the church, that we're doing away with the church and with religious beliefs," Ortega pointed out. "We're quite aware of the kind of campaign that's going to follow the taking of these measures, but we've been left with no alternative."

In the months leading up to the most recent events, small delegations of Nicaraguans opposed to the contra war had repeatedly confronted both Obando and Vega, demanding that they speak out against the U.S. aggres-

## Celebration of 1979 fight targets new enemies

By Ruth Nebbia

JINOTEPE — Undeterred by the rain, 10,000 people paraded through the streets here July 5. The parade commemorated the seventh anniversary of the liberation of this town from the Somoza dictatorship in 1979. Waving red and black flags, residents showed their support for the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN). The FSLN led the insurrection which ousted the U.S.-backed Somoza dictatorship.

The parade was kicked off by Nicaraguan singers Carlos Mejía Godoy and Otto de la Rocha. De la Rocha dedicated a song to "the mothers of mobilized soldiers and to those mothers who are now also fathers because their husbands died in the war."

One marcher walked around dressed as a

bishop, his hat decorated with dollar signs. His was just one of the ways people expressed their support for the recent government decision to deny Bishop Pablo Antonio Vega the right to live in Nicaragua.

Some floats carried banners condemning the \$100 million in aid for the mercenaries approved by the U.S. House of Representatives. Others supported the recent World Court decision that condemned the U.S. government aggression against Nicaragua.

Three children dressed up to represent the governments of El Salvador, Honduras, and Costa Rica stuck their tongues out at the crowd to parody the contempt that these three governments have toward Nicaragua. The three Central American governments have opposed a negotiated peace in Central America.

sion. Groups of church activists, mothers of youth killed by the mercenaries, and soldiers permanently maimed by the war visited their offices to demand they change their stand.

Each time, Obando and Vega had the same answer: the church cannot take sides in a political conflict; the best solution is for the Nicaraguan government to negotiate with the mercenaries.

On June 14, 4,235 supporters of the revolution who are also active in the Catholic church in Juigalpa sent a letter to the Vatican's representative in Nicaragua. They urged him to call Vega to order.

"We want to give you some statistics," the letter said, "that show the blows we have suffered up to April of this year: 709 brothers of the countryside murdered; 636 peasant brothers kidnapped; 11,840 people displaced by the war; and 1,200 children orphaned."

"Our pastor, Monsignor Pablo Antonio Vega . . . has never given us one word of consolation or made any condemnation of these outrages."

"His sermons and seminars are aimed at creating lack of confidence and division; they are more political than religious."

#### Demonstrations against 'contra' aid

On July 5 several hundred people marched from the Juigalpa Sandinista Workers Federation hall to the headquarters of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) to demonstrate opposition to the \$100 million and support for the action against Vega. They were addressed briefly by Ortega, who told them that Vega and Carballo "have not acted as Nicaraguans or as Christians, but as agents of Reagan and enemies of Christ."

Larger demonstrations have taken place against the U.S. aid to the contras in cities and towns on the Pacific Coast. On June 27, 65,000 rallied in Managua to repudiate the \$100 million. There was prolonged chanting of

"Obando and Vega — out with them!"

Since then, 10,000 marched in the town of Jinotepe and 20,000 in the city of León. These were traditional celebrations of the date each city was liberated from the Somoza dictatorship by Sandinista forces in 1979. The actions were demonstrations of support for the revolution and the FSLN and determination to defeat the mercenaries. The general mood was one of agreement with the action taken against Vega, Carballo, and *La Prensa*.

One protest of the Sandinistas' measures has been reported. Cardinal Obando, who remains in Nicaragua and has said very little publicly since the approval of the \$100 million, held a mass in Managua July 6. Several hundred people attended.

Obando dedicated the mass to Vega and Carballo, who he said now bear the same scars as Christ.

Obando also read out a statement by Pope John Paul II, who appealed to the Nicaraguan government to "reconsider" its actions.

In a news conference after the mass, Obando said the government action against Vega was a "violation" of human rights. Vega was "expelled" from the country, Obando continued, because he spoke out against "some things" and "that had bothered" some people.

Meanwhile, Víctor Tirado, a member of the FSLN National Directorate, called for "determined action by revolutionary, democratic, and progressive forces and partisans of peace" in support of Nicaragua's struggle against the U.S.-backed war.

In a July 2 speech to the congress of the United Workers Party in Poland, Tirado said: "All our efforts are directed, basically, at defeating the foreign aggression of which we are victims. This has diverted our forces, our material and human resources, and is exhausting us in human and economic terms."

"It's because of this, among other reasons, that we have fervently struggled for a peaceful

solution to the conflict Reagan has produced in our country and in Central America. This is why we firmly support the Latin American effort of the Contadora Group."

(The Contadora Group, which is made up of the governments of Colombia, Mexico, Panama, and Venezuela, was formed in January 1983 with the avowed aim of achieving a peace accord in Central America.)

But the Contadora Group, he continued,

"has invariably been sabotaged by the U.S. government from the beginning of its work."

In the face of Washington's decision to step up the war, Tirado said, the Nicaraguan people would continue defending and advancing their revolution. "No one can substitute for us in this task and this historic responsibility. All we ask for is active and committed solidarity in this struggle, which is an integral part of the struggle for peace and progress in the world." □

sponsored by the ministry, only to have the company violate the accords.

Finally, in July 1985, the union struck and occupied one of the workshops. This forced the company to sign an agreement to respect the terms of the contract, but two months later they again refused to give union officials their wages or assign work fairly to union mechanics. In April 1986 the company tried to fire 27 union activists.

In response, leaders of CST unions from other factories and offices in Managua organized protests in front of the main auto repair shop. On April 19 Julio Martínez workers raised their problems directly with Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega at a public Face the People meeting. Other unions, including some at other automotive companies, took up collections to help support Julio Martínez workers whose wages had been cut by the company.

On June 12 the CST led 300 workers from different plants and offices throughout Managua in a march to the offices of President Ortega to demand government intervention. "For Julio Martínez: confiscation!" "National Directorate: Give the order!" and "People's power!" were their chants.

The workers crowded into a meeting room normally used for press conferences by top government officials. There, René Vallejos, vice-minister of labor, told them that the ministry had decided to take temporary control of the company if the management did not correct its actions by midnight.

The company's attitude was "abusive, dishonest, and illegal," Vallejos said. "If it does not change its attitude, we will prepare the technical plans to run the company, and put the administration in the hands of the workers." He added that the outcome of the Julio Martínez case should serve as an example for other private companies as well.

"Unions will not be destroyed here," Vallejos said. "The revolutionary government re-

## Government takes over auto firm

*Action aimed at stopping employers' union-busting drive*

**By Harvey McArthur**

MANAGUA — On June 19 Nicaragua's Ministry of Labor took temporary control of the administration of six companies that are part of the Julio Martínez Group here.

The ministry acted in response to demands by Julio Martínez workers, who have faced a three-year union-busting drive by the owners. The government declared that the company was carrying out an "employers' strike" that affected the national economy and was damaging the interests of the workers.

The Julio Martínez Group is the largest auto import and repair company in Nicaragua. It employs 400 workers throughout the country and includes import companies, a large repair shop, an engine rebuilding plant, a tire retreading plant, and a large auto-parts business. It is privately owned, and controlled by a five-person board of directors.

The workers at Julio Martínez were able to organize a union and win a contract only after the overthrow of the U.S.-backed Somoza dictatorship in 1979. Their union, which is affiliated to the Sandinista Workers Federation (CST), recently released a six-page chronology of the antiunion attacks by the company.

In 1983 the management stalled on new contract negotiations and unilaterally suspended 32 of the 51 clauses in the old contract. When the Ministry of Labor ruled that the company had to respect the old contract while a new one was being negotiated, the company appealed and dragged out legal proceedings for two years.

### Campaign to divide union

Meanwhile, the management launched a campaign to divide and weaken the union. They began assigning work to those workers who opposed the union, while denying work to union activists. This was a powerful weapon since many automotive workers are paid on a piece-work basis with no guaranteed minimum wage.

"By 1986 some workers were receiving no pay for weeks on end," José Quintero Sánchez, an auto painter and union activist, told me. "Others received as much as 200,000 córdobas a month." (This is eight times the median wage for industrial workers in Nicaragua.)

The Julio Martínez Group receives scarce foreign exchange from the government to import auto parts because its repair operations are vital to the economy. However, the company has sold some parts at black-market prices, assigned the rest to workers who do not support the union, and denied an adequate supply to union mechanics.

Because of this economic pressure, some union activists and leaders were forced to quit and seek work elsewhere. Others were fired outright by the company. In 1985 the company cut off light, water, telephone, and air conditioning to the union offices. In April 1986, 50 workers were denied the right to eat in the company cafeteria.

Company officials have physically threatened union leaders. In April 1986 they even threw inspectors and officials of the Ministry of Labor out of their offices.

### Workers fight to defend union

Since 1983 the union has repeatedly filed complaints and petitions with the Ministry of Labor protesting the company's antiunion practices. In 1984 they twice signed agreements with the company after negotiations



Nicaraguan workers demanding government takeover of their auto import and repair company.

sponds to a call by the workers.”

Ricardo Robelo, a regional CST leader, called for broader worker mobilizations in support of the embattled union. “To the *gusanos* [worms] of Julio Martínez, we are ready for anything,” he said, ending with a cry of “Confiscation!”

The next day the union called in the Sandinista Police to guard the Julio Martínez warehouses after the company tried to remove large amounts of parts and tools. One week later, the Ministry of Labor took over the company administration.

In an interview, Ministry of Labor official Donald Alemán said the action against Julio Martínez was taken under a provision of the Labor Code (which was established by the

Somoza dictatorship in 1945), prohibiting “employers’ strikes” in essential industries, such as transportation. The Julio Martínez management’s attacks against the union disrupted production and constituted a strike, the ministry ruled.

In 1979 Nicaragua’s workers’ and peasants’ government nationalized properties belonging to former dictator Anastasio Somoza and his close supporters. Since then it has nationalized some factories whose owners were decapitalizing and sabotaging the economy or who were actively supporting U.S.-backed mercenaries. The Julio Martínez case is the first time that the government has taken administrative control of a private company to stop a union-busting drive.

The June 20 issue of the Sandinista daily *Barricada* reported that government control will be maintained at Julio Martínez as long as is necessary “to restore working conditions and resolve the problems that have developed.” When conditions are improved, the company may be returned to its owners, ministry officials explained.

The new government-appointed administrator, Idermo Ignacio Cuadra, met with all the Julio Martínez workers on June 19. He stressed that no one would be fired, and urged them to work together to provide the repair service needed in the country. “We are here to take on a responsibility, which means fighting for efficiency, productivity, and unity of the workers,” he said. □

# Women’s rights and the new constitution

## Town meeting discusses abortion, rape, housework, equal pay

[A series of public town meetings to discuss the initial draft of a new national constitution took place in Nicaragua in May and June. The draft was drawn up by a subcommission of the National Assembly, made up of representatives from six of the seven parties in the assembly. The capitalist Independent Liberal Party (PLI) refused to participate.

[A total of 75 town meetings took place throughout Nicaragua, including on the Atlantic Coast. These were meetings of workers, peasants, women, students, professionals, church activists, police, soldiers, etc. An open microphone at each meeting allowed anyone to take the floor to offer suggestions or criticisms of the draft constitution. Copies of the constitution were printed in massive quantities.

[Many of the mass organizations held workshops to explain and discuss the constitution and help prepare for the town meetings. Debates and discussions also took place in the media with representatives of the various parties, mass organizations, and religious groups.

[Women participated actively, and issues of women’s rights were prominent in most of the meetings. In addition, separate women’s town meetings were organized in each region to insure their full participation in the discussion.

[The following are excerpts from the discussion at the June 10 women’s town meeting in Managua. Among the issues raised were demands to end discriminatory laws against women, including the current law prohibiting abortions. Abortion was also a big topic of debate in the editorial pages of the Nicaraguan dailies throughout the constitution discussion. The right-wing daily *La Prensa*, the Catholic church hierarchy, and the capitalist People’s Social Christian Party (PPSC) actively campaigned against legalization and for the “right to life.”

[The June 10 meeting was presided over by Carlos Núñez, National Assembly president and a leader of the Sandinista National Libera-

tion Front (FSLN). More than 800 women participated and 75 signed up to speak. The following excerpts were transcribed and translated by *Intercontinental Press*.]

\* \* \*

*Esperanza Romano.* The constitution’s Chapter IV, “Rights of the Family,” establishes that family relations rest on the absolute equality of rights and responsibilities between the man and the woman. The first question that arises is: How can absolute equality of rights and responsibilities exist if the woman is economically dependent on the man?

Conditions should be established so that this equality can be real, creating the means by which women can participate in economic, social, political, and cultural life. This would be the real basis for such equality.

Within the family there is a division of labor. Usually the woman takes on the responsibilities of motherhood and housework. And, in the case of formally established couples, the man carries out the role of providing the necessary means of subsistence, though he doesn’t always do so. Often, on top of housework and duties of motherhood, women must also provide for the maintenance of the home.

If the constitution doesn’t begin with this reality and with the importance of creating the conditions to break down this division of labor, there can be no equality in the family. Therefore, it’s necessary for society to support greater participation by women in economic, social, political, and cultural activities, and create the means to free her from housework and the permanent care of her children. The construction of neighborhood CDIs or organizing collectives for the creation of SIRs should become a central policy of the revolutionary government.<sup>1</sup>

1. CDIs are child development centers. SIRs are rural children’s services. Both are types of child-care centers.

*Cristian Santos López.* Good afternoon, brothers and sisters. First of all I want to say that my sisters and I are overjoyed to be participating in this women’s town meeting. We are still burdened with centuries-old injustices — such as the fact that men continue to have power over and to abuse women. Now on prostitution. For sure, there is no prostitution without the participation of men. [Applause] So, I’m asking that reeducation programs be established for women and for men who are constant repeaters and who are the ones who promote prostitution. [Applause]

Another injustice that we women face, even though we are defending the revolution at the war fronts, is that we are mistreated in our homes. When I talk of mistreatment, I don’t mean a slap in the face — though we don’t deserve that. I’m talking about brutal, savage abuse, physical as well as mental. It doesn’t seem possible, but if the abuse takes place in the home, within the walls of the “home-sweet-home,” there is no punishment. And that must be corrected. Within the couple’s relationship there must be respect for the physical and mental integrity of the woman and of the children also. There should be reeducation because our revolution is about reeducating our people.

*Salvadora Valle.* I want to take this opportunity to raise a proposal related to the difficulties and legal restrictions that women and men face in Nicaragua in getting a divorce. [Applause]

Right now in order for a woman or a man to get divorced, they must get a lawyer to take the case to court and request a divorce for the following reasons: mistreatment and grave offenses — which means our companion has deeply offended us, impairing our dignity as human beings. Or that he beat us or threatened to kill us.

Other than these two reasons, a woman can ask for a divorce if she proves that her husband



Harvey McArthur/IP

Participants at Managua's women's town meeting on new constitution discuss wide variety of issues affecting women.

lives in public cohabitation with another woman. However, the man, just by accusing the woman of adultery and proving it, can get a divorce. Then there is another way. You can get a divorce if you both agree to it.

So, in order to get divorced you must both agree, or, as a rule, the woman must suffer terrible experiences and be convinced that if she remains married she will lose her life or be forever denigrated as a person. For a man, only cohabitation is considered infidelity, while for a woman adultery is; they measure the same act with different scales.

It must be spelled out in the constitution that marriage is based on the agreement of both parties. That is to say, when one party does not wish to remain married to the other, a divorce may be granted without necessarily fulfilling any of these requirements.

*Lilian Torres.* I am a gynecologist and I'm associated with CONAPRO — Heroes and Martyrs.<sup>2</sup>

I am deeply concerned about the position of some right-wing parties that have become standard-bearers for a policy of death. They have supported U.S. imperialism's death policy against our people.

As doctors we have seen our patients die; we have seen our children, our brothers, our friends, die [in the U.S.-backed mercenary war]. So we're concerned when these same parties now raise a "right-to-life" banner. For which life? The life of the soldier who was just bombed and killed? The life of the mother who died with all her children in an explosion? Our lives which are threatened more each day by those proposed \$100 million?

We want to defend life, but we want to de-

fend the lives of our soldier sons and the lives of peasants who are in the war zones. We want to defend a dignified life for Nicaraguan women. We do not want a demagogic defense of a bunch of cells that have the potential in the future to perhaps yield life. Article 103 of the constitution should say "the right to motherhood freely chosen or freely planned."<sup>3</sup> [Applause] And I think women should be given three choices: sex education, family planning, and legalized abortion.

*Xiomara Chamorro.* Article 3 of this draft constitution says that power rests with all Nicaraguan citizens, that is, with the plantation owner and the wage workers, with the exploited and exploiters.<sup>4</sup> Now, the July 19 [1979] triumph opened a new perspective so that power in this country could rest with the workers and peasants and all those sectors that accept the hegemony of the workers.

With this in mind, I propose that Article 3 say that the revolutionary power rests with men and women of the people, city and rural workers in the vanguard, peasants, artisans, indigenous communities, technical professionals, artists, small industrialists and merchants, soldiers, and militias.

3. Article 103, "The protection of Motherhood," currently reads: "The State will grant special protection to pregnant women. During pre- and post-natal periods, working mothers must be granted leaves with adequate insurance payments and benefits. Parents will have the right to have their children cared for by the State while they are at work."

4. Article 3 currently states, "Revolutionary power rests with the people — workers of the city and countryside, women, youth, patriotic agricultural and industrial producers, artisans, professionals, technicians, intellectuals, artists, and religious people — who make up the majority forces of the nation and guarantee the irreversible character of Nicaragua's National and Democratic Revolution."

*Aura Matute.* I belong to a Christian movement. I am the mother of six children. About the proposal on abortion — in these trying days, when our sons march off to defend the nation, how can we join with the aggressor by destroying our children before they are born? [Some applause] The idea of legalizing death through abortion is unnatural and criminal. It would be pathetic if instead of saving lives, our doctors were busy ending them. That's all.

*Michel Nasli.* I would like to refer to Article 102 of the constitution, which talks about Patria Potestad.<sup>5</sup> I would like to ask that this term be eliminated from our constitution, because it recalls one of the most shameful institutions that has existed in the course of humanity.

The Roman empire gave the pater familia, the head of the family, absolute authority over his children. This even meant the power of life and death. It meant the right to abandon his children in the street — especially those daughters who were not even worth selling. I think it is dishonorable for our revolution to raise this institution, which is the shame of humanity, to a constitutional level. [Applause]

*María Magdalena Morán Pérez.* Good afternoon. I'm from the sixth region in Matagalpa, from the community of San Murali.<sup>6</sup> I am a peasant and president of a service and credit cooperative.<sup>7</sup> [Applause]

5. Article 102 currently reads: "Patria Potestad will be enforced according to the Law on Relations Between Mother, Father, and Children. Parents must jointly provide for the home and the rounded upbringing of children. Children, for their part, are required to respect and help their parents."

6. Region Six is in north-central Nicaragua.

7. In Credit and Service Cooperatives, farmers maintain their individual farms but group together to share government services and financing.

2. The National Confederation of Professional Associations "Heroes and Martyrs."



We women have rights, not like in that previous time when only men — if you'll excuse me — only machismo did.

The Democratic Conservative Party says that agrarian reform should disappear for 10 years.<sup>8</sup> I ask that agrarian reform be deepened more — for us, the peasants. [Extended applause] We peasants are the ones who need the land of those landlords. We don't want any more landlords. Before we lived by renting from those bloodsuckers. Today we want the land to pass forever to the peasants.

Before we had a government that did not care for us, and today we have a government that is ours. We want the land so we can grow the basic grains that maintain the people in the cities, that maintain the Nicaraguan people.

*Delga Bermúdez.* I want to discuss the question of women's dignity. The law does not protect us and, furthermore, it is obsolete.

I want to speak specifically about rape. Given that the prevailing ideas about rape are myths — that rape is an uncontrollable male impulse, that we women provoke it — the majority of rape cases go unreported. The victims feel ashamed or sometimes guilty.

The current law defines sexual offenses as private crimes. This means that the complaint can only be filed by the victim or her legal representative. If the victim withdraws the complaint, proceedings end and the rapist goes unpunished. The outcome of the crime is catalogued as a private matter that doesn't affect public order.

Therefore, this crime should be considered a public offense, since its consequences are social and not private. [Applause]

*María Zúñiga.* We women think that housework should be shared, that it is useful and is a duty for all family members and not just women. [Applause] Men are used to being waited on. For women who work outside the home, society has imposed a double workday on us. Housework should be recognized as socially useful and should, therefore, be shared by all family members.

*Haydée Rodríguez.* My concern is about the reelection of the president. I think that the reelection of the president should be provided for in the constitution because we women are 52 percent of the population, and after seven years of revolution, women have achieved gains that even Latin American women have not achieved.

In its historic program, the FSLN stands in favor of women's emancipation. Therefore, the reelection of the president should be provided for in the constitution in order to continue moving forward with our conquest, something that only the FSLN can guarantee. Thank you. [Extended applause]

*Maira Pasos.* I wish to deal with the chapter that refers to education and culture. I think it

deals with and encompasses almost all the fundamental aspects relating to education. However, it does not clearly state those aspects that deal with women.

I think that we must educate in every possible way — the family, the schools, the universities, and above all in the news media — about the new role of women in a revolutionary society. Above all on the following points: the real meaning of equality between men and women and the woman as an active participant in making history, consistent with her participation in defense, production, and her social and political roles, and not as a sexual and commercial object.

*Ivonne Súa.* I want to raise here what a few women have had the courage to raise publicly before. And to once and for all make it known that it is not the opinion of four or five women, but an opinion supported by thousands of women — we agree with the legalization of abortion. [Extended applause]

*Vilma Sandoval.* When a child is born out of wedlock, the woman has a problem. Either the child is not given a birth certificate, or if he is, only his mother's last name appears. We do not agree with this. Here in Nicaragua, because a revolutionary government exists, children are born to be happy! [Applause]

This irresponsible man should be tracked down if he does not show up when his child is going to be registered.

Another thing, with the revolution we have many foreign brothers here. They must also be made to take responsibility for the children that they have constantly. [Laughter and applause]

*Magda Enríquez.* I would like to warn about falling into the trap of discussing abortion as an issue of life and death. It's really interesting that the great standard-bearers of [the right-to-] life are the same ones who do not defend the lives of all of us Nicaraguans. The great majority of these women and men can go at any time and pay the 100,000 córdobas that an abortion costs in Managua.<sup>9</sup>

What we are talking about is simply the right that I as a woman have to decide if I do or do not want to have a child. I want that right to be respected the same way that the right of the woman who wants to have a child is respected.

No one is saying that we are now going to force all women to abort after having a certain number of children. What we are saying is that in a pluralistic society we should all be treated equally. The truth of the matter is that here we are only respecting the rights of those who think that abortion is wrong.

We are talking about a 14-year-old girl who is not ready to be a mother and who doesn't have the 100,000 córdobas. She goes and aborts with a coat hanger, and she dies and the child dies. That is what we are talking about. [Applause]

*María Elena Martínez.* [Gives greetings in Miskito Indian language] I come from the Río

Coco, and I come representing the women of the Atlantic Coast. [Applause]<sup>10</sup>

The indigenous people and communities of the Atlantic Coast are not represented in this draft constitution. The draft does not take into account the multiethnic and multilingual character of the nation.<sup>11</sup>

*Gloria Margarita Martínez Largaespada.* I am the mother of two martyrs. Therefore, I am moved by one point in Article 1 where it says that it will be decided later on if the veneration of the martyrs of our land remains in the law.<sup>12</sup>

The Social Christian and Conservative parties categorically oppose the veneration of our martyrs. As Nicaraguan proletarian women, we gave our children for the struggle to overthrow the oppressive Somoza dynasty. If our wombs are left empty and our hearts broken because our fruits have been torn away, why are we asking permission to have our children venerated? [Applause]

We were freed with the blood of our proletarian children. In my 52 years, I have never seen any party speak so shamelessly as the [Social Christians and Conservatives] do now.

I challenge those parties — I, a mother of martyrs — to tell me what they were doing when the [National] Guard was killing our children. What did they do to defend them? Where were they? Today, they proudly enjoy the rights of our revolution, they hold good posts, they humiliate us, and they try to pass for Sandinistas in front of us dummies who don't know any better. But they can't fool us mothers! [Applause]

And if our children fell for the sacred ideals of our general Augusto César Sandino,<sup>13</sup> here

10. The Río Coco is the river that separates Nicaragua from Honduras and is located in the Northern Zelaya region of Nicaragua, where the most Miskito Indians live.

11. Article 210 of the draft constitution, "Autonomy of the Indigenous peoples and communities of the Atlantic Coast," states: "It is recognized that the indigenous people and communities of Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast have the full right to preserve and develop their own cultural activities, their historical and religious heritage, the free use and development of their languages, the right to organize social and productive activities according to their values and traditions.

"The culture and traditions of the indigenous peoples and communities of the Atlantic Coast form part of the National Culture."

In his report on the draft constitution, Carlos Núñez said that precise legal statutes on autonomy were left pending so they could take into account the popular consultations being carried out by the National Autonomy Commission.

12. The draft includes an article calling for the veneration of heroes and martyrs. Núñez explained that when the constitution is finalized, it will be determined whether this remains as a separate article or is included in the preamble. The term heroes and martyrs refers to those who have died in the war against the Somoza dictatorship or fighting the present U.S.-backed mercenary war. Some of the right-wing parties have questioned its inclusion in the constitution.

13. Augusto César Sandino led the fight against U.S. occupation troops in Nicaragua from 1926 to 1933.

8. In April the Democratic Conservative Party proposed in the National Assembly that land reform be frozen for 10 years. The motion was overwhelmingly defeated.

9. 100,000 córdobas is equivalent to 40 weeks' pay for a minimum-wage worker in Nicaragua.

we must be Sandinistas, and our government must be Sandinista forever! Because it is the Sandinista government that supports us and we don't want anything else.

*Sonia Castro.* [Gives greetings in Miskito] I represent the Miskito Indians. I would like to deal with Article 210 of the draft constitution where it says that the indigenous peoples are recognized. I think that the word people should be changed to indigenous communities or ethnic groups, because Nicaraguans are one people. Although we of the Atlantic Coast are of different indigenous ethnic groups, we are not a different people. We are part of this free Nicaragua because our brothers fight for her on the war fronts, and because our heroes and martyrs have died for her.

I also want to talk about Article 100, which says that a family can be formed through marriage or a de facto union. My question is, what happens with all the women who have children but don't have a companion? Don't we have the right to constitute a family? As an example, I'll cite the other sister from Northern Zelaya, who spoke before me. She has children, and her husband gave his life in the defense of the revolution. I think that she also has the right to form a family.

*Carlos Núñez.* Of the 75 women who signed up, 40 have spoken. Attention levels are dropping. If you want, we can stay here until dawn, but we must pay attention. I think that the fundamental aspects of the draft constitution have been dealt with. Since we're falling into repetition, I think that we should end this meeting, if you agree.

[Woman interrupts from the floor.] I have a point that has not been touched on. May I?

[The woman continues.] Studying the constitution should be made obligatory. High school diplomas should not be granted if the individual does not have thorough knowledge of the constitution. The rest has been dealt with. Abortion, I am proabortion. [Applause] Also, the law should severely punish all those citizens who campaign against their country. We are all citizens, and to me, those who speak and offend their nation are traitors. That's all.

[At this point a line of women wanting to speak forms behind the microphone.]

*Núñez.* Everyone please sit down so that I can call on you to speak. Let's not overrun the microphone. I'll keep calling on everyone. . . . Where is my list? . . .

[Woman interrupts.] I am going to ask to be excused for this. I just want to say one word and that's all. The people ask that Daniel Ortega Saavedra be the government for life. [Applause]<sup>14</sup>

*Sara Marina Rodríguez.* I am a member of the Marxist-Leninist Party. We have rejected



Harvey McArthur/IP

Gloria Margarita Martínez Largaespada, mother of two martyrs, speaking at town meeting.

the definitions of the draft constitution on two points: who holds power and how wealth is distributed.

My party didn't consider these town meetings legitimate precisely because they do not contain elements of a decision-making character by the masses. Nonetheless, we have rescued them as channels through which the masses can participate and decide what course the revolution is taking. We think these town meetings should be institutionalized, or similar structures created.

*Hortencia Rivas.* I am a member of the Socialist Party. On abortion, I totally agree that women have the right to decide whether they do or do not want children. We know that prohibition does not keep it from being practiced.

Companies should not be allowed to require women to prove that they are not pregnant in order to get a job.

As a socialist, I think that individuals should not be reelected. The principle of no reelection is not undemocratic. On the contrary, it is highly democratic, and as Doctor Córdova Rivas<sup>15</sup> said, so the other eight [members of the FSLN National Directorate] will also get a chance.

*Margarita Samura.* I speak in the name of the women at the Nelson Suárez School for Technical Training, which is today working with demobilized troops of the Patriotic Military Service. Article 119 says that workers have the right to technical-cultural education. I would like to include in some manner a separate paragraph that says women should be treated equally with men for certain job training. Currently when training is available in order to fill certain more important jobs, men are most often selected.

*Margarita Felix Salgado.* Good evening. I work at HILANICSA textile plant. I am the mother of three daughters, one of whom is mobilized in the Patriotic Military Service first women's contingent.<sup>16</sup> [Applause]

I am not in favor of approving the law on abortion. Today hospitals are full of irresponsible women and men who are having abortions. What will it be like when abortion is legal? What would happen? It would lead to prostitution. I don't agree with that, because if we had a revolution here it was to make the new man and the new woman.

Secondly, I think the right-wing parties have no right to be in the elections or to vote. During Somoza's time they did not fight against the dictatorship. I even remember a time that a massacre occurred in the San Miguel market. The Conservative Party allowed the National Guard to massacre their people. Therefore, the only ones who have the right to govern are Commander Daniel and the Sandinista Front. They are the only ones who fought the dictatorship, so, for me, Commander Daniel should continue and there should be no more elections.

*Sofia Velázquez.* I want to speak about Article 11 on "Defense of the Homeland." We women demand to be included in this constitution. Women learned to use weapons in Sandino's time, then in the underground movement and in the final insurrection, and today we are in the Sandinista Police, the Sandinista People's Army, the Nicaraguan Women's Association, and the Sandinista Defense Committees. And we are the vanguard of the revolutionary vigilance.

In Article 12 it says that natural resources are at the disposal of all Nicaraguans. We women do not agree with this. We think that they should be at the disposal of the workers and peasants, who are the ones who made this revolution a reality. We are the ones who work for the revolution. We are the ones who fought. We are the ones who should be in charge of all the natural resources, not the bourgeois sell-outs and false pastors who were born here and live here but are simply defending their own interests and carrying out counterrevolutionary activities.

[From this point on, most of the speakers do not give their names.]

I do not want to leave without expressing my concern. I am proud to have been born a peasant. I want to talk about Article 40 and 41 where it deals with agrarian reform and cooperatives. The articles do not say that women can be landowners. Therefore, I think it would be appropriate [to add that]. You could say it is a right that we have conquered, that we have won.

Good evening. It is true that we have covered most subjects, but a woman's right to have a job after pregnancy should be written into the constitution. Women have the right to

14. Commander Daniel Ortega Saavedra is the president of Nicaragua and one of the nine members of the FSLN National Directorate.

15. Doctor Rafael Cordova Rivas is a leader of the capitalist Democratic Conservative Party and a member of the National Assembly.

16. The first volunteer women's contingent joined Nicaragua's draft military service on May 29, 1986.

return to their jobs even after a lapse of six or seven months.

Good evening all. I agree with the statements that our president should remain so for the rest of his God-given days. I'm also opposed to abortion because it would become a vice, but I am in favor of sex education. I am in favor of preventing those children we do not want to have, but not of killing a life, because we need life. As a woman, as a revolutionary, as a Christian, I say we must not promote death in the mother's womb.

Good evening all. I wanted to speak about abortion to emphasize one more point. We must talk about the men. Many fathers leave their children abandoned or else they deny them; they say that the children are not theirs. It has even happened to me.

I have five children. Of the five, two children have one father and three have another. Neither of the two fathers helps me. I tried to call one of them at his job and he changed jobs. I even resorted to abortion. It didn't work, but I did try it. [Applause] When you find out you're pregnant, the guy says, "Who knows whose it is, honey?" and you've got to deal with it alone. I really don't see why a child who is not wanted should be born.

*Ligia Gutiérrez.* I come from the Tejidos Nicaragua textile plant. The question I have is about Article 113. I speak for my sisters at work. When they come back to work after childbirth, they lose their vacation time. Vacation time has nothing to do with maternity leave, so it should not be lost. Thank you.

Good evening, I represent the Nicaraguan working woman. Article 115 says equal pay for equal work. When a woman is as skilled as a man she is not paid the same as the man. No more of this sex discrimination! I want this to be enforced. Equal pay for equal work.

*Ligia Altagirano Gómez.* I am a gynecologist at the Bertha Calderón Hospital. We want to point out what we have already shown with facts, figures, and statistics. Women are still dying [from illegal abortions]. These women are not lazy, irresponsible, ill-fated, or prostitutes, as some have said here. We have women dying of all ages, all sectors of society, and of all professions. We have Catholics, Protestants, atheists. On top of that we have women dying who are humble, women of the people, the laundress, the presser, the cook, who can't afford to go for a [safe] abortion.

They are dying, not peacefully the day after the abortion, but a cruel death, a horrible death after months in the hospital in the most expensive intensive care units of this country. I can say this because I worked as a gynecologist for 10 months in the intensive care unit. I saw them come in and I saw them dying, clinging to the hands of the doctors, begging to be saved when there was nothing that could be done for them. And we suffered along with their families, and occasionally with their husbands, who sometimes showed up.

I want to ask, once and for all — let's end

the nightmare of our women dying of botched abortions. We need to write into the constitution — as human rights — sex education, real family planning methods accessible to the whole population, and legalized abortion.

And we are not for education this year, family planning next year, and legalization in 20 years. No, the three things must appear now in this constitution if we are to solve the problem. [Applause] □

## Ireland

# Vote upholds ban on divorce

## Church officials campaign against constitutional change

By Will Reissner

Voters in Ireland overwhelmingly turned down an amendment to the constitution that would have eliminated the country's ban on divorce.

In a referendum held June 26, the electorate rejected by a 63 percent to 37 percent margin an amendment that would have changed the present constitutional provision stating that "no law shall be enacted providing for the grant of a dissolution of marriage."

The government of Prime Minister Garret FitzGerald had proposed an amendment allowing divorce on a highly restrictive basis, after proof that a marriage had failed for five years.

Ireland is the only country in Western Europe that still bans all divorces.

Early polls had shown strong support for lifting the constitutional ban. Two months before the voting, supporters of the right to divorce were registering 20 points higher than opponents in opinion polls, even though Ireland's population is overwhelmingly Catholic and church leaders were vehemently opposed to any change in the constitution.

Archbishop Kevin McNamara of Dublin compared the potential impact of divorce on Irish society to the radioactive fallout that had spread over Ireland from the Chernobyl nuclear accident in the Soviet Union.

During a visit to Ireland in 1979, Pope John Paul II said: "May Ireland always continue to give witness before the modern world to her traditional commitment, corresponding to the true dignity of man, to the sanctity and indissolubility of the marriage bond."

As the election drew nearer, opponents of divorce rights began stressing secular objections to any change in the constitution. They argued that divorce would jeopardize the rights of women and children to family property, pensions, and inheritances.

In rural areas, opponents of divorce claimed that approval of a divorce law would imperil family farms, which could be lost in divorce settlements.

One woman who had campaigned for the right to divorce observed bitterly, "It's got nothing to do with religion. It's property. It's money. The opposition told the farmers they would be losing their farms in divorces, and believe me, a farm is rated in Ireland as far more valuable than a wife."

In some rural areas, the vote was 4-to-1

against the right to divorce.

Prime Minister FitzGerald had argued that a change in the constitution was vital to speeding the reunification of Ireland, which was divided by a British-imposed partition in 1921.

Protestants in Northern Ireland, he claimed, would be more likely to accept reunification if the Irish constitution were more secular.

Many voters, however, were unmoved by this argument, viewing leaders of the pro-British segment of Northern Ireland's population as unalterably opposed to the country's reunification regardless of the nature of Ireland's constitution or institutions.

The trade union movement, led by the Irish Congress of Trades Unions, strongly supported the right to divorce and remarry. So did Sinn Féin, the political organization that supports the armed struggle of the Irish Republican Army to force a British withdrawal from Northern Ireland.

At a June 7 meeting of Sinn Féin's national committee, the party's president, Gerry Adams, stated that "Sinn Féin is calling for a massive show of support for what is, in fact, a basic civil right."

A June 19 editorial in Sinn Féin's weekly newspaper *An Phoblacht/Republican News* argued that "divorce must be seen as a civil right which no state should deny to its citizens."

Support for the right to divorce, the editorial noted, is in keeping with Sinn Féin's "demand for a republic in which church and state are totally separate and the civil and religious liberties of all citizens are guaranteed." □

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# Rural revolt sweeps Bantustans

*Struggle against apartheid rule deepens in countryside*

By Ernest Harsch

South Africa's countryside is in revolt. The massive popular mobilizations that have been rocking the major cities for the past two years are now spreading increasingly to remote rural areas that had not previously been swept up in the anti-apartheid upsurge.

Virtually every one of the 10 Bantustans — the impoverished rural African reservations — has experienced clashes between villagers and Bantustan police in recent months. The April 23 Johannesburg *Star* noted that the Bantustans "are suddenly having to deal with popular resistance at various levels: school boycotts; protests over land, rents and other local issues. . . ."

The grievances that have fired these rebellions stem from forced population relocations, grinding poverty, inadequate educational facilities, and land shortages.

By law, some 87 percent of South Africa's land is reserved for white occupation and farming, while Africans — the big majority of the population — are only allocated the 13 percent that comprises the Bantustans. Under such conditions of extreme overcrowding, the more than 12 million Africans confined to the Bantustans are unable to subsist from their tiny plots of land — if they have any land at all.

Besides being driven to protest by their own wretched conditions, these Bantustan residents have also found inspiration in the broader upsurge against the apartheid state.

So have the 4 million Africans who live and work in rural areas outside the Bantustans, where only farmers who are white have the legal right to own land. More and more of these Africans are refusing to accept the abysmally low wages and long hours of hard labor imposed on them.

The March 23 Johannesburg *City Press* commented, "The sudden shift of violence to rural areas and homelands [Bantustans] has affected black people — mostly labourers and farmers — who have little or no access to newspapers, TV and radios. . . . And the intense political conflict, which the government and homeland leaders thought they could contain — probably for a lifetime — has now emerged. For people in rural areas . . . are now fighting back."

Currently, the area of greatest rural ferment is in the northern and eastern Transvaal, which includes the Bantustans of Lebowa, Venda, KwaNdebele, Gazankulu, KaNgwane, and parts of BophuthaTswana. The United Democratic Front (UDF), the massive anti-apartheid coalition that is leading many of the countrywide protests, has been experiencing significant growth there. A northern Transvaal re-

gional branch of the UDF was established at the beginning of 1986, and by April it had about 100 affiliated organizations.

## ANC flags in Lebowa

The UDF's northern Transvaal region is centered in Lebowa.

A part of that Bantustan that has a long legacy of political turbulence is Sekhukhuneland, where a peasant organization known as Sebatakgomo led a revolt in 1958. One of the leaders of that revolt, Peter Nchabeleng, was chosen as the president of the UDF's northern Transvaal region. A longtime activist of the African National Congress (ANC), Nchabeleng had been jailed in 1962 and sent to the notorious Robben Island prison for eight years. Upon his release he was banished to Sekhukhuneland, where he eventually resumed his political activities.

Political ferment in Lebowa has been on the rise since late 1985. Local youth congresses have been especially active, involving students, young workers, and unemployed youths. They help coordinate struggles among the various villages as well as with women's, students', workers', and civic organizations. According to the April 21 Johannesburg *Star*, "The structures, activists point out, are a rural equivalent of the street committees and neighbourhood organisations established in the urban townships. . . ."

The protests in Lebowa have been directed in large part against the Bantustan administration, which implements Pretoria's policies there. Government buildings and homes of Black policemen and other collaborators have been burned down. Students have boycotted schools. Protesters have demanded that members of the Lebowa Legislative Assembly resign, and a few have.

Reprisals have also been taken against tribal chiefs who support the Lebowa administration or who have used their positions to exploit the people. Some have been killed or have had their homesteads burned down.

Not all chiefs have sided with the authorities, however. A layer has joined the ongoing protests. This is especially true in Sekhukhuneland, where some of these chiefs had played leading roles in the 1958 rebellion.

In seeking to stem this upsurge, the administration of Cedric Phatudi has unleashed a wave of terror against political activists, conducted by the Bantustan police — who are under a white commander — as well as by right-wing vigilantes. According to the UDF, the vigilantes include members of the Mozambique National Resistance (Renamo), a South African-backed counterrevolutionary group that

has been fighting for several years to overthrow the government of neighboring Mozambique.

Phatudi has called for the dismissal of all employees deemed to be members of "subversive" organizations, in particular the UDF and the Azanian People's Organisation (Azapo), which also has some influence in the area. Lebowa police stormed a regional Azapo congress held in Seshego in March, beating many of the participants.

Dozens of anti-apartheid activists have been murdered, and many others detained and tortured in police cells. According to Beyers Naudé, secretary-general of the South African Council of Churches, "The people in the area no longer feel safe in the presence of the police. Many are fugitives in their own villages — they have fled and are now living in the mountains in caves. The old people in the villages are terrified — many are being beaten up. Even chiefs have been detained and beaten."

Among those killed was Makompo Kutumela, a journalist and Azapo activist. Thousands turned out for his funeral.

In April police seized UDF leader Nchabeleng from his home in Apel, Sekhukhuneland. Within hours he was dead. The police claimed he had died of a heart attack. But members of Nchabeleng's family had overheard the arresting police tell him, "This time we are going to kill you." And a chief detained at the same time later reported seeing Nchabeleng being tortured.

Nchabeleng's murder provoked the most massive outpouring yet in Lebowa. On May 3, some 30,000 people flocked to the tiny village of Apel for Nchabeleng's funeral. UDF leaders Henry Fazzie and Albertina Sisulu addressed the crowd, and speakers from Sekhukhuneland called for the resignation of all Lebowa assembly members and for a boycott of white-owned shops in the region. Participants sang freedom songs and hoisted flags of the outlawed ANC and South African Communist Party.

## Protesting 'independence deathtrap'

The nearby Bantustan of KwaNdebele has witnessed an equally dramatic upsurge.

KwaNdebele is one of the smallest and most recently established of the Bantustans. It is also one of the poorest. Most of its 200,000 inhabitants were forcibly expelled from other Bantustans or from the white-owned farming areas. Since the average land allocation is just *one-sixteenth* of an acre, most of its "citizens" must earn their subsistence outside the Bantustan; some 600,000 Ndebele-speakers who have been assigned to KwaNdebele do not ac-

tually live within it.

According to the Surplus People Project, an anti-apartheid organization that documents Pretoria's forced population relocations, "KwaNdebele is a rural ghetto where the unemployed and old are forced to live in dire poverty."

Yet Pretoria has declared that this impoverished enclave will become "independent" on December 11, the fifth Bantustan to be accorded that status (the others are Transkei, Ciskei, BophuthaTswana, and Venda). Such fraudulent "independence" proclamations are designed to deny Africans assigned to those Bantustans their few rights in South Africa as a whole. All the "independent" Bantustans remain under Pretoria's overall domination.

In an effort to give KwaNdebele some credibility, at least by the standards of South Africa's other Bantustans, Pretoria is moving to significantly increase its total land area before December 11. This has involved incorporating other African-occupied areas into KwaNdebele, including a part of Lebowa called Moutse.

But the 120,000 residents of Moutse have put up stiff resistance to this. They are predominantly Sotho-speakers and fear persecution by the KwaNdebele authorities. They have also expressed fears that their privately owned farmland will be taken over by the KwaNdebele administration.

Opposition to incorporation has been spearheaded by the Moutse Youth Congress, a UDF affiliate. It has called on the population to fight the "independence deathtrap." Although the Lebowa authorities have protested Moutse's incorporation into KwaNdebele, the youth congress has condemned the policies of Phatudi's Lebowa administration alongside those of Simon Skhosana, KwaNdebele's chief minister. "Phatudi and Skhosana are on the

same mission of enslaving our people on behalf of the apartheid system," the youth congress declared.

To crush the Moutse resistance, as well as other opposition to KwaNdebele's impending "independence," Skhosana formed a rightist vigilante force called Imbokotho. It is headed by Skhosana himself, and many of its executive council members are local businessmen who support his administration.

On New Year's Day, Moutse was invaded by Imbokotho goon squads, who kidnapped, tortured, and killed residents and burned down homes and shops. In just three weeks more than 30 people in Moutse were murdered by Skhosana's thugs.

#### Chiefs join opposition

Although this crackdown succeeded in terrorizing Moutse for a while, active opposition to Skhosana's policies soon spread into the rest of KwaNdebele. This was provoked by the "independence" plans, as well as by the brutalities of Imbokotho, which carried out widespread kidnappings and beatings of schoolchildren.

A key element in this opposition has been the stance of a layer of tribal chiefs, including the royal family, the Mahlangu. Although some hold positions in the cabinet and legislative assembly, they have resented Pretoria's appointment of Skhosana and other "commoners" to dominant positions in the administration, a move that runs against the traditional authority of the tribal chiefs. To retain popular support, these chiefs have joined in resisting "independence."

Speaking as chairman of the tribal authorities and as spokesman for King D.M. Mabhoko, Prince Sozakhona Mahlangu declared, "The king and his subjects do not want independence — nor the Imbokotho."

Some of these chiefs have also suffered re-

pression, and shops and businesses belonging to opponents of "independence" have been burned down.

On May 12 more than 20,000 people — one-tenth of KwaNdebele's resident population — rallied at the royal *kraal* (compound). This mass assembly issued three main demands: that the "independence" plans be scrapped, that Imbokotho be disbanded, and that all tribal representatives resign from the legislative assembly.

The following day, thousands of people turned out for the funeral of a man killed by Imbokotho thugs. Youths expressed their anger by burning shops owned by Imbokotho leaders and cabinet officials.

Then on May 14 some 30,000 people again rallied at the royal *kraal*, despite the fact that the meeting was banned. Police attacked the crowd, using helicopters to drop tear gas. This provoked widespread fighting throughout KwaNdebele, as police and vigilantes confronted large crowds of protesters. Workers staged a general strike.

In reponse, Skhosana escalated the repression. He also sought to isolate the royal family by securing the support of tribal chiefs who did not oppose "independence."

But resistance has continued. Almost all of KwaNdebele's 80 primary and secondary schools were shut down by class boycotts. Civil servants staged a three-day strike to protest "independence." Some prominent Skhosana supporters have been killed.

By early June, beleaguered cabinet ministers and the parliament building had to be protected by a newly constructed fence and by round-the-clock armed guards.

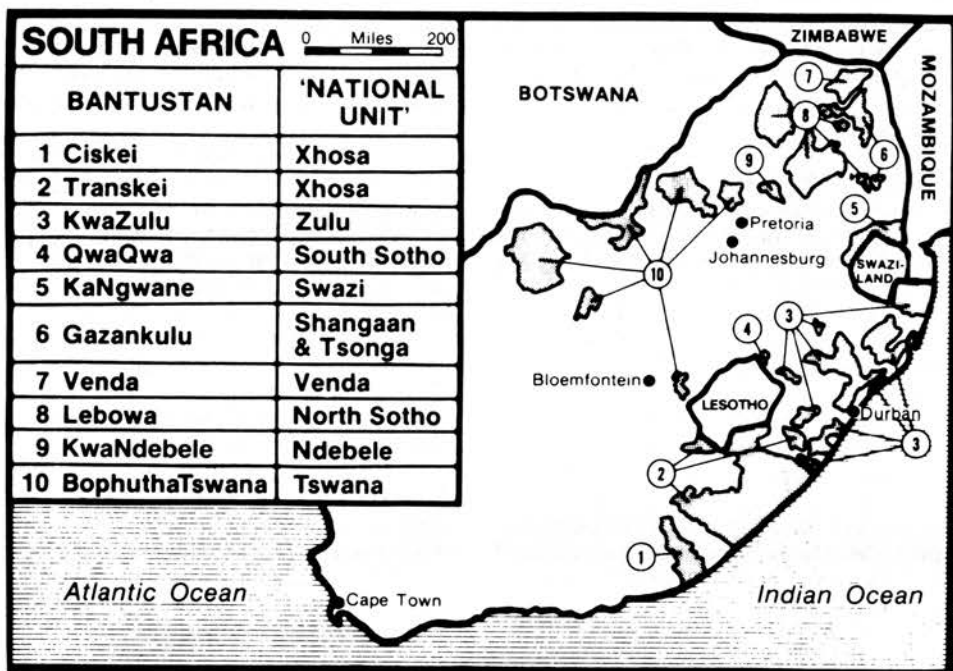
Pretoria's imposition of a countrywide state of emergency on June 12 has not halted this upsurge. Although severe press censorship has prevented details of the struggle within the Bantustan from leaking out, the government's own Bureau for Information has acknowledged ongoing clashes in KwaNdebele, including actions by armed insurgents.

#### 'We are at war'

In BophuthaTswana, an "independent" Bantustan, major protests have been under way in the Odi and Moretele regions since mid-November. They have included demonstrations, school boycotts, and other actions.

"We are at war," BophuthaTswana's president, Lucas Mangope, proclaimed, singling out the UDF as the main "challenge" to his administration. He has imposed an undeclared state of emergency, which has hit especially hard in the Odi and Moretele regions and in GaRankuwa and other townships near Pretoria.

BophuthaTswana police and vigilantes have beaten, raped, and killed many residents. A Catholic bishop based in the area charged in court that the police were waging a "campaign of intimidation" against the local population through "large-scale and apparently arbitrary detention, assaults, and threats of detention and assault." Young people and trade unionists



were singled out for attack, he said.

Under pressure from the population, some community councillors have resigned to protest the police brutalities.

On March 26, at the end of a three-day general strike, some 15,000 people gathered for a rally in Winterveld, a huge shantytown north of Pretoria, to demand the release of a large number of detained children. The crowd was predominantly elderly. BophuthaTswana police Col. Makanye Molope ordered his men to open fire, killing 11 and injuring up to 200.

This massacre provoked widespread outrage. Consumer boycotts were launched against white-owned businesses. Youths engaged in running battles with police. Among the dozens detained was Josslyn Motsuenyane, wife of the president of the National African Federated Chambers of Commerce, South Africa's main African business association.

Although Mangope named a commission of inquiry into the Winterveld massacre, his support for the police action was emphasized by the promotion of Colonel Molope to brigadier.

But on June 21 Molope was shot to death by insurgents in Winterveld. Several other police have been killed as well.

Despite severe repression, Venda, another "independent" Bantustan, has also been hit by protests. In Vleifontein, a township that was incorporated into Venda in May, residents have stopped paying rent and students have marched through the streets singing freedom songs. All the members of the government-appointed advisory board resigned their positions under community pressure.

In late May virtually all schools in the Sibasa area of Venda were closed down by the authorities following student boycotts and demonstrations. Police and army units equipped with tear gas, clubs, armored cars, and helicopters moved in to try to crush the protests.

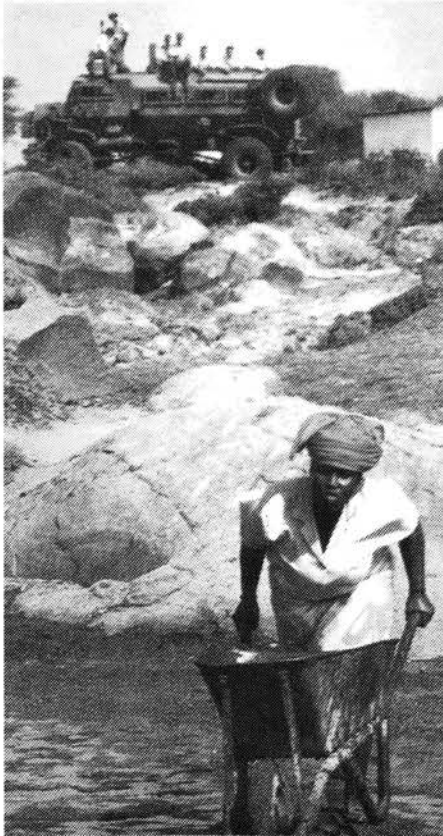
In Gazankulu, which borders on both Venda and Lebowa, more than 160 youths were arrested in early May on charges of "public violence."

#### 'The ANC has majority support'

KaNgwane, a Bantustan set up for South Africa's Swazi-speakers, has also been rocked by school boycotts, demonstrations, and other protest actions. On March 22 more than 15,000 people rallied in KaNyamazane township to bury three youths killed by the police. ANC flags were unfurled.

This funeral reflected one of the differences between KaNgwane and the other Bantustans. Sharing the platform with several prominent UDF leaders was KaNgwane's chief minister, Enos Mabuza, the only Bantustan leader thus far to openly align himself with the anti-apartheid struggle.

That same month, Mabuza, who also heads the 100,000-member Inyandza movement, traveled to Lusaka, Zambia, to meet with Oliver Tambo and other exiled leaders of the ANC. In a joint communiqué with the ANC, Mabuza pledged to campaign for the release of imprisoned ANC leader Nelson Mandela and



In Lebowa Bantustan, African woman being watched by South African troops.

to support the struggle for "majority rule in a united, democratic nonracial South Africa."

Since then, Mabuza has called for the withdrawal of South African troops from KaNgwane and has criticized the repressive policies of the South African police.

In an interview in the *Johannesburg Star* in early May, Mabuza indicated support for international economic sanctions against Pretoria. He also declared that among the people of KaNgwane "there is latent as well as overt support for the ANC. . . . There is no doubt in my mind that the ANC has majority black support today. I also regard Nelson Mandela as my spiritual leader. . . ."

#### Buthelezi challenged

Mabuza's stance has brought him into conflict with a former ally, Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, who heads the KwaZulu Bantustan in Natal Province.

Although Buthelezi seeks to portray himself as an opponent of the apartheid system, he has emerged as one of Pretoria's most valuable African collaborators. His speeches are filled with attacks against the UDF and ANC, as well as condemnations of those who call for international economic sanctions. Armed thugs from Buthelezi's Inkatha movement have beaten and killed scores of UDF supporters, particularly in the African townships around Durban, some of which are within or near KwaZulu.

Following Mabuza's talks with the ANC, Buthelezi launched a stinging attack on him.

He hit Mabuza's refusal to condemn "the terror tactics now being employed by the ANC," as Buthelezi terms the ANC's armed struggle.

Buthelezi's strong-arm methods, combined with anti-apartheid demagoguery, have succeeded so far in heading off the emergence of the same kind of massive opposition within KwaZulu that most other Bantustan leaders now confront. But support for the UDF and ANC remains strong in the urban townships around Durban.

Nor have other parts of KwaZulu been immune from political ferment. The University of Zululand, located in a rural region, has been a stronghold of opposition to Buthelezi's collaborationist policies. Last year more than 200 students were expelled for political reasons, and this January another 100 were kicked out.

In Sibongile, in the heart of KwaZulu, residents have been refusing to pay rent since April 1985. According to the *Johannesburg City Press*, "The unrest in Sibongile shocked many observers, who thought Natal would not be affected by unrest because of the 'strong leadership' of Inkatha's Chief Gatsha Buthelezi."

#### Body snatchers of the Transkei

The Transkei Bantustan, set up for Xhosa-speakers, has in the past been the center of some of the country's most massive and sustained rural rebellions. Several key ANC leaders, including Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu, are from there.

In an effort to keep a lid on the Transkei's volatile population, the administration of Kaiser and George Matanzima has carried out some of the most brutal repression in any of the Bantustans. Of the 10 years since the Transkei was proclaimed "independent," the last six have been spent under a state of emergency. During the second half of 1985 alone, an estimated 2,000 people were detained. Torture in police stations is routine.

Virtually all anti-apartheid activity is portrayed as "communist agitation." In February Kaiser Matanzima called on Pretoria to form a unified army with the Transkei and other Bantustans to fight against "communist organizations."

Over the past year, there have been sporadic outbreaks of student unrest and insurgent activity in the Transkei. An opposition group, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), openly calls for reversing the Transkei's "independence" and for the establishment of a unitary South African state. "The death of apartheid will mean the reinstatement of the citizenship of South Africa to the people of Transkei, Ciskei, BophuthaTswana and Venda," DPP leader Caledon Mda declared in the Transkei's National Assembly in April.

The founding leader of the DPP, Paramount Chief Sabata Dalindyebo of the Tembu people, died in exile in Lusaka, Zambia, less than two weeks earlier. A cousin of Nelson Mandela, he had fled abroad in 1980 to escape the repression in the Transkei. He soon joined the ANC and became known among anti-apartheid activists as the "comrade king."

Although jailed for life in Pollsmoor prison in Cape Town, Nelson Mandela was asked by Dalindyebo's family to decide on the funeral arrangements. He concluded that Dalindyebo should be interned in the Transkei's royal burial ground. UDF activists worked out the details, planning to make it the most massive funeral in the Transkei's history.

Before that could take place, however, a group of Transkei security police, led personally by Kaiser Matanzima, snatched Dalindyebo's body from a funeral parlor. Matanzima then had Dalindyebo buried secretly.

Though Matanzima succeeded in preventing a mass funeral demonstration, opposition in the Transkei nevertheless picked up. A large bomb blew up part of the Transkei's Interior Department offices in April, and that same month the authorities claimed that they had killed two ANC guerrillas.

In mid-May students at the University of Transkei launched a class boycott. Although some 500 students were briefly detained, the boycott dragged on for weeks.

To the south of the Transkei lies the Ciskei, another Bantustan for Xhosa-speakers. Unlike its predominantly rural neighbor, however, the Ciskei has within its borders some large townships, such as Mdantsane, near the industrial city of East London. It has thus been affected more directly by the urban protest movements of recent years.

Numerous trade unions and political organizations, including key UDF affiliates, have been banned in the Ciskei, although some remain active in Mdantsane. That township is the site of frequent student and youth protests.

Youth revolts likewise swept Alice, Sada, Dimbaza, Aliwal North, and other small towns and villages of the Ciskei in April and May.

The Ciskei administration of Lennox Sebe has cut off health care to several rebellious communities. In February Sebe forcibly deported from the Ciskei several thousand residents of Kuni. The villagers of Kuni had long been in conflict with the Ciskeian authorities, resisting the imposition of appointed tribal headmen and setting up their own residents' association.

In March Rev. M.A. Stofile, a regional UDF leader, was detained in the Ciskei. This provoked a general-strike call in Alice and a walk-out by students at the University of Fort Hare. Stofile was then released.

During the June 16 national general strike called to mark the 10th anniversary of the Soweto rebellions, Mdantsane was again rocked by "numerous outbreaks of violence," according to a heavily censored report in the June 20 Johannesburg *Weekly Mail*.

#### **Farm workers strike, organize**

The rural revolt has not been confined to the Bantustans alone. Blacks are also beginning to conduct political and social protests in other areas of the countryside.

Thousands of landless African squatters have in recent years poured into the Upper Kubusie area in the narrow strip of white-owned land between the Transkei and Ciskei.

They are living there illegally. Hundreds have vented their anger at the wealth of the white capitalist farmers in the area by attacking white farming businesses and farmhouses.

The political turbulence in Lebowa and other Bantustans in the Transvaal has spilled over into nearby farming regions where white-owned farms dominate. In Steelpoort, across the river from Lebowa's Sekhukhuneland, white capitalist farmers have been hit by a trade boycott and by frequent work stoppages by agricultural laborers recruited from Lebowa. During a national general strike on May Day, virtually all African farm workers in Steelpoort stayed away from work.

Pietie du Plessis, a cabinet minister whose parliamentary constituency includes Steelpoort, accused ANC and UDF "agitators" of seeking to destabilize the Bantustans and of fomenting unrest among agricultural laborers. ANC pamphlets were said to have been distributed in the area demanding a R5 minimum daily wage for farm workers (1 rand = US\$0.40). The average wage for agricultural laborers in Steelpoort is now R2 a day.

In another part of the Transvaal, near the Gazankulu Bantustan, hundreds of Black farm workers in the GaModjadji area went on strike at a dozen white-owned farms in February to protest the "slave wages" they were receiving. Local village area committees and youth congresses supported the strike action, as did the

UDF. In late June there were also strikes by Black fruit pickers in the Western Cape.

Because of the isolated and repressive conditions in the countryside, farm workers are among the few sectors of the Black working class that have not yet been able to organize any recognized trade unions. But when the half-million-member Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) was launched late last year, one of the tasks it set for itself was to begin organizing Black farm workers.

In an interview in the May 18 Johannesburg *Sunday Star*, COSATU General Secretary Jay Naidoo vowed that the union federation would "fight tooth and nail" to eliminate the widespread use of child labor and to expose the "feudal conditions and slave labour" on white-owned farms. The newspaper reported that already "thousands of workers in South Africa's last bastion of conservatism — the farmlands — have been quietly recruited into trade unions outside the official collective bargaining framework."

The extension of the anti-apartheid mobilizations to the countryside, on a scale not seen since the 1950s, is adding a powerful new social force to the revolutionary struggle to bring down the apartheid state. As the oppressed of the towns and countryside are drawn closer together, the apartheid authorities will face an even greater challenge to their continued rule. □

## **DOCUMENTS**

# **Black miners' leader speaks**

## ***Ramaphosa hits South African news media, mine bosses***

[On June 10, just two days before a national state of emergency was imposed on South Africa, Cyril Ramaphosa, the general secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), spoke to a gathering at the Market Theatre in Johannesburg. The NUM is the largest single union in the country and is a key affiliate of the 600,000-member Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). We are reprinting major excerpts from Ramaphosa's speech below.

[The occasion for the gathering was the first anniversary of the Johannesburg *Weekly Mail*, a liberal tabloid that has provided extensive coverage of the anti-apartheid struggle.

[After Ramaphosa, Harry Oppenheimer took the floor. Until he formally retired a few years ago, Oppenheimer headed the Anglo American Corp., the largest single mining, financial, and industrial conglomerate in the country. His family still dominates the corporation, which directly or indirectly controls hundreds of other South African companies, among them many of the liberal South African newspapers. Oppenheimer himself is a prominent public figure and has criticized certain policies of the apartheid regime.

[Oppenheimer included some of those criticisms in his speech. But he also took issue with Ramaphosa's sharp condemnation of the role of the mining companies in South Africa. "I think he is wrong," Oppenheimer said of Ramaphosa, "not to understand that in some sections anyhow of private enterprise, he has powerful potential allies in his battle against racial discrimination."

[Following the imposition of the state of emergency, many trade union leaders were detained. Some were able to evade arrest, Ramaphosa among them.

[The June 13-19 issue of the *Weekly Mail*, which published the texts of the speeches by Ramaphosa and Oppenheimer, appeared the day after the state of emergency was declared. Security police quickly seized virtually all copies of that issue before it was distributed. *Intercontinental Press*, however, was able to obtain a copy that was not seized, from which we have taken these excerpts. The footnotes are by IP.]

\* \* \*

The *Weekly Mail* has in its short and dynamic history certainly contributed to a creative

journalism in our country.

It is well known that the censorship laws in our country curtail the free flow of information. In addition, we also have self-censorship legislated by the newspaper barons and companies which control our media.

If one puts it simply, repression alone cannot produce the relations of domination and subordination in our society. Legitimacy and consent have to be generated. The media in general play a crucial role in this regard. Many journalists, I regret to say, have become active agents in this process.

Under the guise of objectivity, they have been perpetrators of disinformation and blatant propaganda for the minority apartheid regime and the capitalist class in our country. Under the guise of presenting both sides of the story they delude themselves that there is such a thing as total objectivity.

There are many people in this troubled country, some of whom are ordinary workers, some intellectuals, who believe the South African press has all along underestimated the brutality of the South African regime and its main allies, big business, and so ought to share the responsibility for what has happened in our country today.

To speak frankly, the system — I mean the regime and big business — cannot continue their crusade of brutality and exploitation without the help and support of the compromised press. The regime and big business need the press to explain and legitimise their brutality against the oppressed and exploited.

Press people who do not stand up to that fact by operating within a perspective which radically negates the system, find themselves serving the established order. And there are many of those today that we know.

A number of South Africans are today indebted to those journalists who serve on papers such as the *Weekly Mail*, the *Namibian*, the *Indicator* and the *New Nation*, for recognising that fact and for reporting within a new perspective.

It is true that the regime is up in arms against the media, through the various ridiculous laws that have been passed to restrict the freedom and effectiveness of the press. It is also true that big business has muzzled the press and virtually destroyed the freedom of the press. One can go further and say the regime and capital are making attempts to reduce the South African media to pacifiers, mediators, and interpreters of its policies.

However, the South African press must at the same time accept responsibility for the gross omission of not highlighting the plight of the downtrodden workers of this country. The press has done very little to question the captains of big industry about the low wages they pay workers when they speak about how they are helping to abolish apartheid.

The mining industry is left unchallenged by the press. The mining industry is least able to convince people of its support for social change. It is the industry which provided the furnace in which race discrimination was baked and the press knows this. Today it relies



CYRIL RAMAPHOSA

absolutely on the exploitative migrant labour system and on police oppression to operate. It pays black workers the lowest wages of any major mining country in the world, with the exception of India. Yet the press has never highlighted this fact and has never really analysed it.

The mining industry employs public relations people, advertising agencies to try and whitewash the real facts. They make a big noise about the small amounts they spend from the Chairman's Fund on education and money they give to the Urban Foundation,<sup>1</sup> in the hope that no one will look closely at the wages they pay their black workers, which they keep secret of course.

Businessmen and, least of all, the mining industry do not want economic reform. The mine owners have had the money, the resources, and the opportunity to fight racial discrimination and to raise the wages of black workers substantially, but they have not done so.

All you ever hear the mining industry barons say is that they are hamstrung by the law. Big business has been breaking innumerable laws to make big profits, but they have avoided breaking unjust laws that would help destroy the migrant labour system and allow workers to live with their families.

Newspapers always write about the billions that Anglo American has made in profits. But

1. The Urban Foundation was set up in 1977 (in the immediate aftermath of the 1976 youth rebellions) by the Anglo American Corp. and other South African and foreign companies. It has provided funds for housing, educational, and other programs in Black townships. Corporate officials often cite their contributions to the foundation as evidence of their "anti-apartheid" credentials.

they write it up in the business section, which workers do not read. The press does not analyse those profits and interpret them for the workers who produce the wealth.

If they did, we would all know that the mining industry's profits in 1985 were R7.7 billion,<sup>2</sup> which represented a whopping 78 percent increase in profit. In 1985 each worker contributed about R15,400 to gold mine profits and earned in return an average of R4,800, less than a third of the profits he produced. The press does not highlight these facts.

Our union has demanded a 45 percent wage increase, but the press which speaks for capital has rejected that demand as ridiculous, without analysing the facts.

Businessmen and economists are crying out for the government to reduce taxes to stimulate the economy and to jerk South Africa out of recession. What better way is there than for the mines to act unilaterally and to slash their tax payments by increasing workers' wages. But they prefer not to do so; they prefer to pay higher taxes than higher wages.

Against this backdrop, the Chamber of Mines is today offering black miners a 14.5 percent wage increase when their profits have increased since 1975 by 70 percent and their profits for 1985 increased by 38 percent.

Will anyone be shocked if there is a strike? Yes, there will be a total outcry from the press, which will accuse the NUM of being irresponsible and leading the country to bankruptcy. The forces of repression — the mine police, the SAP [South African Police] and the army — will crush the strike with impunity, and the press will not even bother to find out what really happened other than to give a report that the forces of evil were successfully crushed.

Efforts such as Project Free Enterprise,<sup>3</sup> announced today, may have noble objectives, but the experience of the working class dictates that it is too late to save the free enterprise system in this country. The alliance between big business and the apartheid regime has gone on too long and is soaked with the blood of workers who have reaped nothing from the free enterprise system but poverty, low wages, massive unemployment, lack of housing, inferior education, malnutrition, and inadequate medical care.

The working class wants a programme that will restructure the economy and society as a whole in such a way that the wealth of the mines, factories, farms, and all the means of production, are democratically shared and controlled by all its people. □

2. Currently, one rand is equivalent to US\$0.40.

3. A document supported by 900 South African businessmen that calls for an end to certain apartheid policies, such as legally sanctioned residential segregation and racial job restrictions.

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# 'Fidel and Religion' appears in English

Pathfinder in Sydney publishes new book by Cuban leader

By Dave Deutschmann

SYDNEY — The first English-language edition of the book *Fidel and Religion* has just been published in Australia by Pathfinder Press. To be released on July 26 — an important anniversary in the history of the Cuban revolution — the book will be distributed throughout the Asian and Pacific region by Pathfinder Press.

*Fidel and Religion* consists of a series of interviews with Cuban President Fidel Castro. The interviews were conducted by Brazilian priest Frei Betto in early 1985. The 23 hours of discussion have been edited by Betto into *Fidel and Religion*.

A central part of the book is the discussion by Castro of the relationship between religion and politics. In the introduction to the Cuban edition — which is reprinted in the Pathfinder edition — Cuban Minister of Culture Armando Hart provides an insight into this framework of the book:

"Thus, a deep exchange of ideas — not only at the tactical and political but also at the strategic and moral level — has been initiated between forces that, up until very recently, seemed to be unable to understand each other. It took place in Latin America because this is a region in tumult, where acute economic, political, and social crisis is reflected in all of the people's spheres of cultural and spiritual life as an announcement of the inexorable changes that will take place, one way or another; because the Cuban revolution has already ushered in a stage of great renovation for socialism that has reached the region's essence and roots; because of the unquestionable contribution that the Nicaraguan revolution and the processes that are taking place in El Salvador and other countries have made and are making to this topic; and because part of the Catholic church and other Latin American and Caribbean Christian currents are stating a topic that has very old roots in a new way: what the role and mission of believers is with regard to social and political problems."

*Fidel and Religion* is just as much a book about Castro and the Cuban revolution. It includes Castro's account of his political evolution at school and university; his involvement in the liberal Orthodox Party; a detailed description of the attack on the Moncada Barracks on July 26, 1953, and its aftermath; the forces that united in subsequent years to lead the victorious Cuban revolution in 1959; and the early years of the revolutionary government.

Throughout the book are a series of profiles by Castro of many of the individuals and organizations that figure in the history of the

Cuban revolution. In particular, the conclusion of the book features a description by Castro of the contributions of Che Guevara and Camilo Cienfuegos.

Since *Fidel and Religion* was first published in Brazil in October 1985, it has widely sold throughout the Latin American continent. In Brazil alone it has gone through 17 reprintings, putting it on the best-seller list for some months. Other editions and reprintings in virtually every South American and Central American country have made it one of the most widely sold books in the region.

When the book was first published in Cuba it sold out in days. Nearly 1 million copies of the book have been sold in Cuba.

The book either has been or is soon to be released in France, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, the Netherlands, West Germany, Italy, and in an Arabic edition in the Middle East. A

first printing of 50,000 copies quickly sold out in Poland, while editions are planned for the Soviet Union, Hungary, and Angola.

The Pathfinder Press edition of *Fidel and Religion* will make the book available in English for the first time. Published in Australia by Pathfinder Press, the book will be distributed in Australia, New Zealand, the South Pacific islands, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, India, Japan, and Hong Kong. Meetings to launch the book will be held in several of these countries.

Pathfinder Press is a Sydney-based distributor of books published by Pathfinder Press and Monad Press of New York, as well as several other radical book publishers. It also distributes throughout the Asian and Pacific region books published by the José Martí Publishing House and Ediciones Cubanas of Cuba.

*Fidel and Religion* is the first book to be published by Pathfinder Press of Sydney. □

## Meetings to launch book scheduled for Australia, New Zealand, and Philippines

By Dave Deutschmann

SYDNEY — *Fidel and Religion* will be launched in Australia, New Zealand, and the Philippines during July and August. Launchings in other Asian and Pacific countries are scheduled for later in the year.

The launch meetings in these three countries have been organized by the publishers of the book, Pathfinder Press, to coincide with the anniversary of the attack on the Moncada Barracks in Santiago de Cuba on July 26, 1953.

A featured speaker at the Australia and New Zealand launchings will be Zuleica Tomay, a leader of the Union of Communist Youth (UJC) of Cuba. A former leader of the university students' federation in Cuba, Tomay is now one of the central leaders of the UJC in Havana.

Tomay will be in Australia and New Zealand from July 25 until the end of August on a speaking tour organized by the Cuban Institute for Friendship With the Peoples (ICAP) and sponsored by the Cuba friendship societies in each country.

A prominent part of Tomay's tour will be the launching of *Fidel and Religion* in eight Australian and three New Zealand cities.

In Australia, the meetings will be jointly sponsored by the Australia-Cuba Friendship Society and Pathfinder Press and will feature Tomay, Labor Party parliamentarians and other labor movement representatives, and progressive church figures.

Tomay will also be speaking about the book

at a number of campus and high school meetings organized as part of the tour.

The initial promotion of the book includes an endorsement from Father Brian Gore, a well-known Australian Catholic priest who was imprisoned in the Philippines for two years under the Marcos regime.

Gore's endorsement says in part: "When a Marxist leader and a Catholic priest can discuss religion and politics without rancor and with frankness, then the ongoing dialogue between Marxists and Christians, between non-believers and believers, becomes possible. This book is a must for those interested in the rather controversial subject of the church and politics.

"It is a change, and I think only fair, to hear a Marxist explain his own journey and position rather than have it explained to us by some anti-Marxist."

A number of labor movement and religious publications are planning to feature reviews and excerpts from the book around the time of the launchings.

Copies of *Fidel and Religion* are available for A\$13.95 from Pathfinder Press, P.O. Box 37 Leichhardt, Sydney, NSW 2040, Australia (phone 02-660-1673). □

You won't miss a single issue if you subscribe.

# Five months of continuing protests

## Masses press for complete uprooting of Duvalierism

By Will Reissner

Since Jean-Claude Duvalier's flight from Haiti on February 7, which ended 29 years of rule by the Duvalier family, struggles to purge the new government of pro-Duvalier figures, to extend democratic rights, and to win social and economic reforms have continued to deepen.

For five months, students, workers, farmers, and the urban poor have pressed especially hard for the government to "uproot" remnants of the Duvalier tyranny from the posts they still hold. This is a precondition for advancing democratic rights and beginning to alleviate the desperate poverty in which the vast majority of Haiti's 6 million people live.

Just before Washington arranged for Duvalier to fly to exile in France, where he now enjoys the vast fortune accumulated while ruling over the Western Hemisphere's poorest country, Duvalier named a six-member National Council of Government to replace him.

The head of the new ruling council, Lt. Gen. Henri Namphy, had been armed forces chief of staff until Duvalier made him head of state.

Three more of the five other members of the original National Council of Government were military officers under Duvalier, a fourth was in Duvalier's cabinet, and only one, Gérard Gourgue, was not connected with the deposed dynasty.

The National Council of Government appointed a cabinet loaded with longtime Duvalier supporters.

But the new regime's attempt to maintain many of the prominent features of Duvalierism without Duvalier, a goal Washington shared, has sparked bitter protests. Time after time the regime has been forced to yield to mass protests.

The *New York Times*, reflecting Washington's worries, lamented on June 27 that "the discouraging news from Haiti — unrest in the cities and a slide toward anarchy in the countryside — casts doubt on the hopes excited by the fall of the house of Duvalier."

### 'Regime is ineffective'

"The interim regime of Gen. Henri Namphy," the editorial stated, "is plainly ineffective," and civil order "remains tenuous."

Immediately after coming to power, the new government tried to placate the mass desire for deep-going changes by focusing on symbolic reforms. The new junta took Duvalier's name off the international airport and off a new capital city that had been planned by dynasty-founder François Duvalier.

The junta also reinstated the historic red and blue flag of Haiti, replacing a flag imposed by

the Duvalier dictatorship in 1964.

These symbolic changes were welcomed. But the students, workers, and farmers who had toppled Duvalier through a wave of mass protests and general strikes beginning in November 1985 were also insisting that society be purged of collaborators with the former regime.

On February 10, the first working day after Duvalier's ouster, two cabinet ministers named by the junta were prevented from entering their offices by angry employees. Both were continuing in the same posts they had held under Jean-Claude Duvalier.

In private industry as well, workers prevented managers associated with the old regime from returning to their positions. Stores owned by prominent Duvalier supporters were ransacked.

In Gonaïves, where the revolt against Duvalier started, students began a school boycott when the junta reopened the schools on February 17. All schools in Haiti had been shut by Duvalier in December in an attempt to halt the spread of protests.

Among the demands of the Gonaïves students was the removal of three members of the ruling junta and three members of the new

cabinet.

The three targeted junta members were Alix Cinéas, who had been minister of public works, transportation, and communications under Duvalier; Col. Max Vallès, who commanded the presidential guard in the last year of Duvalier's rule; and Col. Prosper Avril, an officer of the presidential guard. The three cabinet ministers singled out were Social Affairs Minister Tony Auguste, Commerce Minister Odonel Fénestor, and Secretary of State for Information Georges Valcin.

Auguste was a longtime member of Duvalier's National Progressive Party. Fénestor, a financial adviser to both Jean-Claude and François Duvalier, had previously headed the Commerce Ministry. Valcin had been a pro-Duvalier television commentator.

### Revenge against Tontons Macoutes

In the first days after Duvalier's flight, dozens of hated paramilitary Volunteers for National Security (more commonly called Tontons Macoutes) were killed, as Haitians sought revenge against the members of Duvalier's personal goon squad.

On February 18, army troops used tear gas in an attempt to disperse crowds that had gathered in front of the National Palace in Port-au-Prince demanding the ouster of officials who had served Duvalier. Similar demonstrations involved thousands of people in the cities of Jacmel and Les Cayes.

In hopes of defusing the protests, the junta announced that the Duvalier family's property in Haiti would be seized.

Mass pressures also forced the junta to abolish the Volunteers for National Security, which included an estimated 15,000 members.

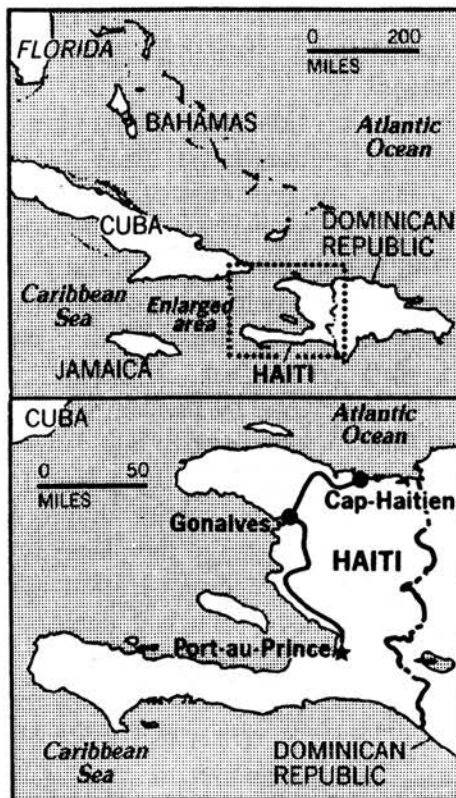
In addition, the junta dissolved Duvalier's rubber-stamp legislature, closed and reorganized the government newspaper, and released dozens of political prisoners.

These measures, however, have not stopped the successive waves of protests that have rolled over the government, demanding a thorough "uprooting," or purge, of all Duvalierists and punishment for those who committed crimes.

The new regime's first crisis was triggered by its decision to let Col. Albert Pierre leave Haiti. Between 1974 and January 1986 Pierre headed a secret police body that arrested and tortured opponents of Duvalier.

On February 23 army troops and police escorted Pierre and his wife to the airport, where a chartered jet took them to Brazil.

Justice Minister Gérard Gourgue — the head of the Haitian League for Human Rights and the only member of the junta not as-



sociated with Duvalier — bitterly protested the decision to let Pierre leave. He called the decision “shocking and offensive” and refused to take part in a junta-organized ceremony February 25 celebrating the return of the original flag.

That very day, the junta tried to organize the escape of two other hated Duvalierists: Luc Désyr and Fritz Lucien. Désyr had headed the secret police during François Duvalier's rule.

But Désyr and Lucien were unable to leave. Following a telephone call by an airport worker to a radio station, thousands of people rushed to the airfield to prevent their departure. Army troops intervened to save the two from the crowd.

Protests against the junta's protection of leading Tontons Macoutes erupted throughout Haiti in the days after Pierre's departure.

On February 26, the junta announced the arrest of Désyr and another Tonton Macoute for the murder of an opponent of Duvalier.

#### **New curfew imposed**

As protests continued, Namphy declared on February 26 a new month-long curfew.

Under intense pressure, the government announced on February 27 that it would forbid the departure of anyone suspected of committing crimes under the former regime. It also announced it would ask for Jean-Claude Duvalier's extradition from France.

In the days that followed, workers at Haiti Electricity in several cities refused to work while pro-Duvalierists remained in positions of responsibility.

Workers at the Banque Nationale de Cr dit in Port-au-Prince went on strike demanding changes in its administration.

Students at the state university in Port-au-Prince began to boycott classes to press a series of demands. Among them were demands that the Brazilian government extradite Col. Albert Pierre and that the Haitian government give the teachers college an adequate building. Under strong pressure, the Ministry of National Edu-

cation agreed to turn over the former headquarters of the Tontons Macoutes to the teachers college.

On March 5 employees at the state automobile insurance company went on strike, demanding the ouster of two administrators.

The same day, the government announced a general amnesty and released all the prisoners, including children, from the country's largest jail.

The first of a long line of cabinet and junta members to lose their posts was Georges Valcin, the pro-Duvalier television commentator who had become secretary of state for information. Valcin's dismissal was reported March 5.

#### **Calls to purge church**

Calls were also heard to extend “Operation Uproot” into the Catholic church. On March 4 speakers at a meeting of church workers called on Port-au-Prince Archbishop Fran ois-Wolff Ligond  to step down because of his collaboration with the Duvalier regime.

Ligond , an uncle of Jean-Claude Duvalier's wife, was one of five bishops who had presided at the couple's wedding.

Catholic youth groups also sent letters to the Vatican calling for Ligond 's replacement.

And on March 7 a group of priests sent a public letter to Ligond  charging that he had “openly collaborated” with the Duvalier regime and had reprimanded priests who worked against the dictatorship.

A strike by bus and taxi drivers in Port-au-Prince on March 10 brought the capital to a halt. They were demanding lower gasoline prices and improved job security. The same day, thousands of students in Port-au-Prince began two days of actions at the Dominican Republic's embassy to protest the inhuman treatment of Haitian sugar-cane cutters in that neighboring country.

About 700 people demonstrated at the offices of Haiti National Television on March 12 to demand the “uprooting” of dozens of employees. Ultimately many of those targeted by the protest were forced out.

The following day employees of the Ministry of Public Works, Transportation, and Communications went on strike to demand wage increases and the “uprooting” of notorious pro-Duvalierists.

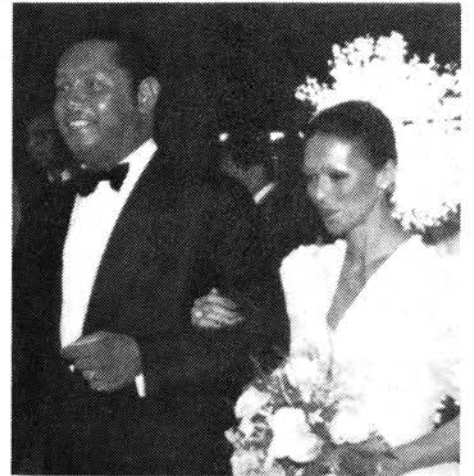
As the pressures for a thorough purge of the Duvalierists continued, the government announced two laws nationalizing the wealth of five members of Duvalier's cabinet.

Then on March 17 two more cabinet members who had been objects of repeated protests were replaced — Minister of Agriculture Montaigne Cantave and Minister of Commerce and Industry Odonel F nestor. Both were holdovers from Duvalier's cabinet.

#### **Massacre sparks protests**

But it was a traffic accident in a Port-au-Prince neighborhood on March 19 that led to the government's biggest crisis up to that point.

A car driven by an off-duty army captain collided with a “tap tap,” a small truck used for



Duvaliers spent \$2 million on wedding while people live in misery.

public transportation. Uniformed soldiers appeared and opened fire on the gathered crowd, killing five and wounding 10 more.

The massacre sparked days of protests. “Tap tap,” taxi, and truck drivers declared a protest strike.

Thousands of students gathered at the National Palace shouting, “The government must explain itself,” and “Stop attacking the people.” Protests also took place at the National Television station and the Catholic radio station.

Students in L og ne marched to demand a new provisional government and the ouster of the city's mayor as a former Duvalierist.

In Cap-Ha tien, the country's second-largest city, people massed in front of the city hall to prevent the installation of an official with ties to Duvalier.

Protesters in Gona ves demanded the ouster of the National Council of Government and the disbanding of an army counterinsurgency unit.

Large demonstrations also took place in the southern city of Jacmel.

The junta's crisis deepened on March 20 when G rard Gourgue resigned. Gourgue later explained his resignation had been prompted by the junta's unwillingness to prosecute Tontons Macoutes for crimes committed during the Duvalier era and by his frustration over the new government's unwillingness to meet the populace's demands for reforms.

As the only non-Duvalierist in the junta, Gourgue's resignation severely weakened the regime's credibility.

The day after Gourgue's resignation, General Namphy explained that “because of the climate of unrest and uncertainty reigning in the country, the armed forces decided to restructure the National Council of Government.” He announced the resignations of junta members Col. Max Vall s, Col. Prosper Avril, and Alix Cin as — three of the most frequent targets of protests.

A new three-person council was named, composed of Namphy, Col. William Regala (both of whom were in the first junta), and civilian Jacques Fran ois. The army also imposed an 8:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. curfew on the



Junta leader Henri Namphy.

country to dampen protests.

The demonstrations, however, continued. Thousands of students poured into the plaza in front of the National Palace shouting, "Down with the junta!" and "Down with Namphy!"

Four protesters were killed on March 21, and 25 more were injured.

The wave of demonstrations following the March 19 shootings registered an important change in the protesters' attitudes toward the army. During the earlier protests against Duvalier, many people had chanted, "Long live the army!" to encourage its opposition to the dictatorship.

Calls for Namphy's resignation were first heard in this wave of protests in March.

Tens of thousands of people marched in Port-au-Prince on March 24 chanting, "We want a civilian government!" The demonstration was called by the newly formed Committee for Democratic Unity (KID), made up of nine prominent opponents of the Duvalier regime.

Edward Cody noted in the April 2 *Washington Post*, "The one cause most street youths appear to have agreed on recently is a growing call for the military to step aside and for a provisional civilian government."

Many Haitians were bitter that their demonstrations had been attacked by troops using a recently arrived \$384,000 shipment of riot gear sent by the Reagan administration.

In early April, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Elliott Abrams and Brig. Gen. Fred Gorden spent two days in Haiti. Abrams called for more U.S. military aid to the regime. "If you want to maintain order in the country," he stated, "then the military is going to have to modernize and professionalize."

Abrams, the Reagan administration's point man in financing the Somozaist counterrevolu-

tionaries fighting Nicaragua's government, maintained that "Haiti will need a new professional force to maintain order." He added that Washington may send military trainers to teach internal security techniques.

With the population's anger level rising, some officials stopped going to their jobs after seeing their names on blacklists being sold in the streets.

Throughout April, strikes and demonstrations continued. Employees of the tax office walked off their jobs April 2. Customs house workers also struck, as did the interns at the University Hospital on April 11 to protest the conditions facing patients.

There were also strikes at a plant making baseballs and at a Port-au-Prince printshop. Workers at the Central Bank staged a one-week strike against the appointment of a World Bank official as the bank's new governor. When the new official returned to Washington, the strike ended.

On April 11 and 12 three more cabinet ministers were removed from their posts: Minister of Health Symphar Bontemps, Minister of Public Works Pierre Petit, and Minister of Finances Marcer Léger.

#### Tensions high

Writing from Port-au-Prince in the April 13 *New York Times*, Marlise Simons reported that the level of tensions was getting as high as in the final days of the Duvalier regime.

Another crisis began on April 26, when troops opened fire on 10,000 demonstrators after a memorial meeting for political victims of the Duvalier era. Eight people were killed.

The shooting began near Fort Dimanche, the notorious military prison and torture center. The League of Former Political Prisoners, which organized the march, blasted the security forces for their "violent and brutal reac-



Harvey McArthur/IP

Port-au-Prince marchers: "Women must be respected in industry."

tion."

Former junta member Gérard Gourgue charged that the Fort Dimanche shootings showed the government had "lost all its credibility." General Namphy, however, blamed the confrontation on "little groups of agitators" taking "every opportunity to destabilize this provisional government."

Two developments on May 5 indicated both the pressures on the government and its carrot-and-stick attempts to stem the protests.

The "carrot" was the opening of the first trial in 30 years of a top Duvalier military aide. Col. Samuel Jérémie was accused of killing four people and wounding five others in two incidents.

Justice Minister François Latortue said of the trial, "There have been accusations of a kind of cover-up, so this proves we are not covering up anything."

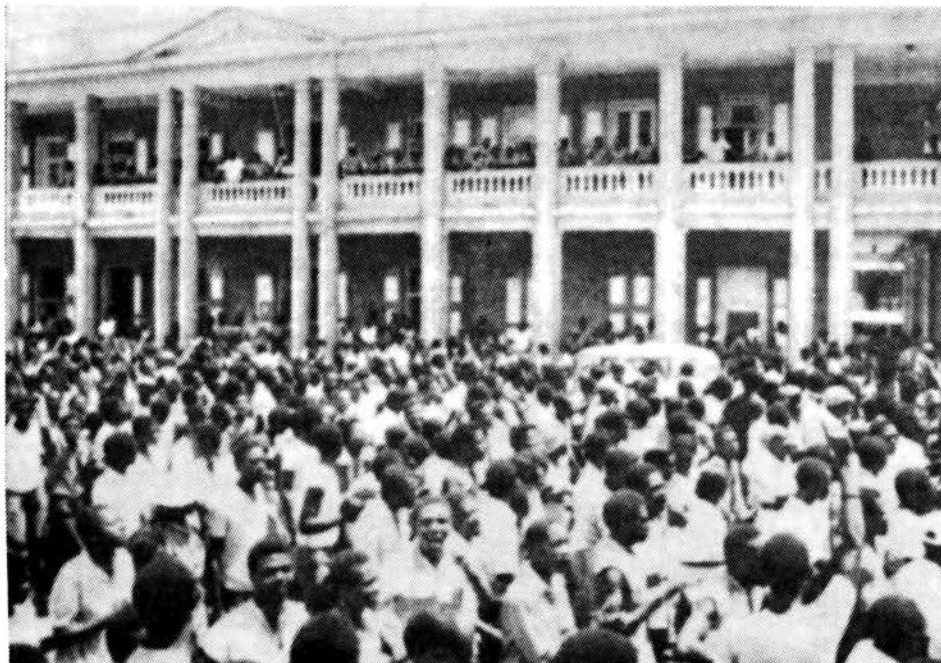
Following a three-week televised trial, Jérémie was sentenced on May 31 to 15 years in prison.

The second development on May 5 was not so positive for the Haitian people. Junta member Col. William Regala, who is also minister of the interior and national defense, announced new regulations to curb street rallies and protests. Organizers of protests were now required to apply for a police permit 72 hours in advance, and to provide the names of all organized marshals.

After the Fort Dimanche massacre, there were few street protests for nearly a month in Port-au-Prince. But in other cities local protests were organized.

In Fort Liberté in the northeast, for 10 days in early May, protesters marched through the city carrying red flags that they said were "Russian" to attract attention to their grievances. The town's mayor explained, "Nobody had come to ask what were our problems and tell us what they were going to do for us."

*New York Times* reporter Joseph Treaster described conditions in Fort Liberté in the newspaper's May 11 edition: "Like many of Haiti's outlying towns, Fort Liberté needs almost everything. Nearby sisal factories that once provided jobs and electricity for the town shut down six years ago. There has been no



Haiti-Progrès

Demonstration in capital, March 24.

## Peasants confront effects of Duvalierism

In the countryside, where the vast majority of Haitians live in misery and illiteracy, there have been a number of attempts to reclaim land seized by Tontons Macoutes during the dictatorship.

Clashes between Macoutes and peasants have been reported, and the army has intervened in these conflicts on the side of landlords.

One issue has mobilized thousands of peasants: the slow progress in rebuilding Haiti's pig population since its entire stock of 1.2 million pigs was eradicated in 1982 to prevent the spread of African swine fever.

The eradication program virtually wiped out the entire accumulated wealth of the Haitian peasantry. Agricultural economist Georges Werleigh notes pigs were "a bank deposit for the peasant in a noncash economy." Pigs were sold to meet emergency needs and to pay school fees of rural children. Since the eradication program, school attendance has dropped by 50 percent in some rural areas.

Although the Duvalier government promised to compensate the peasants and provide replacement pigs, little was done.

Some 20,000 breeding pigs have been

introduced from the United States. They are of a new breed that grows bigger and reproduces more than the native Haitian pigs they replace. But they require far more attention from the peasants and resources that the vast majority cannot afford to provide.

Werleigh points out, "The new pig requires an investment in a pen and in water which some of these people can't even get for themselves, let alone for pigs."

Introduction of the new breed will force Haiti to spend US\$154 million on imported animal feed in 1988 at a time when humans do not get enough to eat and the country's balance of payments is already heavily in deficit.

Some 25,000 peasants have signed petitions calling for importation of pigs from Jamaica, which are better adapted to the primitive conditions on Haitian farms and require less attention.

In addition, 4,000 peasants have signed a petition demanding prosecution of Duvalierist officials who made windfall profits from the pig-slaughtering campaign.

The pig-replacement issue is one of the most explosive questions in rural Haiti today.

electricity since, and most of the people are out of work."

Traster added, "The people had expected so much, they say, and they have got so little" three months after Duvalier's overthrow.

### Storms brewing

Despite the relative decline of protest activities in the capital in early May, new storms were brewing.

A leaked memorandum of an April 30 meeting between Minister of Finance Lesly Delatour and U.S. officials led to mounting calls for Delatour's resignation.

In the memorandum, Delatour, a conservative economist trained at the University of Chicago, pledged to close or sell a number of state enterprises. These measures would throw thousands of workers out of their jobs.

Delatour also agreed to open the Haitian market to competition from foreign products and to cut government expenditures and consider devaluing the currency. The leaked memorandum acknowledged that "these measures will be very unpopular and will give rise to protests from the newly unemployed."

A second source of anger was the decision by Haiti National Television to hire Duvalier's former personal athletic trainer, Philippe Vorbes, to announce the World Cup soccer matches. Vorbes had been forced to resign from the station after the March 12 demonstration demanded the ouster of Duvalierists there.

Station director Carlo Désinor quit in protest of Vorbes' rehiring. Following Désinor's May

27 resignation, 180 other station employees also walked out.

The hiring of Vorbes sparked a new wave of street protests in early June. Also targeted by the protesters was the second-ranking official in the Ministry of Information, Aubelin Jolicoeur, who had publicly disparaged the striking television workers.

During the first week of June, demonstrations against Jolicoeur and Vorbes took place throughout Haiti. At least three people were killed and a dozen wounded in the course of these protests. When an army sergeant was shot and killed in a Port-au-Prince suburb, junta member Colonel Regala blamed protesters, despite eyewitness reports that the killing was caused by shots accidentally exchanged between soldiers and policemen.

As demonstrations spread throughout Haiti, Jolicoeur submitted his resignation from the Ministry of Information as well as from his post as minister of tourism.

Protesters, however, were also demanding the resignation of Finance Minister Delatour and junta member Regala and the reinstatement of the Haiti National Television employees.

On June 5 students at the State University of Haiti began a strike that would last more than one month to press those demands.

In a television and radio address on June 5, Namphy announced a crackdown against the protests. "We have arrived at a situation involving fires, barricades . . . nearly a civil war. The country is on the verge of anarchy," he

said.

Following Namphy's address, Colonel Regala announced that the armed forces would "react sternly against these serious breaches against the security of the Haitian nation."

### Elections announced

But in hopes of undercutting the growing protests, Namphy also announced a calendar of elections. The plan, presented June 7, calls for a July decree on the formation of political parties and for October elections to an assembly to write a new constitution.

Then, in July 1987, Haitians are to vote for local representatives and four months later to elect a president, who would take office on Feb. 7, 1988, the second anniversary of Duvalier's flight.

Namphy's announcement of elections, however, failed to stop the protests. Many influential political figures argued that meaningful elections would be impossible without a thorough uprooting of Duvalierists.

A one-day general strike called by the Committee for Democratic Unity shut down Port-au-Prince and six other cities on June 10. As Julia Preston noted in the June 11 *Washington Post*, "The action marked the growing isolation of the National Government Council . . . from a population that is quick to take to the streets in protest."

In response to the wave of protests culminating in the June 10 general strike, right-wing forces began a counteroffensive using red-baiting and scare tactics.

Haiti's ambassador to the United States claimed "the people from the extreme left have been distributing money to people to create problems in Haiti."

A Reagan administration official stated, "For the first time, what you're getting is a lot of communist rhetoric." He claimed, "There are, for the first time, people telling me that Fidel Castro is involved."

### Bishop attacks general strike

A leading figure in the Catholic church hierarchy, Bishop Gayot of Cap-Haïtien, issued a stinging denunciation of the general strike. "The strike that took place on June 10," Gayot maintained, "is proof that they want nothing but to divide the country."

Gayot asserted, "The strike aimed solely to destabilize the country. Things were said without any proof. The resignation of certain people in the government was demanded without anyone being able to say why."

Bishop Gayot's opposition to the June 10 strike did not go without answer, however. Konbit Veye Yo, a Christian organization influenced by what is known as "liberation theology," sent Gayot a letter stating that the strike's aim was not "to destabilize the country," but to carry through the uprooting of Duvalierism.

Konbit Veye Yo charged that Gayot's attack sowed confusion within the church, but the group vowed to continue to defend the people's interests.

On July 3, 84 residents of Cap-Haïtien sent

an open letter to Bishop Gayot in which they too took exception to his attack on the protests.

These exchanges reflect the tensions within the Catholic church. Many of the lower-level clergy have supported the struggles against the remnants of Duvalierism. But most of the bishops have not. Seven of the eight bishops were appointed by the Duvaliers under an agreement with the Vatican that ended three years ago.

In one conflict within the church, the hierarchy was forced to back down. The confrontation arose over the activities of Father Bertrand Aristide, a member of the Salesian Order who had become popular for his support of the interests of the impoverished masses of Haiti. Aristide's superiors ordered him to stop expressing views that were "too political."

The attempt to silence Aristide was met with petitions and appeals by organizations to lift the ban. In late May the head of the Salesian Order was forced to rescind the gag order.

#### **Vacuum keeps army in power**

Although Namphy's regime is increasingly isolated from the population, the junta remains in power because the 8,000-man army and the Catholic hierarchy are still the only institutions with a national presence.

During nearly three decades of dictatorship, all non-Duvalierist organizations were suppressed. Since Duvalier's flight on February 7, hundreds of community, political, cultural, labor, and social organizations have been established.

The multitude of new organizations testifies to the Haitian people's desire to shape their own future, but none of these groups yet has a national following.

On April 3 the Women's League organized a march of some 5,000 women in Port-au-Prince demanding the right to take part in developing the new constitution and calling for equal pay for equal work and an end to sexual discrimination on the job. More than 3,000 men in a separate contingent showed their support for the demands.

Several other women's organizations have been established, including the Women's League Against Torture and the Haitian League for Defense of the Rights of Rural Women.

Many organizations have been formed to push for democratic rights: the Committee for Democratic Unity (which organized the March 24 demonstration and June 10 strike); the League of Former Political Prisoners; the Committee of Patriotic Vigilance; the Democratic Action Movement; and the Haitian Workers and Democratic Movement.

Organizations of progressive Christians have been established, such as the Christian Solidarity Movement of Haiti and Konbit Veyo.

The National Federation of Haitian Students and the National Organization for Defense of the Youth are organizing among young people.

Community groups have sprung up in many areas to work to improve conditions and mobilize people for cleanups.

Trade unions have also begun to organize, although they are hampered by lack of resources. Unions had to function clandestinely from 1963 to the end of the Duvalier era.

Most workers' struggles have taken place in government ministries, schools, and public enterprises, but there have been some strikes in the private sector.

Private-sector strikes face huge obstacles, including the gigantic pool of unemployed workers. One American plant manager boasted, "These people work because they know they will be replaced by 10 people who are out there looking for their jobs."

The U.S. manager of a company with 1,000 workers in Haiti said strikes cannot last long because "if you don't work you don't eat."

Three trade union federations exist, although as yet they do not represent a major force. This was shown by the low turnout at a May Day rally sponsored by the unions, which attracted 2,000 people to a stadium that seats more than 50,000.

The Autonomous Confederation of Haitian Workers (CATH) was formed in 1980 and functioned underground until the fall of Duvalier. In mid-April it reportedly comprised 17 unions.

Another federation, with links to the Latin American Workers Confederation (CLAT) and the Christian Democratic movement internationally, is called CATH-CLAT and claims seven unions as members.

The third grouping, claiming 20 member unions, is the Organized Workers Federation (FOS), created in 1984 with the blessings of the Duvalier regime. FOS leaders claim it has been purged of Duvalierists.

Many political parties have been organized since the overthrow of Duvalier, most serving as vehicles for exile politicians who have returned in hopes of becoming Haiti's next president.

## **Vanuatu, Soviet Union establish ties**

The South Pacific island nation of Vanuatu announced June 30 that it has established diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. According to a release by the Soviet news agency Tass, the two governments "stated that they reject colonialism, neocolonialism, apartheid, and all forms of discrimination."

The two countries expect to exchange ambassadors. Although 45 countries now have diplomatic relations with Vanuatu, only Britain, France, and Australia have had representatives resident there. The U.S. government has no official ties with the country.

Vanuatu, an archipelago of some 80 islands, with a population of 120,000, was known as New Hebrides before 1980 when it won its independence from joint British-French rule.

The diplomatic agreement follows negotiations on establishing fishing rights in Vanuatu

Two parties with ties to international currents in the working-class movement now function openly in Haiti. The United Party of Haitian Communists (PUCH), led by René Théodore, operates a public headquarters in Port-au-Prince.

The Union of Haitian Patriotic and Democratic Forces (IFOPADA) also has a public presence. Led by Serge Gilles, it has observer status in the Socialist International.

#### **Right wing regrouping**

After a period of demobilization, right-wing forces are beginning to regroup.

There have been numerous reports of Tontons Macoutes coming together to resume terrorizing local peasants. Although the Volunteers for National Security were officially dissolved, thousands of Tontons Macoutes kept their weapons, and most were incorporated into an army reserve.

In late May a former Tonton Macoute asked the Ministry of the Interior and National Defense for permission to form a private armed force called "S.O.S. Security," which would initially have 575 paid men working for "commercial and industrial enterprises."

The uproar among the population, which had such bitter experience with private paramilitary groups, forced the shelving of the plan. But the attempt to form this private militia raised many fears of an incipient death squad.

In early June, leaflets circulated in Port-au-Prince from an organization called the Association of Steadfast Patriots (API) demanded freedom for three jailed Duvalierist criminals, described as "worthy sons of Haiti."

The leaflet attacked "those who, in the name of democracy," actually try to strip the army of "the right to rid the country of these dirty communists" and who encourage "insubordination . . . in the public administration" and "let communists organize into unions." □

waters for Soviet fleets. Soviet negotiators have reportedly asked for permission to build on-shore port facilities on the northern island of Espiritu Santo and have offered a joint project of sea-bed research. The existing port on Espiritu Santo is already being used by fishing fleets from Taiwan, South Korea, and Japan.

Australian Foreign Minister Bill Hayden visited Vanuatu in May. According to the *Melbourne Age*, he warned Prime Minister Walter Lini "that port access could give Moscow a strategic toehold in the region and could lead to political manipulation." Lini flatly rejected Hayden's suggestions, calling them patronizing interference in Vanuatu's affairs.

When neighboring Kiribati signed a US\$1.7 million fishing contract with the Soviet Union last August, U.S. State Department representatives voiced similar concern over supposed Soviet "toeholds." □

# Women miners discuss solidarity

*Conference hears from leaders of British miners' support group*

By Norton Sandler

[The following two articles are taken from the July 18 issue of the *Militant*, a socialist newsweekly published in New York City.]

\* \* \*

PAINTSVILLE, Kentucky — "I didn't fully understand this until I got here," Betty Heathfield said, "but I understand now what a fantastic contribution you are making to the women's liberation movement. You are proving the real truth about women being equal to men, you are proving that women's contribution to society is as great as men's."

Heathfield, a leader of Women Against Pit Closures (WAPC) in Britain, addressed those remarks to the women coal miners attending the Eighth National Conference of Women Miners, held here June 27-29.

Sponsored by the Coal Employment Project (CEP) and the Coal Mining Women's Support Team, and endorsed by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), the conference was attended by 350 women coal miners and their supporters. Women miners came from Alabama, Arizona, Colorado, Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, Missouri, New Mexico, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Utah, West Virginia, and Virginia. A dozen of the women were Black. Native American and Chicana miners were part of the delegations from the western states.

The majority of the women were working coal miners, though participants included several women who had been laid off from the mines. Several male miners also attended, as did some of the miners' husbands.

The participation of a WAPC delegation of Heathfield, Ann Scargill, Gwenn White, and Betty Cook in this year's conference marked an important step in opening the door to increased collaboration between miners in Britain and the United States.

No women work in the underground mines in Britain today. The WAPC is made up of female family members and supporters of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) who got active during the 1984-85 British coal strike.

Scargill's husband, Arthur, is president of the NUM. Heathfield is married to the union's general secretary. Cook and White, active in the Barnsley WAPC, are also married to miners.

Throughout the weekend, the British delegation exchanged information with the women miners about the common problems working people are facing in both Britain and the United States.

They also held discussions with Carl and Susan Benson from Austin, Minnesota. Carl is



Kathy Mickells/Militant

Leaders of Women Against Pit Closures in Britain speak to U.S. women miners. From left: Betty Cook, Betty Heathfield, Ann Scargill, and Gwenn White.

a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local P-9, which has been waging a battle to win a decent contract from Geo. A. Hormel & Co. since August 1985. Susan is active in building support for the P-9 struggle.

The British women brought conference participants up to date on the attacks their government has been waging against the NUM since the end of the strike.

"The government will fail to destroy Britain's greatest union," Scargill told the conference. She explained that the NUM is increasingly seen by the entire working class in Britain as a "focal point for resistance to the attacks" by the government and the employers. (See accompanying story.)

A major theme struck by the WAPC delegation was the need for international solidarity among working people in the face of the employers' offensive. They described the speaking tours British miners and WAPC members made to several European countries and told about the delegations from those countries that brought material support to British mining villages during the coal strike.

"We found it wasn't such a big world," Heathfield said. "It is important for working people to close ranks, to see it's not our little area that is under attack, it's not just our own country."

The four led the conference in singing fighting working-class songs on several occasions and invited the U.S. miners to come to Britain next year to attend the annual miners' summer

"galas."

UMWA staff member Nomonde Ngubo, who is from South Africa, was one of two keynote speakers at the conference. "Apartheid's bare knuckles crack" against the women of South Africa, she said, but "the women of South Africa are becoming hardened like steel by the struggle against apartheid." She noted that under the apartheid laws, Black women are separated from their husbands 11 months out of the year.

"I never heard people talking about reforming Nazi Germany, so why talk about reforming apartheid," she continued, referring to U.S. President Reagan and British Prime Minister Thatcher's approach to the South African government.

She urged support for the Shell Oil boycott campaign the UMWA is waging, saying that such boycotts are essential to bringing about nonviolent change in South Africa.

Author Sallie Bingham was also a keynote speaker.

A wide variety of panels and workshops were held at the meeting. Topics included: how to use your union to fight discrimination and harassment; continuing the campaign for parental leave; women in the UMWA; safety in the mines; UMWA issues in the '80s; CEP issues in the '80s; how to file a grievance and use the contract; the A.T. Massey strike, an update; abortion: a controversy in our times; and international visits.

Considerable discussion took place in the

A.T. Massey strike workshop. Jim Reid, president of UMWA Local 2248 at Massey's Sprouse Creek processing plant, explained that the strike began in October 1984 after Massey refused to sign the agreement the union negotiated with the Bituminous Coal Operators Association.

Massey claimed that its many affiliates were independent and would have to be bargained with separately. Five months into the strike, Massey began bringing in scabs to mine and haul coal.

UMWA President Richard Trumka ended the strike in December 1985 after the National Labor Relations Board upheld the union's position that Massey is in fact a single company responsible for bargaining for all of its affiliates.

Massey fired 26 workers, including Reid, at Sprouse Creek following the strike. Twenty-two union miners are currently working alongside 19 scabs at the processing plant, Reid explained. He said a similar ratio of union miners to scabs exists at other Massey mines in the area.

They are being paid under the terms of the 1981 contract. According to Reid, the union safety committees are still intact, but the company is letting the grievances pile up.

Judy Scott from the union's legal department said that the UMWA has a case pending in federal court that makes Massey a signatory to the 1984 contract since one of its affiliates, Omar Mining Co., signed that agreement.

Several miners at the workshop expressed dissatisfaction that the membership of the union was not fully mobilized to aid the Massey strike.

Others expressed concern that a serious discussion of the outcome of the Massey strike be held in preparation for the 1987 contract talks.

Libby Lindsey from southern West Virginia told the *Militant*, "a year and a half is a long time to wait for a federal judge to tell you whether or not you have a job."

A film made by the United Auto Workers entitled *Would You Let Someone Do This to Your Sister* was shown in the workshop on sexual harassment and discrimination.

Ed Boling from the UMWA's Organizing Department encouraged women miners to use their union's structures to help fight against sexual harassment from management and from coworkers.

Several women complained that the mining companies are blocking women from bidding on and working many jobs in the mines.

An update on a parental-leave bill pending in Congress was given at the workshop on this issue. The bill would make it possible for a male parent or for both female and male parents to get unpaid time off from work for a birth, adoption, or serious illness of a child. The CEP since its founding has been a strong advocate of parental leave.

Women who participated in the March 9 National March for Women's Lives gave a report on that demonstration to the "abortion: a controversy in our times" workshop. A resolution passed at the final conference plenary encour-

aged local support teams to work with other unions and women's rights organizations to hold discussions about women's right to obtain abortions.

The "CEP in the '80s" workshop reaffirmed that the organization would continue to focus its efforts on the problems women face in getting and maintaining jobs in the coal mines."

The "international visits" workshop heard a report from Joy Huit about the trip she, along with union President Trumka, took to visit

## British fight against pit closures continues

By Norton Sandler

PAINTSVILLE, Kentucky — The campaign by the government of Prime Minister Thatcher and by the British Coal Board to close a number of coal mines in Britain has escalated in recent months. In talking to the *Militant* following the Coal Employment Project conference, Betty Heathfield and Ann Scargill said that 30,000 miners have lost their jobs from mine closures since the end of the 1985 miners' strike.

"It is having a devastating effect on some of the mining communities," Heathfield said.

Scargill explained that one of the ploys the Coal Board uses is the offer of "redundancy pay" (a lump-sum payment for permanently giving up one's job). "Five years' wages in advance, that's a lot of money. Miners have never had £25,000 [US\$38,000] before. They are trying to make the men think of the short term, not the long term. But once the job is gone, it's gone forever," she said.

They explained that the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) is trying to organize on-going struggles against the mine closures.

The Union of Democratic Miners (UDM) was set up as a breakaway from the NUM in 1985 with the help of the Coal Board and the government.

Since the strike the government has tried to strengthen the hand of the UDM at the expense of the NUM.

Tactics employed against the NUM include giving higher pay raises to UDM members as a way of trying to make that union more attractive to mine workers.

Recently a court approved the UDM as an official bargaining representative for coal miners along with the NUM. Since 1946, when the mines were nationalized, the NUM has been the sole representative of British miners in contract talks.

In spite of these sweetheart agreements, Heathfield said, the UDM is losing members to the NUM.

NUM funds have been locked up by the courts since 1984. Heathfield said a recent court decision has given the funds back to the union but said that a "receiver" is still in charge of payments.

"As far as we are concerned, as far as the NUM is concerned, we still don't have control over our money."

The British government claims that the

UMWA members in Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, Canada. Huit, recently elected secretary-treasurer of District 22, is the first woman to hold district office in UMWA history.

Joan Levitt from Alabama showed slides of her trip to Nicaragua in the same workshop. The slideshow provoked a lively discussion about how working people opposed to the U.S. government's aggression against Nicaragua can fight against the war.

The women miners voted to hold next year's conference in Birmingham, Alabama. □

strike in 1984-85 was illegal. In a pending court case the two women's husbands, because they are leaders of the NUM, are being held personally responsible for causing about \$2 million in damages in the course of the "illegal" strike.

I asked them their impressions of the CEP conference.

"I could see in talking to the women miners here that their fight is our fight. We have so many things in common. I am with the women miners all the way. They have really lifted my spirits," Scargill said.

"I had heard a lot about the women miners before I came," Heathfield said. "But it is really nothing like meeting them en bloc. I feel I could now go and tell anybody and everybody in our country about what the women miners are doing, where before I might have just quavered a little trying to sell the idea of women working in the mines to British miners' wives and the NUM." □

## Toronto antiwar rally: 'Embargo South Africa'

Eight hundred people rallied at Toronto City Hall June 14 demanding that the Canadian government "embargo South Africa and increase aid to Nicaragua." Before the rally they marched from city hall to the U.S. consulate.

A contingent from the New Democratic Party (NDP), Canada's union-based labor party, and Public Service Employees Union members also participated.

Chants of "Reagan, Reagan, pay attention, we don't want your intervention," "One, two, three, four, U.S. out of El Salvador," and "Hey, hey, Uncle Sam, we remember Vietnam" were prominent at the action.

Speakers included Dan Heap, NDP; Yulof Saloojee, African National Congress; Maurice Hill, Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front—Revolutionary Democratic Front; Sherie McDonald, Ontario Coalition for Abortion Clinics; Richard Martin, executive vice-president, Canadian Labor Congress; and Midia Bishop, Canadians Concerned About South Africa.

In Vancouver 100 people marched in the rain to the U.S. consulate to demand an end to Canadian government complicity with the U.S. government's war against Nicaragua. □



## SELECTIONS FROM THE LEFT

[The following selections deal with the struggle of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local P-9 against George A. Hormel & Co. in Austin, Minnesota.]

### Socialist Voice

*Fortnightly newspaper published in Montreal, Quebec. Reflects the views of the Revolutionary Workers League, Canadian section of the Fourth International.*

Reporting from Austin, Minnesota, Joe Young explained the key contract issues in Local P-9's strike against George A. Hormel & Co.

The union, he wrote, "has made many concessions to the company over the years. In 1984, the company unilaterally slashed wages by 23 percent from \$10.69 an hour to \$8.25.

"When negotiations started for a new contract, Hormel demanded sweeping new concessions including a two-tier wage system under which new hires would never catch up with those already employed, the unlimited right to hire temporary employees with no benefits, the destruction of the seniority system, and the right to suspend or fire any employee for any 'strike, slowdown, refusal to work, sympathy strike, picketing, boycotting or handbilling...'

"To these concessions, the union members say enough is enough."

Young commented that the "strike is being run in an exemplary manner by the rank and file, who have taken over their union." But, he added, "the international leadership of the UFCW is not too happy" with the local's functioning. "They think the unions should be led by the officials for the members and not run and led by the entire membership. While they tell the workers to accept concessions, P-9 says 'fight back.'"

Young's article, which appeared in the March 31 issue, shortly before an April 12 national demonstration in support of the strike, called on Canadian unions to "vote resolutions of support, send money, and participate in the April 12 march."

### International Viewpoint

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

Writing in the April 7 issue, Roger Horowitz described the strike of Local P-9 against Hormel as "a major battle over the question of how trade unions should respond to the capitalist offensive." The strike, he said,

"has produced the biggest controversy in the U.S. labor movement today.

"Determined to resist concessions, members of Local P-9 of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) have traveled across the nation seeking support for their strike and have received a tremendous response from rank-and-file workers and union locals in a variety of industries. Yet, AFL-CIO president Lane Kirkland has called the strike 'suicidal.'"

"The reason for the tenacity of this small local," Horowitz observed, "is that the Hormel workers are struggling to hold onto the basic benefits they won in the 1930s and prevent a return to the conditions of the nonunion era."

Horowitz outlined the history of Local P-9 and the unionization of the meatpacking industry in the United States. He noted that the local had begun giving concessions to Hormel as early as 1963 and that this had led to "erosion in earning levels . . . throughout the 1960s and 1970s." He also pointed out that by 1978 "unionized packinghouses had been reduced to a shrinking minority in the industry."

"Win or lose," Horowitz concluded, "the P-9 strike is likely to be a watershed for the labor movement. It has inspired the unionized rank and file to buck their international union leaders and to use the resources of local unions in a variety of industries in order to support this one packinghouse strike."

### Socialist Action

*A revolutionary socialist weekly, published in London.*

An article in the June 20 issue began, "Most people have probably never heard of the Hormel company — although they certainly know its most famous product, *Spam*. But Hormel is a giant company — one of the 500 largest firms in the United States."

The article explained that the origin of the meatpackers' strike against Hormel was the workers' "refusal to grant the contract concessions demanded by the company. This is itself important in a country where the labour movement's last few years have been dominated by concession after concession granted by unions to the management." This concessions policy, the article noted, has been supported by the top officialdom of the U.S. union movement.

"Still more important than the individual fight against concessions," it went on, "the Hormel strike has reintroduced many methods of struggle into the United States that have not been seen since the 1930s. These methods, such as flying pickets, support committees, a revival of active union democracy, and turning to the most oppressed for support, are the same, on a far smaller scale, as those seen in the miners strike in Britain."

These militant tactics of the local union, the article observed, had led to a conflict with the national leadership of the United Food and Commercial Workers union (UFCW).

"The UFCW leadership have taken a number of steps to try to force the members of P-9 to toe the line and accept a deal with the company. . . . Most seriously the national union leadership has moved to call in a receiver to seize local P-9's funds.

"The UFCW leadership is now trying to negotiate a settlement with the company that includes taking on the 500 scabs working in the plant. These moves against P-9 have been supported by the U.S. courts."

The article ended with an appeal for support messages and financial aid.

### Internationalen

*"The International," weekly newspaper of the Socialist Party, Swedish section of the Fourth International. Published in Stockholm.*

The June 19 issue carried a two-page center spread on the Hormel strike in Austin. The articles and photographs were by Dag Tirsén, who visited Austin in late May to discuss the strike with members of Local P-9.

The main article described the background to the strike, the issues involved, the resistance of the union to many strikebreaking moves by the employers and the government, and support from farmers in the region. The article also noted the attempts by the top leadership of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union, to which P-9 is affiliated, to sabotage the strike.

Tirsén stated, "P-9 has more and more become the symbol for the struggle to put a stop to the increasingly unrestrained offensive of the employers in the country.

"Strike after strike," he continued, "has been crushed by ruthless management backed up by the Reagan administration. But P-9 in Austin has not been smashed or forced to sell out.

"P-9 represents something entirely new," Tirsén wrote. "It has entirely broken from the tradition of routine, ritually organized fights with passive members. Instead the leadership tries to draw them more and more into the activity around the strike.

"And related to this," he added, "is the fact that P-9 is a truly democratic union. P-9 representatives have often declared, 'It is the members who have started the strike, and it is only the members who can end it.'"

An interview with Cindi Bellrichard, a leader of the strike support committee, and her husband John, a striking P-9 member, also appeared as part of the feature. A box on the center spread asked Swedish workers to help support the P-9 strikers.

# Guyana: Elections and economic crisis

Interview with Working People's Alliance leader Eusi Kwayana

[Eusi Kwayana is a longtime political figure in Guyana, a country of more than 800,000 people located on the northern coast of South America.]

[In the period of British colonial rule, Kwayana (then called Sydney King) was a central leader of the People's Progressive Party (PPP), the main anticolonial organization, headed by Cheddi Jagan. Kwayana was detained by the colonial authorities for several months as a result of his political activities. In 1957 he broke with the PPP and briefly joined the People's National Congress (PNC), headed by Forbes Burnham. Kwayana broke with the PNC as well in 1961.]

[In 1964 Burnham became prime minister after the U.S. and British authorities succeeded in toppling a governmental administration headed by Jagan's PPP. This was followed two years later by the granting of formal independence to Guyana. Although Burnham's PNC regime proclaimed itself to be "socialist" and established diplomatic relations with Cuba, the Soviet Union, China, and a number of other workers' states, it followed repressive policies toward Guyana's working people.]

[In 1974 a new opposition group was formed, the Working People's Alliance (WPA). Besides Kwayana, its leading figures included Walter Rodney, an internationally known writer and political activist who was assassinated in June 1980, presumably by supporters of the Burnham regime. Though WPA members and leaders were often victimized by police repression, the WPA emerged as one of the most active left-wing organizations in the country.]

[Following Burnham's death in August 1985, the new PNC government of Desmond Hoyte held general elections in December of that year. Those elections were marked by widespread electoral fraud. The PNC took 42 seats in the National Assembly. The PPP got eight seats (down from its previous 10) and the right-wing United Force retained its two seats. The WPA won its first parliamentary seat, and nominated Kwayana, the chairman of the party's Central Committee, to fill it.]

[The following is an interview with Eusi Kwayana, obtained by Ernest Harsch and Malik Miah in New York City on June 16.]

\* \* \*

*Question. The overthrow of the revolutionary government of Grenada and the U.S. invasion had repercussions throughout the Caribbean. The WPA's assessment of those events seems to have led to a rethinking about its own political orientation. In the WPA documents we reprinted in IP,<sup>1</sup> one of the criticisms of the*



EUSI KWAYANA

Ernest Harsch/IP

*People's Revolutionary Government of Grenada was that it did not commit itself to seeking a "constitutional" government, that it failed to hold "free and fair elections." This criticism seems to have been linked to a greater stress by the WPA on the question of participating in electoral activities in Guyana itself. Could you comment on this interconnection?*

*Answer.* Grenada gave us a lot of hope, while it lasted, that small islands — among which we include Guyana, so to speak — can carry out an effective revolution and survive.

Quite apart from those criticisms that you mentioned, and which I'll come to later, there was the fact of Reaganism in the Caribbean. Other American governments prior to that, in our times, had put a lot of pressure on revolutions. But this invasion was something quite unheard of.

We had a lot of debate about this inside our party. We have never closed the door to any kind of revolution. We felt that the development of the movement would decide what kind of revolution [there would be]. In fact, Walter Rodney electrified the country by calling for the removal of the PNC, saying that the dictatorship must go, by any means necessary. He was the first person to do so in such a direct

way.

However, we began to think, in terms of the Reagan doctrine, that any violent revolution would be put down. And we said it is the work of revolutionaries to take things like that into account. We are a small country.

Grenada having been obliterated, we had to rethink our entire perspective.

For us, the democratic road and participation in elections were not new. In 1979 we had gone through an entire process of consultation with the PPP, the VLD — the Vanguard for Liberation and Democracy, which was the moderate party in those days — and some trade unions and churches. We called for free and fair elections. At the end of 1979 we all signed a document on this.

We also felt very strongly that part of the attack on the dictatorship had to involve various interest groups. These included the national capitalist class. They never responded, because they preferred to make deals with individuals in the government.

So we started to preach the doctrine of self-organization. And we made it very clear what we were after — the genuine multiracial<sup>2</sup> and democratic power of the working people. We made it clear that this power of the working people was to be a democratic power. The working people, well-organized and educated, have nothing to fear from democracy. That is our understanding of the Caribbean, and Guyana, particularly since it is the poor who predominate in this society.

Along similar lines, we discussed the question of Grenada. We had written to Brother [Maurice] Bishop, pointing out that it was a mistake not to maintain the electoral principle. We had a theoretical discussion on that question. Our position was that these participatory bodies [in Grenada] were all right, but no revolutionary has to abandon the electoral principle.

We did not make this discussion public at the time, because obviously if we had made it public it would have been part of the attack on Grenada. We made it public only after the U.S. invasion. So people began to suggest that our position had changed. Yet it was not an afterthought, as far as I was concerned.

But you are right, Grenada did change our emphasis in relation to elections. We decided that we now had to engage in a full-scale cam-

2. In Guyana, the term "multiracial" encompasses the country's main groupings: the Indo-Guyanese (also called East Indians), who make up about half the population; the Afro-Guyanese (descendants of African slaves), who make up 43 percent; as well as those of indigenous Indian, Chinese, and European background.

1. See the Oct. 15, 1984, *Intercontinental Press*.

paigned for free and fair elections. It would increase the pressure on the dictatorship for one thing.

The PPP had in its own way been carrying out such a campaign for a number of years. But we could carry it out in a different way, because our interests are not the same. The PPP is very well connected to certain international bodies. We are in touch with some of them.<sup>3</sup> But our campaign is mainly a campaign among the people.

*Q. How do you assess your participation in the December 1985 election?*

A. We are glad we took part in the campaign, because no one in Guyana can now pretend that the WPA is a marginal force. The regime was very worried. They didn't think we could mount a campaign. We had up to nine political meetings in one night, in various areas. And we were able to elaborate a program suitable to Guyana's present needs. So far as establishing the party among the people, it contributed heavily to that.

After the elections, of course, there was some disappointment among people. People began to resign themselves to another five years of waiting. Some people thought we would win, others that the PPP would be the leading force. These were the two parties that could have won the elections. Leaks from within the regime indicated that we did remarkably well. We believe we could have won free and fair elections, and if we didn't win that we would have done very well. We were prepared to enter a government of national unity on the basis of a free and fair election.

*Q. What did you mean by a government of national unity?*

A. A union of all parties including the PNC. We said in documents that if the PNC conceded a free and fair election we would regard it as a new kind of party, that something had happened within it for it to take that kind of step. We were for including parties according to their political support in the country, because the great need is reconstruction.

But the road they have gone on now is a road in which they are opening up the doors of the country, the floodgates, we should say, inviting all and sundry to invest. They are contracting with a lot of lumpen-capital, as we call it, off-shore banking, casinos, and all of that. They have no development program.

A lot of the things that are happening now are things that Burnham initiated in his time. The whole question of moving towards the United States, I don't think is purely Hoyte's decision. I saw signs of that for a long time. Negotiations with the IMF were going on. Hoyte is probably more openly enthusiastic about this relationship.

*Q. How do you see your democratic demands, in the programmatic sense? You call for free elections. Do you seek to mobilize people with those demands? You mentioned that many people have illusions, that they feel they have to wait five more years for elections. How do you educate people about the need to change the country in a more fundamental way?*

A. One target we have now is the local government elections. The Patriotic Coalition for Democracy has written to Hoyte asking him to open negotiations on a local government electoral system, how it should function.

*Q. The Patriotic Coalition for Democracy — that was formed right after the elections?*

A. It was formed one month after. All the opposition parties are in the PCD, except the United Force. We did invite them, but they didn't respond. So it includes us, the PPP, the People's Democratic Movement, the Democratic Labour Movement, and the National Democratic Front. There are also some trade unions, like the NAACIE [National Association of Agricultural, Commercial, and Industrial Employees]. It's probably the best-organized union in Guyana, the one that is most accountable to its members.

So, we hope local government elections will be held. We are at present training people for local government in the various villages. We are conducting classes in local government, so that we can find councillors from among the people to contest the seats. Workers, farmers, housewives — these are the sort of people who should be encouraged.

We are also having community meetings as much as we can afford it, especially in the bauxite-mining belt. These meetings are having a very interesting effect in opening up the consciousness about the way things really are.

One thing we have to fight against is the notion of "Give Hoyte a chance." The American government is also saying that. In Guyana, this notion is coming from the investing class, the merchants and the small manufacturers. They feel that Hoyte is going to bring in a lot of American money and their businesses will boom.



Our position in parliament is to represent the masses, the working people. And this is what we have been doing, people say effectively. We were able to present a document showing how many days' labor it took in 1975 to buy an old stove, to buy an LP record, to buy a toilet bowl, things that take you just slightly above bare poverty. And then we showed in 1985 how many days' labor it took. That was a telling document.

Hoyte says he's going to create a climate for investors, a new package of taxation measures, and so on. We respond that that is all very well, but who are going to turn the wheels of these industries, where is the climate for the working people?

We are defending the trade unions and we are defending the TUC [Trades Union Congress] against the government.

In terms of this rush of foreign capital — the people are very much aware that the country needs technical and capital resources from abroad if it is to do anything toward recovery. What we are doing is dealing with the conditions of this participation.

For example, we always raise the national element in all this. There was a measure for petroleum companies and individuals to come in and extract petroleum. We introduced an amendment that if an individual prospector finds oil, he should at once form a company, and that there should be no discrimination against Guyanese shareholders, because capital accumulation will have to take place. The government rejected all these amendments.

They bring in off-shore banking. We moved an amendment saying that these banks should create a facility with the Bank of Guyana through which foreign exchange should be lent to domestic manufacturers. The government rejected it.

So this is the way we show up the contradictions.

*Q. Over the past few years there have been some labor actions and also protests by farmers. Could you describe the impact of the economic situation on working people and how they're responding to that?*

A. The impact on working people is very severe. Their living standards are going down. They have to spend long hours every day in search of essential commodities.

And water is now among those essential commodities. Most of the water systems in the country, which had been financed by the U.S. Agency for International Development, have collapsed. They no longer function. What you see in Guyana is long troops of women and children, walking as much as one or two miles to get water for domestic purposes.

All this has meant that when working people gather at a political meeting they are really doing something very big. Because the household work can keep them engaged until late at night, doing all this drudgery.

The formal protests are few and far between. There are reasons for that. The village councils are not elected, are not accountable to

3. The PPP has close ties with the Soviet, East European, Cuban, and other Communist parties, while the WPA is a consultative party of the Socialist International.

the people. In the old days the farmers would flock to the village council and get some redress.

In agriculture throughout the country, the trenches are not properly cleaned. Weeds grow very fast in the tropics. So all the drainage and irrigation trenches tend to become clogged up with weeds, and the crops are destroyed. And these nonelected village councils have no consciousness about cleaning the trenches.

Most farmers keep some kind of livestock. Among the Afro-Guyanese it is mainly pigs, and cattle mainly among the Indo-Guyanese. But pasturage is not well organized. So people are dependent on livestock feeds. These things are now hoarded by the ruling class. One of the leaders of the PNC — the retired prime minister, Dr. [Ptolemy] Reid — is hogging the supplies of livestock feed. He distributes the bulk of it. So farmers have to pay him two, three times the regular price to get it. This is hindering the development of livestock.

*Q. How severe is the repression now?*

A. The machinery for protest in Guyana is

not very available. There is a lack of freedom of association. The police are present almost everywhere.

There is not wholesale harassment against the WPA at present; it is more selective. We have had reports of activists on sugar estates being called into the police station, being picked up, and so on. Teachers have been victimized.

There are no buildings in which people can meet freely. All the school buildings and all the public buildings are at the disposal of the state. If farmers want to gather, they have to gather almost stealthily. Strictly according to the law, you need to notify the police to have a gathering, even though you are not using a loudspeaker. If you want to use a loudspeaker, you must apply for permission.

Last March, a meeting called by the PCD was billed as a church service. The people speaking at that service were genuine parsons. But they sent police to that service to note what was being said. And some people kept away because of that; they felt their names would be sent in for attending that service.

There is nothing that the Hoyte government has done to lift the level of political freedom enjoyed in Guyana. They have not opened up the radio. They have not opened up the press.

So our work is not easy by any means. The means of political struggle are very few. No press release of the Working People's Alliance gets on the radio, though during the election campaign we got some radio time.

So there are marches in Mackenzie or in Demerara, but they are the only people who know about it. It reaches the other end of the country only when someone travels around.

*Q. How is the WPA itself doing?*

A. The party is organized in different regions. Throughout the country we have an expanding membership at present. We are organizing heavily among the working people, and there is a lot of interest. These are mainly workers and peasants, the rural poor and the urban poor.

This is an indication that the people have not lost faith, because at this time, after the so-called defeat [in the elections], they want to come in and play a more active role. □

## DOCUMENTS

# Interview with Horacio 'Boy' Morales

*Former Philippine prisoner gives view of prospects under Aquino*

[Shortly after Ferdinand Marcos' tyrannical regime was toppled in February, the new president, Corazon Aquino, ordered the release of several hundred political prisoners. Among them was Horacio "Boy" Morales, a leader of the National Democratic Front (NDF). The NDF, a clandestine coalition of mass organizations formed in opposition to the Marcos dictatorship, has still not been legalized under the Aquino administration. The coalition claims that 1 million people belong to its constituent groups.

[Morales was captured and imprisoned in April 1982 and released March 1 of this year. The following interview with him was obtained, a week after his release, by *Intercontinental Press* reporter Deb Shnookal. Shnookal was in the Philippines for several weeks following the overturn of the Marcos regime.

[Since this interview was given, Morales has taken a job in the Aquino administration.]

\* \* \*

*Question. Is the demand for a "democratic coalition government," a slogan raised by the NDF, still relevant? How is it posed today?*

*Answer.* We would like to see the other sectors of society represented in the government. The Aquino government, for example, does not have the kind of broad democratic base that we would like it to have eventually. But the way we look at it now is that it has started out in the right direction by releasing the political

prisoners. We were very skeptical at first. The release of the prisoners was a decisive move by the government.

As Joema [Communist Party leader Jose



HORACIO "BOY" MORALES

Maria Sison] has said, we should look at the positive aspects of the government, its more progressive elements, and try to support those. We know that there are many limitations with the present system. So without forgetting those, we will try to push forward programs that will work toward the broadening of the democratic order. At the same time we hope we will be able to tackle those fundamental questions that are being posed at this time.

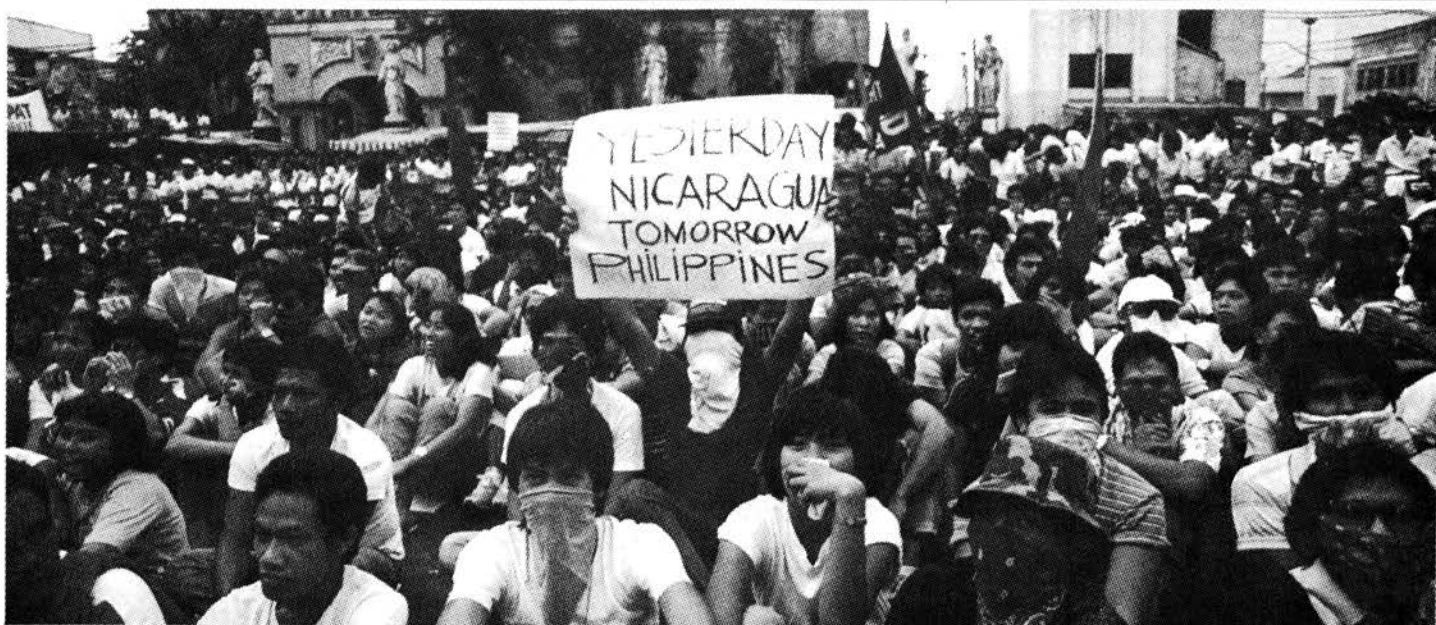
*Q. How should those unrepresented sectors, such as workers and farmers, push forward their concerns?*

A. We would like to experiment with various mechanisms and structures that can really activate the people's organizations and mobilize them to work very closely on all aspects of national life.

In that way we would be really broadening participation of the other sectors. For example, the farmers need to be harnessed in an organized, institutionalized way to be able to affect the direction of the agrarian program — its planning and implementation — that is, actual participation and representation without being in the government.

*Q. How would you describe the February events?*

A. We would call it a bourgeois, democratic revolution, which means that the bourgeois class, the progressive class, tried to take over a



Supporters of the anti-Marcos front Bayan at the time of the dictator's ouster. Morales said Bayan's attitude toward Aquino government will be one of critical cooperation.

landlord/bourgeois-led economy and tried to restore a democratic apparatus. But its direction is still bourgeois, because it is hopefully aimed at developing more capitalist enterprises and the elimination of the old feudal tenure system in the countryside.

I say "hopefully," because there are some bourgeois, democratic revolutions that aren't fully realized, that are interrupted, and don't, for example, follow through with a thoroughgoing agrarian reform.

The progressive aspect would be the elimination of the feudal structures in the countryside. The more industrially oriented capitalists would dominate the landlord elements within the government. But that wouldn't mean that they would automatically support the interests of the peasants.

The government is still a government of the elite whose orientation is toward the preservation of the status quo. But in spite of that, we are hopeful there are enough reform elements who will be receptive to a more progressive direction, who will take the interests of the farmers to heart and try to do something.

*Q. What is the likelihood of a truce between the New Peoples Army and the Aquino government?*

A. I think the proper move is for the CPP [Communist Party of the Philippines] and the government to sit down and have talks. Now, whether that will lead to them giving up their arms I don't know. But any move toward negotiation is important at this point.

*Q. What conditions would be necessary for such a truce?*

A. No offensive moves from either side could lead to a cease-fire for six months.

*Q. Would you expect the military to abide*

*by such a cease-fire?*

A. Well, this is the time to really test that. There are many within the military who claim they would like to reform the whole military structure. So this is a test for them. It would be a good occasion for both sides to see how serious the other side is.

It would have to be a graduated process. Initially it would be a truce. Then maybe it would lead to a giving up of arms. But by that time the government would have had to have restored all democratic rights, which would include recognition of all political parties, including the Communist Party, and a provision for the right to bear arms for all citizens.

*Q. What assessment would you now make of the boycott tactic carried out in the presidential election campaign?*

A. The boycott, we would say, contributed to the overall success of the people's struggle. That's one way of looking at it.

It was adopted by some groups to make it clear to the masses that the issue was the dictatorship, which was backed up by the United States, and that elections were not going to be the avenue for change. And what happened wasn't really an electoral victory.

*Q. What would you see as the major factor in Marcos' overthrow?*

A. The people's struggle, which started with the movement against military repression some time ago. The campaigns against the illegal arrests, detentions, and the "salvagings" made a lot of people more conscious, as did the Escalante massacre in Negros last September and the murder of Father Romano on Cebu.

*Q. Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile has claimed that the left has been disoriented by*

*the turn of events. Is that accurate?*

A. Well, to a certain degree. What he is saying is that some of the issues raised by the left and around which they organized the people are no longer there. That is true. It is now incumbent on the left to change its tactics.

There were people in Bayan [New Patriotic Alliance, a broad anti-Marcos front] who participated in the elections. This is a matter of being able to behave in a dualistic way without losing your perspective. Many who participated obviously felt it was the right thing to do. But there was no real falling out of Bayan membership.

Now the question is what Bayan should do at this time. This is a challenge. If they are able to participate in the elections, they will be able to show how strong they are politically.

There are going to be some new alignments and coalitions now. Obviously one of these will be the coalition of cause-oriented groups in the face of a government that is composed of diverse groups.

*Q. How should these cause-oriented groups, such as human rights groups, relate to the Aquino government?*

A. The effectiveness of the cause-oriented groups' impact on the government will depend on how they can unite together around issues. There are two ways they can influence the government: First, by working through the bureaucracy itself. Second, by institutionalizing the people's organizations to work in tandem with the government.

*Q. What would your attitude be if you were offered a position in the government?*

A. I would have to see what was being offered and whether I could do it. It depends. It doesn't seem likely at this stage, especially if

politics is looked at as a form of patronage. Obviously then, Aquino won't appoint those (like myself) associated with the boycott.

*Q. What was the role of the U.S. government in the February events as you see it?*

A. I think Reagan's statements the day after the military rebellion are the most revealing expression of U.S. interests. Reagan was still supporting Marcos when everyone could see he was about to fall.

The last few years have educated our people about the way the United States interferes in our affairs. However, different levels of the U.S. government represent different interest groups. People are now accustomed to recognizing the nuances. But they know that executive power is still in the hands of the president of the United States.

Of course, the people of the United States have been very supportive of the Filipino people, but the government itself has indicated various reactions, some hostile, some friendly to the Filipino people.

We would like to work with those from the United States who are more open to us, even big businessmen.

*Q. What are Bayan's perspectives now?*

A. The problem of how to overcome the hostility from some other groups has to be faced squarely by Bayan. This is due to the difference of opinion about the electoral process. Bandila [a political grouping describing itself as social democratic] is advancing in Manila, expanding its organization. But Bayan is still the dominant organization in the countryside.

Bayan's attitude to the new government will probably be one of critical cooperation. There is an element of openness. How well they can mobilize their forces outside of Manila to influence what is happening will be important.

Eventually I expect they will find common cause with others because of the growing polarization between different groups. For example, Bayan will take the lead on agrarian reform.

*Q. What has been the role of the Catholic church?*

A. The church has played a crucial role in the overall movement, especially the bishops by issuing their call to support the military rebellion.

The church and the big-business groups still

have the resources to do what they want. In this case, they chose to oust Marcos. We are not here to contend with others for leadership. If they are willing to support our struggle that's good. They have many resources and access to communication that the people's organizations don't have. So by joining the people's struggle they can help us a lot.

Now, will this be the case in the future? Will they be willing to share the liberal democracy with others? The question is how strong the people's organizations are and how much pressure they can exert.

The level of consciousness and people's struggle has advanced to such a stage that it cannot be ignored. We also cannot ignore the sectors such as the professionals and the middle layers in Makati [Manila's business district]. They are a highly conscientized sector.

It is now a question of looking at ways to harness the resources and motivations of these different groups in actual institutional ways of relating to government.

We will try our best to ensure that what we have now will be preserved and at the same time explore the possibilities to develop it to its greatest potential.

If our people are given the chance they can make substantial achievements. □

# Philippine CP reviews boycott stance

## *Criticizes its tactics in February presidential election*

[The following article was the lead item in the May issue of the English-language edition of *Ang Bayan*, published by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines.]

\* \* \*

For more than 17 of the 20 years that the Marcos fascist puppet regime was in power, the Communist Party of the Philippines (reestablished in December 1968) had played a leading role in our people's antifascist, anti-imperialist, and antifeudal struggles.

In all those 17 years, the Party and its revolutionary forces that it leads have contributed tremendously to exposing, isolating, and weakening the regime, leading to its eventual downfall.

Yet, where the people saw in the February 7 snap presidential election a chance to deliver a crippling blow on the Marcos regime, a memorandum by the Executive Committee of the Party Central Committee (EC-CC) saw it merely as "a noisy and empty political battle" among factions in the ruling classes.

And when the aroused and militant moved spontaneously but resolutely to oust the hated regime last February 22-25, the Party and its forces were not there to lead them. In large measure the Party and its forces were on the sidelines, unable to lead or influence the hundreds of thousands of people who moved with amazing speed and decisiveness to overthrow

the regime.

This was because of the Party's official policy enunciated by the EC-CC to launch an active and vigorous boycott campaign vis-à-vis the election, a policy that was based — as the events showed — on an incorrect reading of the political situation.

A recent assessment conducted by the Political Bureau (Politburo) of the Central Committee characterized the boycott policy as a major political blunder.

As evaluated by the Politburo, the boycott erred in its overall assessment of the political situation at the time of the snap election, in its understanding and application of the Party's tactics against the U.S.-Marcos fascist dictatorship, and in its understanding and application of the Marxist-Leninist organizational principle of democratic centralism.

In the main, the political assessment on which the boycott policy was based mechanically analyzed the various political forces with regard to their basic class standpoint and subjective intentions. It paid little or no attention to the objective positioning of each of the political forces in motion and in interaction with the others.

Thus it failed to grasp the essence of the whole situation that was in flux at that time.

The assessment had earlier described this period as the setting for an important political battle with a tremendous impact on the people and on the major political forces. But when

this came initially in the form of the snap election, the assessment underpinning the boycott policy belittled it as nothing but a noisy but meaningless interfactional contest among the ruling classes.

Specifically, the assessment:

1. Did not correctly understand the character and operation of U.S. policy toward the Marcos regime. It overestimated U.S. capacity to impose its subjective will on local politics and misread the U.S. dilemma over the conflicting needs it had to simultaneously attend to. It failed to appreciate the possible effects on U.S. policy of local developments over which the U.S. did not have full control.

2. Underestimated the bourgeois reformists' capacities and determination to engage the Marcos regime in a decisive contest for state power.

3. Ignored the fact that the Marcos clique had become extremely isolated and its capacity to rule was fast eroding. It failed to look more deeply into the contradictions developing within the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

4. Above all these, misread the people's deep antifascist sentiments and readiness to go beyond the confines of the electoral process in their determination to end the fascist dictatorship.

As practice subsequently showed, the snap election was not just "a noisy and empty political battle." The election and the major events it unleashed constituted the climax of the

people's long-drawn struggle against the Marcos regime. During and after the snap election, the historically determined central political struggle was the showdown over the very existence and continuance of fascist rule. The snap election became the main channel of large-scale mobilization and deployment of the masses for the decisive battle to overthrow the dictatorship.

This being the case, it was tactically necessary for the revolutionary forces to participate critically in the snap election in order to effectively combine and make use of all forms of struggle, march at the head of the politically active masses, and maintain flexibility and an active position in the face of the fast-changing situation. Only by doing so could the revolutionary forces have maximized their political and military capability and reaped the optimum gains for the revolution under the prevailing circumstances.

The boycott policy forfeited all these.

As regards understanding and applying the Party's tactics against the U.S.-Marcos dictatorship, the boycott failed to give commensurate political value to the antifascist struggle that assumed primacy during and after the snap election. The antifascist struggle united the various levels of revolutionary, democratic, and anti-Marcos sentiments during and after the election and created a mass force capable of toppling the regime.

The boycott policy not only failed to give enough value to the question of reaching and mobilizing the majority of the people. It directly and openly went against the desire of the broad masses to pursue the antifascist struggle by means of critically participating in the snap election.

More specifically, the boycott concentrated on addressing and consolidating the advanced section of the people, or the revolutionary forces, at a time when the people were already gearing for a decisive battle with the fascist regime.

This showed an insufficient understanding of the tasks of political leadership during such a time, as well as a lack of appreciation of the current level of mass participation in revolutionary struggles and confusion regarding the actual needs of the revolutionary armed struggle.

The Party leadership is now encouraging leading Party organs which have not yet done so to sum up their experiences regarding the boycott policy. The results of the different studies and summing-ups will be circulated within the Party, to develop a common understanding of the lessons from the boycott campaign.

Likewise, a general summing-up will be conducted of the Party's experiences in the struggle against the U.S.-Marcos fascist dictatorship. At the same time, steps will be undertaken to strengthen the Party's ideological foundation and raise the theoretical knowledge of the entire Party.

Steps are being taken to encourage and develop the democratic spirit and democratic way of doing things in the Party. To this end,

forums and channels will be created for the full expression within the Party of the various ideas and views on significant questions so as to arrive at a unified understanding and stand.

While we missed out on important political as well as military opportunities and suffered other negative effects as a result of our erroneous boycott policy, the fact remains that the events of last February represented a great victory for our people and for their struggles towards genuine national freedom and democracy.

The Party and its forces are intact, and these are now in the process of strengthening their

ranks for new tasks in the post-Marcos period which is highly conducive to the heightened and more extensive politicalization of our people.

While the Party perseveres in strengthening itself ideologically, politically, and organizationally, while it looks inward from time to time and learns both from its negative as well as positive experiences, it will continue reaping the people's wholehearted support.

The future is bright for the Party, for the entire national-democratic movement, for the revolution, and for the entire Filipino people. □

## 10 AND 20 YEARS AGO



July 19, 1976

Hugo Blanco, well-known Peruvian revolutionist and leader of a mass peasant movement in the department of Cuzco in the 1960s, was deported to Sweden July 10. Blanco had been arrested July 3 by the Peruvian Investigations Police (PIP), a political unit of the national police. At 1:30 a.m. the PIP picked him up at his brother's home in Cuzco, where he had been visiting for more than a week.

Two days later Blanco was flown to the headquarters of Seguridad del Estado (State Security) in Lima. For most of the time prior to his deportation, he was held incommunicado. No charges were placed against him.

Blanco's arrest was part of a roundup of at least 300 students, workers, and what the Morales Bermúdez regime called "criminals." The roundup took place in the two days following the junta's July 1 declaration of a state of emergency throughout Peru.

The official excuse for the state of emergency declaration suspending all civil rights was that there were "certain political groups who are trying to foment disruptions of public order." The "disruptions" the regime was referring to were mass demonstrations in Lima and major provincial cities in protest of the draconian austerity measures the government announced June 30.

## WORLD OUTLOOK

PERSPECTIVE MONDIALE

(Predecessor of *Intercontinental Press*)

July 15, 1966

The Meredith March in Mississippi came to an end June 26 with what was for Jackson, the capital of the state, a giant rally of some 15,000 singing, shouting demonstrators. This successful conclusion to the march that began June 6, when the lone James Meredith was ambushed, turned out, however, to be but a curtain raiser for a new development of enormous importance in the American political scene.

All the organizations primarily involved in

the Negro struggle for civil rights and equality had rushed contingents, including some of their most prominent leaders, to resume the march begun by Meredith. During the long days walking in the sun, they discussed the major issues facing their movement, particularly the acute problem of ways and means to achieve their goals. The constant harassment of the marchers by local police and white racists lent special point and urgency to the discussion. Daily television coverage brought the debate into the homes of Americans from coast to coast.

The end result was the explosive spread of a new slogan — *black power*.

The concept is relatively simple. It involves (1) the right to self-defense against the physical assaults of the racists; (2) the necessity for the Negro people to assert their potential political strength under their own leadership; (3) the necessity to exercise this strength independently of the two-party system and, if need be, against it.

The concept involves a rupture with the "nonviolent" Gandhist prescription (although it does *not* mean *advocacy* of violence). It signifies breaking the political strings held by white liberals who have been a major source of financial support for the traditional organizations (it does *not* mean rejection of white participation in the struggle or "racism in reverse"). It offers a sharp challenge to the Democratic party (while still far from organization of an independent political formation on a nationwide scale). It places a huge question mark over trying to legislate meaningful reforms into the present system (without as yet posing the need to turn to revolutionary methods and a revolutionary program).

One of its most significant aspects is its *opposition to the war in Vietnam*. It notes the hypocrisy of purportedly exporting democracy to Vietnam while democracy is still nonexistent in the South; and of sending troops across the Pacific under pretense of defending the democratic rights of the south Vietnamese when the Johnson administration does not even offer federal protection for Negroes inside the United States. It stresses in particular the crime of sending Negroes to fight against the colored peoples of Asia.

## Writers demand more freedom

*Congress marked by open debate, attacks on censorship*

By Steve Craine

The unusually lively discussion and sharp debate that took place at a recent congress of the Union of Writers of the Soviet Union is a reflection of the growing pressure to free intellectual life there from its bureaucratic fetters.

Many of the 500 delegates attending the June 24-28 congress in Moscow spoke out against censorship and called for government publication of previously suppressed works. Speeches were met with jeers as well as cheers, as real differences were aired. Some members of the literary establishment came under harsh criticism. Aleksandr Chakovsky, editor of the influential weekly *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, was repeatedly interrupted by hostile clapping.

The congress also appointed several of the most outspoken critics of the government and past direction of the Union of Writers to leadership positions in the organization.

Serge Schmemmann wrote from Moscow in the June 30 *New York Times*, "Participants spoke with excitement of the novelty of actual debate rather than staged readings of propaganda speeches. The debate, they stressed, was not radical or defiant, and many of the speeches followed themes that have long circulated among writers and artists. What made the congress different, they said, was a novel air of candor, spontaneity and experimentation as writers tested the new limits."

### Discussion on Pasternak

Proposals to honor Boris Pasternak and to publish his 1957 novel *Doctor Zhivago* received the most attention in the five-day meeting. Although much of Pasternak's work has long been available in the Soviet Union and a new two-volume edition of his writings was recently published, *Doctor Zhivago*, which won him the 1958 Nobel Prize for literature, has never been printed in his homeland.

In a speech to the congress, poet Andrei Voznesensky called for the publication of all of Pasternak's works, including the suppressed novel.

He also proposed setting up a commission to review other unpublished manuscripts and a writers' cooperative independent of the government to help young authors get their works published. "A writer uses 10 percent of his life writing books and 90 percent trying to get them out," he said.

Yevgeny Yevtushenko, another prominent poet, also called for more official recognition for the contributions of Pasternak. He presented a letter signed by some 40 writers demanding that Pasternak's home be made into a museum dedicated to the writer.

Since Pasternak's death in 1960, his family

had kept the house open to visitors interested in the writer's life. However, two years ago they were evicted, and the Union of Writers proposed making the house a museum honoring several writers.

Immediately following the congress, Yevtushenko and several other participants held a press conference in Moscow to publicize their drive to make Pasternak's works better known in the Soviet Union. According to the head of the writers' union of the Russian Republic, the state printing house is now considering publishing *Doctor Zhivago*.

### Greater openness developing

These specific proposals and the toleration of differences that prevailed at the writers' congress come in the context of heightened expectations for greater freedom of intellectual life in the Soviet Union.

Mikhail Gorbachev, who became the top Soviet Communist Party leader 16 months ago, has called for greater openness as the key to the changes he proposes throughout Soviet society.

Exactly how and if the top bureaucracy's openness campaign will translate into greater leeway for writers remains to be tested. In December 1985, at a meeting of the Union of Writers of the Russian Republic, Yevtushenko launched a broadside attack on censorship, bureaucratic privilege, and intellectual conformity. He declared that "socialist civic conscience" precludes "concealing and... hushing up things in our native land." The full text of his speech was reprinted in the Jan. 13, 1986, *Intercontinental Press*.

This bold challenge to official control over art and literature helped set the stage for the June congress of the Union of Writers of the whole Soviet Union.

Between these two congresses, a meeting of the Union of Cinematographers removed its old leadership and elected Elem Klimov, a director with a long history of conflicts with government censors, to head the body. One of his first actions was to establish a commission to review films rejected by the government.

Other signs of increased openness in the field of literature include the publication of previously banned Soviet writers. Literary commissions have been organized to study other long-neglected works, and there is discussion of possible translations of foreign classics, such as James Joyce's *Ulysses*, that have not been available in the Soviet Union before.

During the writers' congress, rumors were circulating in Moscow that the powers of the state censorship agency, Glavlit, would be sharply curtailed. According to a *New York*

*Times* dispatch from Moscow, the reports indicated the agency's staff would be reduced and its jurisdiction narrowed to questions of military secrets and national security. Editors and publishers, the *Times* said, would thus gain new autonomy in judging the suitability of works for publication.

Although Gorbachev himself, in a meeting with writers a week before the congress, encouraged them to be bold and innovative, the details of the current administration's attitude toward artistic independence has never been spelled out.

Some writers have voiced concern that the developing opening may be only temporary. An easing of restrictions in the late 1950s, accompanying Nikita Khrushchev's denunciation of deceased Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin, was soon followed by a renewed crackdown on cultural freedoms.

### Congress engenders optimism

However, novelist Valentin Rasputin told the press conference that he left the congress feeling more optimistic. Others attending the meeting pointed to the "acute discussions" and "sharp polemics" that took place there as signs of intellectual vitality.

Yevtushenko said he was encouraged by the selection of a large number of new members to the Union of Writers' leading bodies. Yevtushenko, Voznesensky, and other prominent critics were added to the union's 63-member secretariat, despite vociferous attacks on some of them. Voznesensky, for example, was castigated for his participation, in 1979, in the short-lived dissident journal *Metropol*, which was branded "anti-Soviet," and for his association with writers who are now in exile.

The top post in the Union of Writers went to Vladimir Karpov, editor of the literary magazine *Novy Mir* and the former deputy leader of the union. Although Karpov was considered a "neutral" choice for the post, he supported Yevtushenko's proposal to make the Pasternak house a museum.

In the congress discussion, Karpov linked the need for democracy in the Soviet Union with the fight against imperialism. "The development of democracy, openness, social fairness," he said, "would be the greatest blow of all to international militarist reaction, because it would take away its propaganda trump card, would raise the prestige of socialism, and strengthen the attraction of its example to people of the whole world."

Voznesensky summed up the views of many Soviet writers on the need for more openness and truthfulness in literature. The reader, he said, struggles with the evils of "lawlessness, corruption, bribe-taking, deceit and hypocrisy" in life. "He sees benefits improperly distributed, and then he is handed a timid book, mauled by the editors." No wonder people "turn away from some books," he said.

"Our main internal enemy," Voznesensky added, "is not the hard-hitting book, but the horror of bureaucratism and the inertia of the old thinking braking the new." □