

Reagan's tour escalates war against Nicaragua



Executive committee of the Nicaraguan Democratic Front (FDN), a coalition of counterrevolutionary Nicaraguan exile groups, meeting in Miami in November. Coalition includes political and paramilitary groups and receives aid from Central Intelligence Agency. It oversees fund raising in the United States to overthrow the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua. Operating with Washington's blessing, it is becoming more open. It held a news conference December 7 in Florida to announce its activities.

BY FRED MURPHY

Ronald Reagan's imperial tour of four Latin American countries came amid mounting signs that Washington's war against the Nicaraguan revolution was about to be escalated further.

As the Sandinista daily *Barricada* noted in a November 24 editorial, Reagan scheduled his final stop for Honduras "in order to

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make quite clear that in the two remaining years of his term Nicaragua will have to go on living with the danger of war at any moment."

The visit to Honduras, *Barricada* said, would be "a very expressive way of dissipating the doubts raised by *Newsweek's* report as to whether what is being done in Honduras results from uncontrolled initiatives by the CIA and [U.S. Ambassador John] Negroponte, or whether Reagan himself is the one responsible for the entire policy."

Throughout his tour, Reagan repeatedly attacked the "counterfeit revolutions" in Cuba and Nicaragua and accused those countries of "protecting guerrillas and exporting violence."

But that charge is really applicable to Reagan's own client regime in Honduras, which shelters the secret army of Somozaists and other counterrevolutionaries that is waging war on Nicaragua. That force is armed, trained, and directed by the CIA.

What is under way in Honduras, CBS News correspondent George Crile wrote in the December 3 *New York Times*, is "one of Washington's most ambitious attempts to bring down a foreign government since the Kennedys unleashed the Central Intelligence Agency against Fidel Castro."

Among the signs of a step-up in the anti-Nicaragua war was a report from southern

Honduras in the December 3 *Washington Post*. Correspondent Edward Cody found that the Somozaist camps in that region had recently been abandoned. "They are all inside" Nicaragua now, one counterrevolutionary told Cody. "That is where the war is. That is where it must be fought."

"They have gone in to stay," a Nicaraguan woman told Cody, speaking of her four sons, who were all fighting in a counterrevolutionary unit.

In El Salvador, Defense Minister Gen. José Guillermo García and army chief Gen. Rafael Flores Lima held a news conference December 2 and charged that four foreign guerrilla commanders — one Cuban, two Nicaraguans, and a Honduran — had been killed there in recent fighting.

Because El Salvador's civil war "has been imposed on us from outside the country," García declared, the regime had decided "to undertake an action that tries to end everything that is happening."

"In the next few days determinant actions of the armed forces will be underway that will need the absolute collaboration of the Salvadoran people," García said, without giving details.

These new threats of stepped-up attacks on Nicaragua were in line with details that had come out previously. *Newsweek* magazine's November 8 exposé of Reagan's secret war had pointed to what the Somozaists call their number one plan — "to move the *contra* [counterrevolutionary] camps that remain in Honduras across the border into Nicaragua, then move the camps already established in Nicaragua farther down toward Managua and, finally, past the capital into the south. When the time is right, the Somocistas say, they will draw their loose circle of camps together in toward Managua and force the Sandinistas out."

Further data on Washington's war were offered at a Mexico City news conference November 30 by a defector from Argentine military intelligence. Héctor Francés asserted that the CIA's "vast plan" to bring

down the Nicaraguan government had entered the "invasion" stage in mid-October (see article on this page).

The December 4 *New York Times* implicitly corroborated Francés's revelations as to the CIA's key role in directing the counterrevolutionary war. "With more than 150 agents based in Honduras and dozens more in neighboring countries," the *Times* said, "the C.I.A. has devoted a large part of its special operations staff to the Central American effort."

CBS News correspondent Crile's article in the December 3 *Times* revealed that Washington had nearly launched a full-scale invasion of Nicaragua in the early months of this year.

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Workers shut down Argentina for 24 hrs.

BY DOUG JENNESS

Workers closed down factories, public transportation, mail delivery, and shops in Argentina for 24 hours on December 6 in the country's first general strike in six and one-half years of military rule. At least 90 percent of the country's 10 million workers defied President Reynaldo Bignone's administration to protest unemployment, inflation, and human rights violations.

In the face of this massive display of solidarity, the military regime made no move to break the strike called by all three of the country's labor federations, despite a government ban on work stoppages.

The mobilization by labor unions and human rights groups was the first of a series of protests planned for this month by opposition leaders. Military leaders have sharply attacked the opposition's activities. They have particularly warned of the "destabilizing effect" of a planned "march for democracy" next week expected to draw 100,000 people to Buenos Aires.

Argentina's working class is suffering one of its worst economic crises of this century. Unemployment, 2 percent two years ago, is 15 percent today. This situation is worsened by the country's lack of any unemployment insurance system. Thousands of workers are lining up in front of soup kitchens throughout the country, one of the world's biggest exporters of food.

Inflation, which has exceeded 100 percent in recent years, has been running at an annual rate of 450 percent in recent months. Real wages are 10 percent below what they were 30 years ago.

Argentine officials are presently negotiating a \$1.75 billion credit package with the International Monetary Fund as a prelude to overall refinancing of the country's \$40 billion foreign debt to big banks in the imperialist countries. It's debt is third only to Mexico's and Brazil's among the semi-colonial countries, which are oppressed by imperialism. The IMF's condition for further financing is that the regime impose even harsher belt-tightening measures on the working people in the country.

On top of the worsening economic situation, there have been recent discoveries of

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Argentine defector reveals CIA's anti-Sandinista plans

BY FRED MURPHY

Extensive revelations by a former Argentine intelligence officer assigned to Costa Rica have shed new light on the Reagan administration's escalating war against the Nicaraguan revolution.

Speaking by videotape to a Mexico City news conference November 30, Héctor Francés — until late October a member of Battalion 601, Argentine military intelligence — detailed his government's role in helping Washington to arm and train a military force of Somozaist ex-National Guardsmen, Miskitu Indian refugees, and other counterrevolutionaries that is trying to topple the Sandinista government.

Francés's revelations were front-page news in the Mexican press, and in Nicaragua the entire tape of his statement was broadcast on national radio and television. The full text was published the next day in the Sandinista daily *Barricada* under

the headline "Reagan heads the war of terror."

In explaining why he had decided to desert his post and reveal the Argentine role in Reagan's secret war, Francés pointed to "the massacre of Argentine soldiers in the Malvinas, brought about through the betrayal by the United States." He said he had also come to understand "that Latin America is kept in a state of poverty, underdevelopment, and permanent crisis through misrule directed and controlled by the United States."

When the British government launched a war against Argentina last April to recover its colony in the Malvinas Islands, Nicaraguan leaders were among the first to speak out in defense of Argentine sovereignty and to denounce Washington's support for London's aggression. They also pointed out how Buenos Aires's complicity with

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Defector reveals CIA anti-Sandinista plan



Deserter described anti-Sandinista command center in Honduras directed by United States. U.S. Ambassador to Honduras Negroponte (above) proconsul in charge of war against Nicaragua.

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U.S. intervention in Central America could only weaken the anti-imperialist struggle of the Argentine people.

As the war over the Malvinas went on, the Argentine intervention in Central America was curtailed. Washington's support for the British aggression threw a monkey wrench into its efforts to line up capitalist governments in Latin America behind its counterrevolutionary efforts.

SWP wins victory in Supreme Court

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled unanimously December 8 that because the Ohio Socialist Workers Party faces political harassment, it cannot be forced to turn over the names of contributors to its election campaigns. This is a major victory for democratic rights, especially the right of workers to participate in politics free from government harassment.

The court upheld a lower court decision that exempted SWP candidates from disclosure provisions in the Ohio campaign spending law. Ohio state officials had appealed that decision to the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court concurred with the lower court decision that if the names of contributors were revealed, they would be targeted for victimization by government agencies, employers, or right-wing groups. This was based on voluminous evidence of decades of illegal government harassment of the SWP and its supporters.

"The evidence suggests that hostility toward the S.W.P. is ingrained and likely to

continue," Justice Thurgood Marshall wrote in the Supreme Court decision.

A majority of the court also upheld the SWP campaign committees' right not to disclose the names of those they do business with. "Compelled disclosure of the names of such recipients of expenditures," wrote Marshall, "could . . . cripple a minor party's ability to operate effectively and thereby reduce the free circulation of ideas both within and without the political arena."

The three judges dissenting from this part of the decision were Sandra O'Connor, William Rehnquist, and John Stevens. The SWP case was argued before the Supreme Court by American Civil Liberties Union attorney Tom Buckley.

Since 1974, seven courts and administrative agencies have ruled that the SWP campaigns need not comply with the state and federal disclosure requirements. The Ohio case is the first to have reached the Supreme Court level.

The Israeli ambassador in Costa Rica has provided the Somozaists with false passports, Francés said.

Many of the Argentine advisers are themselves trained in the United States. Upon returning to Central America, Francés said, "they bring . . . not only mockups of the targets to be bombed, but also photographs taken by satellite." He noted that such data is obtained by "the same satellite that helped the English pi-

rates massacre Argentines in the Malvinas."

Francés sketched out what he termed a "vast plan" to bring down the revolutionary government in Nicaragua. This plan entered the "invasion" stage on October 14, he said.

Three-prong strategy

According to Francés, the stepped-up infiltration and attacks inside Nicaragua that began on that date "aim at achieving domination in the northwestern [provinces] so as to allow the declaration of a liberated zone . . . which would be fundamental for achieving [diplomatic] recognition from the United States, Honduras, El Salvador, and Argentina, through the formation of a government in exile. This would permit that government to request military aid and support that the United States is already in a position to provide" as a result of a series of joint military exercises with the Honduran armed forces.

"Cells" of counterrevolutionaries have been infiltrated into 14 Nicaraguan cities and towns, Francés continued. Their role is to implement a plan that has been labeled "Silent War, Strategy of Terror," planting bombs and identifying and assassinating managers of productive enterprises, leaders and members of the Sandinista Defense Committees, and State Security officials.

A third part of the strategy calls for a diversionary attack on the Atlantic Coast by a force of between 2,000 and 10,000 Miskitu Indians, with the dual aim of dispersing the Sandinista People's Army and laying the basis for fresh propaganda charges that the Nicaraguan government is repressing the indigenous population of the coast.

Francés also said he had met in October with officials of the Costa Rican foreign ministry to plan an anti-Nicaraguan provocation. A phony Nicaraguan attack on Costa Rican islands in the Caribbean was to be staged, he said, after which the Costa Rican government would charge aggression and call for foreign military assistance.

"All this has an integrated framework," Francés said, "in which the aim is to destabilize Nicaragua through terror, the dispersal of its forces, impoverishment, and the paralysis of its means of production."

Role of Pastora

The Argentine deserter also revealed that the CIA had made efforts to bring the renegade Sandinista commander Edén Pastora into the operation. Since 1979, he said, Pastora had been "informing the State Department about the course of the Nicaraguan revolution because he saw that he was not going to have the quota of power he thought he deserved." Francés described Pastora as "a man who cast aside his rev-

olutionary mystique for a deeper one — that of money and power."

Because Pastora balked at joining up with the Somozaist-dominated forces backed by Washington, Francés said, plans had been made to assassinate him and lay the blame on the Sandinistas.

Francés closed his lengthy statement with the following appeal:

"It is important that public opinion make its voice be heard in order to halt this bloodshed. . . . It is important that public opinion recall — in the case of the United States — the massacre of a generation in Vietnam. In the case of Argentina, it is important that Argentine mothers and fathers appeal to the military elements who have not dirtied their hands in this shameful complicity."

From Intercontinental Press

Workers shut down Argentina for 24 hrs.

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mass graves of missing persons. More than 10,000 persons have died, disappeared, or been jailed in the last several years as a result of the military government's repressive policies. The revelation of hundreds of unmarked graves has brought anger on this issue to a boiling point.

According to a report in the Nov. 7, 1982 *Granma* English-language weekly published in Havana, thousands of people marched through the streets of Buenos Aires on October 28 to demand that the missing be returned and those jailed released immediately.

"Local newspapers gave big coverage to the demonstration, organized by Argentine human rights groups," *Granma* reported, "which was much longer than the usual Thursday demonstrations by the Plaza de Mayo Mothers."

Granma says that the "military's official position has been that it will not permit any review of the conduct of the armed forces in the 1976-79 period, which they call the 'struggle against subversion.'"

The growing activity of the human rights organizations, *Granma* writes, "especially the Plaza de Mayo Mothers, makes it safe to say that denunciations and demands will continue. The mothers say they will continue their efforts for the return of 'the thousands of missing persons who were jailed by security forces.'"

Confronted with mounting working-class opposition, Bignone rejected President Reagan's offer for a meeting during his recent tour of Latin America. Such a meeting would have been a demonstrative act of conciliation with the government that most vigorously aided British imperialism's war of aggression in the Malvinas last spring.

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Debate rages over D.C. anti-Klan protest

BY IKE NAHEM
AND LINDA MOHRBACHER

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A big debate is raging here over the November 27 anti-Klan protest where thousands of demonstrators were clubbed and tear gassed by police. Who is responsible for the violence that erupted? What motivated the thousands who came out to protest the Klan's first march in the nation's capital since 1925? These are the questions that are being discussed.

On one side of this debate are most of the big-business media and the city's leading politicians. On the other side are thousands of workers, many who demonstrated against the Klan, and thousands more who supported the action.

The anti-Klan demonstration was different than many previous Washington, D.C. protests. The majority of participants were young D.C. workers. Their hatred for the Klan and for the hundreds of cops that protected its march was fueled by anger over unemployment, sky-high rents, police brutality, and other social problems. And for Blacks in this 75 percent Black city, the Klan march was like rubbing salt in a wound.

So thousands turned out to oppose the Klan. And the tiny band of Klansmen — no more than 40 — were forced, despite massive police protection, to hightail it out of town with their robes tucked in paper bags.

According to D.C. Police Chief Maurice Turner, the events on November 27 were the work of "opportunists and misfits hell-bent on crime."

The November 28 *Washington Post*, in its lead editorial titled, "Saturday's Shame," piously asserted: "Please, no excuses for the rampage of Saturday. Even to grace those mindless rock-and-bottle throwers and looters with the label of 'anti-Klan protesters' gives them a status they don't deserve to enjoy."

This theme was further developed by nationally syndicated columnist William Raspberry, whose attacks on school busing and affirmative action for Blacks have won him praise as a "Black moderate" in ruling circles. In his December 1 column in the *Washington Post* entitled, "The Klan Won," Raspberry offered the following gem, "My hunch is that most of Saturday's looting had less to do with despair than with the opportunity for getting something for nothing and having a little fun."

While most of the news media took this approach of slandering the protest, it wasn't unanimous.

Dorothy Gilliam, a columnist for the *Post*, gave a more truthful account. She wrote on November 29: "The counter-protesters, many times the miniscule numbers of the Klan, sent a message of strong resolve: certain vulgarities, such as the appearance of the KKK, just won't be tolerated in the nation's capital . . ."

"The sophistication of the masses was, in the end, a thing to behold. These were not bedraggled, straggling, drugged-out potheads. It was a strong racial and cultural mix: Latinos, blacks, whites, and Palestinians.

"At one point, when a black man was grabbed by three policemen, the racially, economically, and culturally mixed crowd chanted, 'Turn him loose. He is not the Klan. Turn him loose.' The police let the man go.

"The crowd also understood that today's Rightwing Revival had given the Klan the nerve to come to the capital. The anti-Klan protesters were saying that they have had enough; that they were going to stand up, and were ready to do battle in the streets. . . ."

The presence of the Klan brought to the surface the rising anger of young workers, many of whom are unemployed.

Chants of "We want jobs, not the Klan," "We want jobs, not the police," echoed through the streets as thousands of youth defended themselves from club-swinging cops attired in full combat gear.

Protesters marched to the big department stores like Hecht's and Woodward and Lothrop's chanting: "Close! Close!" As one demonstrator put it: "People wanted to shut down downtown D.C. by 4 o'clock. We wanted to show Mayor Barry how we felt."

Some Black Democratic Party politicians swiftly began the search for scapegoats and "outside agitators."

D.C. congressional delegate Walter Fauntroy blamed "white radical organizers," "Communists," and "Trotskyist radicals," all of whom "got what they wanted . . . pictures of black youths looting and throwing bricks . . . showing America that Blacks are oppressed brick throwers."

He referred to a "Tarzan complex" of "white outside agitators swinging on a vine through our neighborhoods inciting our youth." Fauntroy has asked the D.C. police department to launch a formal investigation into the November 27 events.

The FBI, however, didn't even wait for the action to occur before launching an investigation. On November 24 it announced plans to investigate the anti-Klan action.

Talk is being revived of requiring groups applying for demonstration permits to come up with sizable cash and property bonds to cover "city expenses" for protests.

Fauntroy's attack on the demonstration was answered by Tom Soto of the All-People's Congress (APC) at a well-attended news conference on November 29. The APC organized the anti-Klan rally in McPherson Square. "Black and minority youth do not need white radicals to be 'incited,'" Soto said. "Blacks, other minorities, and working people were 'incited' by the Klan, the lack of jobs, and police brutality."

The truth is that when the Klan announced it was going to march in Washington, the major media gave it prominent coverage. The large majority who came out that day did so on their own. The protesters were overwhelmingly unfiliated with any political organization.

Socialist transit workers and garment workers in this city report that many workers on their jobs attended the anti-Klan action. Their response to the news media and



Militant/Osborne Hart

D.C. cops, mobilized to protect the Klan, beat protesting Black residents. Local politicians and big business media seek to smear antiracist action.

politicians such as Fauntroy was scorn. One transit worker in the track department said: "Fauntroy has a lot of nerve talking about Tarzan. Where was he? Where was Jesse Jackson?"

A railcar mechanic, who attended the demonstration, after hearing Fauntroy's remarks replied shaking his head, "Well, what do you expect? That's what they're paid to say."

Another transit worker who participated in the protest asked, "What were the police doing out here protecting the Klan? Let the Klan protect themselves."

Garment workers and transit workers

feel that the November 27 events have given Black and white workers a greater appreciation of their common goals and enemies. A mechanic described the situation in her shop. "White workers initiated discussions with Black workers about the demonstration. They were pleased that the Klan was smashed."

There was jubilation that the protest was a victory over the anti-Black, anti-Catholic, anti-Semitic, and antilabor Ku Klux Klan. A garment worker explained: "November 27 has increased the confidence of many workers in what we can accomplish together."

New interest in YSA as convention nears

BY PETER THIERJUNG

In the context of the U.S. government's escalating intervention in Central America and the growing resistance by U.S. workers to the corporations' drive for takebacks, the Young Socialist Alliance will meet in Chicago December 30-January 2 for its twenty-second national convention. The gathering will take place at the McCormick Inn.

The potential to bring many young people to their first YSA convention was demonstrated in the huge successes of the recent circulation drive for the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* and the Socialist Workers Party election campaigns. Members of the YSA and SWP discussed socialist ideas with thousands of people at plant gates, on the job, in working-class neighborhoods, and at public meetings. The most important way to follow up on the gains registered this fall is by publicizing the YSA convention widely and organizing to bring the largest possible number of people to it.

YSA chapters in many areas are sponsoring special activities designed to bring people to the convention. National leaders of the YSA — Mac Warren, Andrea González and Héctor Marroquín — went on speaking tours sponsored by chapters in Detroit, Toledo, Cleveland, Philadelphia, and Indianapolis.

Susan Apstein, the Detroit YSA organizer, reported that Warren spoke to a social studies class at South Field High School near Detroit. A number of students joined in the discussion. One explained that he had always considered himself a socialist. He decided that he should come to the YSA convention.

Warren also traveled to Toledo, Ohio, where YSA members have recruited three new members over the last several weeks, and he spoke at Bowling Green State University.

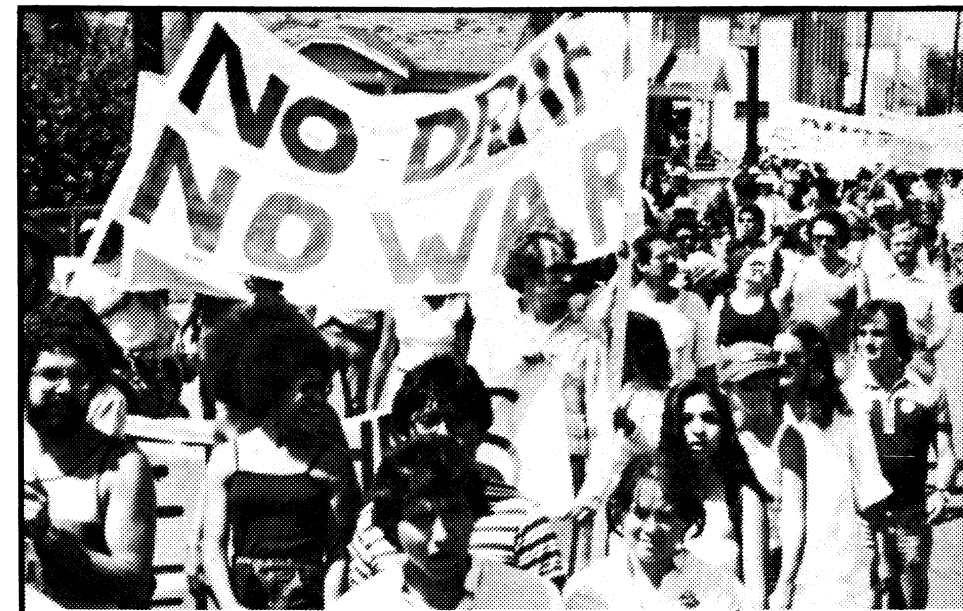
The Philadelphia YSA helped sponsor a meeting at Temple University for Mel Mason, the socialist city councilman from Seaside, California. Mason's talk was called "Independent Black Political Action — A Revolutionary Perspective". Thirty-five people attended the meeting, 17 of them young Black activists. Many asked for more information about the YSA and the convention. One Black activist signed up to go to the YSA convention.

González spoke in St. Louis at a banquet in solidarity with the people of Central America and the Middle East sponsored by the YSA. González reported that two people asked to join the YSA and two more were planning to attend the convention.

In Los Angeles, YSA members are holding regular classes in Spanish on *The Communist Manifesto*. These classes have been attended by nearly a dozen young Latinos who are interested in the YSA. Many of them have bought the Spanish edition of the draft political resolution for the convention and have indicated an interest in coming to Chicago.

A special weekend educational confer-

ence has been scheduled by the New York-New Jersey District of the YSA on "Capitalism in Crisis, Socialist Solutions". The conference will be held on the weekend of December 11 and will include classes on topics like *The Communist Manifesto*, origins of women's oppression, the changing consciousness of the U.S. working class, and the Marxist approach to the fight against war. There will be a major presentation given by Nan Bailey, a national leader of the YSA. The purpose of the conference is to encourage young workers and students to learn more about socialism and to urge them to attend the YSA convention.



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Militant/Cappy Kidd

Cop warns demonstrators trying to block trucks bearing toxic waste

Battle against toxic waste in rural North Carolina

BY GREG McCARTAN

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. — With the trials nearly completed for more than 500 people arrested in protests against toxic waste dumping in this state, only nine people have been found guilty so far. The nine are appealing their convictions on charges of resisting arrest or interfering with traffic, while the judge in the case has dropped charges against more than 400.

The failure of North Carolina officials to obtain more convictions shows how deep the opposition is here to the dumping of PCBs in mostly Black Warren County. One recent poll showed 79 percent of the population agrees with demonstrations against the dumping.

Big protests erupted in Warren County in September when the state began trucking in soil contaminated with PCBs, which stands for polychlorinated biphenyls, known to cause cancer. While the state and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) succeeded in completing the dumping, residents say the struggle is not over. Moreover, the political experience they have gone through in fighting the dumping has changed their views profoundly.

Rural, nonunion area

Warren County, 70 percent Black, is the poorest county in the state. Many people here are small farmers, but also hold jobs in area cotton mills or furniture plants in order to make ends meet. There are few unions around.

When the state and the EPA announced they would deposit tons of PCB-contaminated soil in a 140-acre landfill there, residents reacted angrily. They pointed out that the area didn't meet landfill requirements and that officials had waived rules on the distance between the soil and ground water, changing the 100-foot minimum to a five-foot minimum.

The obvious racism of the decision to

put the PCBs in the county was denounced.

And residents insisted the long-range goal of the dumping was to establish a permanent waste dump here that could attract polluting industries to the area, with the additional enticement of low-wage scales and no unions.

So when the trucks bearing the PCB-laden soil began to roll in, residents by the hundreds sat down in the middle of the road to block their path.

They were met by dozens of riot-equipped state troopers, National Guard helicopters, and an array of prison vans and buses. Cops also videotaped demonstrators.

The protests were spearheaded by the Warren County Citizens Concerned About PCBs. During the height of the actions, some 300 people would turn out for evening planning meetings.

While the most active on a daily basis were unemployed people and retired farmers, workers began taking a day off to join the protests, and students skipped a day of school.

'A human rights question'

The sweeping arrests — far from deterring activists — inspired more to join the struggle and brought Warren County to national attention.

Ken Ferruccio, a white school teacher who heads the Warren County citizens committee, explained that the state "decided to try to resolve the question by use of force." The government wanted to set a precedent, he said, "that it's OK to use military power and police power to force people into a chemical toxic waste experiment that they really want no part of. The siting question has been linked to profound questions concerning human rights."

Rejecting government charges that "outsiders" were manipulating them, Warren County residents appealed to civil rights groups nationally to aid them. Rev. Joseph

Lowery, president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), and SCLC organizer Golden Frinks helped lead some of the demonstrations.

Revs. Leon White and Ben Chavis of the United Church of Christ Commission for Racial Justice also participated in the protests. Chavis is also a national leader of the National Black Independent Political Party.

Government efforts to divide Blacks and whites failed. The struggle, in fact, highlighted the changing consciousness among whites toward Blacks and civil rights issues.

This was demonstrated by the white hog farmers who put up their land to help bail out young Black protesters. Interviews by the *Militant* found a lot of rethinking on the race question.

A retired white mechanic said he was "skeptical about working with the civil rights people, especially because of their past crimes. But when I met with them, all my fears immediately went away. And who knows, maybe their crimes were justified."

Mary Helen Mustain, a white school teacher, said, "in the 60s we had a lot of civil rights problems with the Blacks and whites. Now we are together. We don't separate ourselves as Blacks and whites now. We think of us as one group standing together to protect our lives, the future, the land, and everything. We are the same now, everyone's the same."

"We are all Black," one white woman declared on TV.

Big changes occurring

"There are big changes occurring," said Ken Ferruccio. "People in Warren County are beginning to discover one another."

"I think the separation of the races has, to a considerable extent, been to the political advantage of people trying to sustain the status quo of the power structure in North

Carolina. And I think people are beginning to realize that there is no reason for Blacks, whites, Indians and people of all races not to get together, work for common goals, play together, and fully participate in the human family."

The struggle has also deeply affected the way people look at the government and Democratic and Republican politicians. When the idea of dumping the PCBs in Warren County was first raised four years ago, residents got the county commissioners to file suit. The suit was in court for several years, but then the commissioners secretly dropped it last spring.

Many are furious with Democratic Governor James Hunt. One of their favorite slogans is, "Dump Hunt in the dump!"

Vincent Alston, a Black high school student, explained, "My own attitude toward the government has changed. I think it has for a lot of other students too."

"I never thought a governor could have so much hardness and would be willing to sacrifice people for his own benefit. I thought the governor was supposed to help people, not destroy them."

Soul City

Many activists are convinced the dumping is related to plans to attract high technology industry to the county, and particularly to an unfinished industrial park near the landfill.

About 10 years ago, funds were allocated to build "Soul City," an industrial park that was supposed to favor Black business and provide jobs. While the sewer and electrical lines are all in place, the project was never completed because federal funds were withdrawn, along with the idea of aiding Black business.

Many now believe that if Governor Hunt can legitimize the toxic-waste dump the next step will be opening up Soul City for industries that produce a lot of dangerous chemical waste.

"This is a situation where the state is a public relations entity for the petrochemical industries," said Ferruccio. "The EPA is a public relations man for the same boss; the federal government, the same thing."

He explained that policy in this country is "formulated by high corporate executives, the industrialists. Then you have the two-party system, but that's just a facade to deceive the public so people think we have a choice."

"The fact of the matter is, whether it's a Democrat or a Republican, he is put there because he is going to carry out this policy as far as he can. Then the next Democrat or Republican is going to carry on the same policy."

New political leadership is needed, he said. "Somebody called it a people's party. I don't care what you call it. But we need leaders who can put restraints on industry so they cannot arbitrarily and randomly destroy the American people."

Ferruccio will be on a speaking tour of East Coast cities in December to publicize the fight in Warren County.

For more information, write Warren County Citizens Concerned About PCBs, Coley Spring Baptist Church, Afton, North Carolina.

S.F. drops charges against socialists

BY MATILDE ZIMMERMANN

SAN FRANCISCO — The city of San Francisco has dropped all charges against Marilee Taylor and Deborah Liatos, arrested for passing out election campaign material and antiwar leaflets on a public sidewalk outside Horace Mann School in the Mission District. The two young women, members of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance, had been arrested October 14. The charges were dropped November 9.

Taylor and Liatos are sewing machine operators at Koret of California and members of the ILGWU. They reported that co-workers as well as classmates at Horace Mann night school were inspired by this victory. When they returned to work, co-workers all day long came up to express their solidarity saying in Spanish and English, "How wonderful! I'm so glad you won!"

Classmates at Horace Mann responded to the news of the victory with, "Right on!" "I knew they had no case." And their teacher exclaimed, "I'm so glad you're

here, and that you're free." The evening Liatos and Taylor reported their victory, students spent most of their time talking about the brutality of the police, especially in the largely-Latino Mission District. They discussed how their view of the democratic rights enjoyed in this country had changed.

The two young women were peacefully passing out campaign material for Mel Mason, independent socialist candidate for governor of California, when they were arrested. But the police report on the incident attempted to make them into aggressors instead of the victims. When they were in custody in the police station with five armed cops in attendance, the police report relates that "Fearing for his safety, Officer Dempsey searched Cited-1 and Cited-2's purses . . ."

In the face of the trumped-up charges of "interfering with the peaceful conduct of a school," the San Francisco SWP and YSA waged a big campaign to defend Liatos and Taylor. Immediately after the arrests, fact sheets were put out in Spanish and English.

Petitions in both languages were circulated, demanding that Mayor Dianne Feinstein use her office to ensure that the charges were dropped. Virtually everyone who speaks either English or Spanish on the floor where Taylor and Liatos work signed the petition. On two separate occasions, representatives of the Socialist Workers Party met with aides of Mayor Feinstein. Taylor and Liatos' attorney, Ann Menasche, fired off letters to the chief of police, the mayor, city supervisors and the district attorney, demanding that they recognize the constitutional right to distribute literature on a public sidewalk. And, at the time that the charges were dropped, a delegation of leading union officials was planning to visit City Hall to express their concern about the arrests.

Just prior to their arraignment, Taylor was discussing with a Latina co-worker her worry about going to court. The garment worker said, "Yes, but you're not going alone." Taylor responded, "Right, some people from my party are going with me," to which her co-worker replied, "Yes, you have a party. You're not alone."

Can steelworkers fight the bosses' attacks?

BY GEOFF MIRELOWITZ
(Third of a series)

BALTIMORE — In his opening speech to the United Steelworkers (USWA) convention in September, President Lloyd McBride told the delegates, "This union does not exist for the purpose of converting free men and women into wage slaves."

Every steelworker can agree with this statement. However, after McBride's proposal that the union accept the outrageous takeback contract recently demanded by the steel companies, many are beginning to believe that the policies of the top union leadership do not match this sentiment.

The strategy of concession bargaining, followed by top USWA officials for over 30 years, is based on support for the capitalist economic system. This system is wage slavery. Most of us have no choice other than to sell our labor power to some company for whatever wages we can get.

How high these wages are is based on how successful workers are in forcing the employers to meet our demands. In most cases this depends on whether we have a strong union that we can use to organize a fight against the employer when he denies us adequate wages and working conditions. We expect the union to represent our interests uncompromisingly in this fight.

Today, many members of the United Steelworkers realize that we do not have a strong union; at least not one that is strong enough to meet the current offensive of the steelmakers and the government.

The top leadership of our union does not fight in an uncompromising way for our interests. They seem more concerned with the profit interests of the employers.

Helping the boss

Last August after local presidents had rejected the first concession contract, McBride sent out a letter to all basic steelworkers. It said, "Let me first stress that I am convinced that the Steel Industry has many problems and that our union should help alleviate those problems in the areas over which we have control."

Because the steel corporations' profits are sagging, McBride and other top USWA officials proposed that we accept a massive wage cut and takeback package in November. They did this despite a unanimous union vote in July to reject a concession contract.

It is clear that the steel corporations are out for blood. Their July proposal was bad. Their November proposal was worse. In conjunction with their outrageous demands, they threaten the union with more permanent plant closings and indefinite layoffs. Some union officials reported after the November contract rejections that U.S. Steel and others had threatened that the pensions of tens of thousands of retirees were no longer safe.

This is not just bluster from the employers. They have closed down operations in the past and they may very well do so in the future. Under capitalism nothing compels any company to keep any operation going other than the amount of profit they make on their investment.

Clearly we are facing a giant challenge. All of the gains the union has made are on the line, along with the futures of tens of thousands of members and our families. The decision by local presidents in July and then again in November to reject the industry's blackmail accurately reflects a militant spirit among rank-and-file steelworkers — employed and unemployed alike.

Where to go?

But now we must begin to discuss and decide where to go from here. The industry is threatening to force us out on strike in August. Even a militant "no concessions" stand is not enough to meet this threat. We need a program and strategy to defend our class interests and a leadership capable of mobilizing the membership in action.

How can we develop such a program and forge a leadership that can put it into practice? To answer this question let's begin by summarizing our situation today.

The current capitalist economic crisis is not just one of many occasional downturns. It is the third in a 10-year period that has signaled the end of an era of post-World

War II economic expansion for U.S. big business.

U.S. corporations in steel and other industries do not simply accept that their profits are shrinking. They are determined to reverse this. Part of their strategy is an all-out assault on the wages, working conditions, and rights of the American working class. The Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization's strike demonstrated the ruthless union busting that the employers and their government are prepared to carry out.

American workers are not the only targets of this class war. The U.S. corporations and their government are also at war against workers and peasants around the world, in order to protect their profits. This is what lies behind the unprecedented size of the war budget, the tens of thousands of U.S. troops stationed in other countries, and the use of the U.S. military in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Lebanon, and elsewhere.

It is important to understand this because these war moves abroad and the attacks on workers in the United States are part of the same effort by the employers to protect their profit interests. Steelworkers cannot defend their own interests here at home without opposing U.S. war moves abroad. The USWA should break with the foreign policy of the Democrats and Republicans and demand an end to U.S. intervention in Central America and the Middle East.

One of the clearest expressions of the war on the working class at home is the wave of what is called concession bargaining. This is the current term for the new high in the givebacks the bosses are demanding.

The November decision to reject the result of this concession bargaining in steel puts the USWA at the center of the discussion of resistance to the employers' attacks.

To meet this challenge steelworkers need to see ourselves not just as one union under attack, but as part of an entire class that is under fire. To defend ourselves and other workers, our unions must put forward a program in the class interests of all workers.

This can begin with one simple but powerful idea. Working people did not create the economic crisis. We did not share in the billions of dollars of superprofits that the employers raked in before the crisis began, and we should not pay the price for the crisis today.

But that is exactly what the employers are trying to force working people to do through layoffs and plant closings.

In many areas, such as Minnesota's Iron Range or Pennsylvania's Monongahela Valley, entire communities that are dependent on the steel industry for jobs have been devastated. On the Iron Range for example, 11,000 of 14,000 iron ore miners are out of work.

Immediate relief needed

The steelworkers union has a responsibility to demand action to deal with this. The government must provide immediate relief for the millions — steelworkers and others — who are jobless.

Some union locals, including many in the USWA, are trying to provide aid to their unemployed members through committees that collect and distribute food. They also try to help with financial emergencies. The funds to pay for these programs usually come out of the pockets of those workers who are still lucky enough to have a job.

Most workers are motivated to contribute to these programs by an elementary spirit of working-class solidarity. Almost all workers are touched in some way by the effects of unemployment. Everyone knows the cost in human terms. Eviction notices, heat and utility turnoffs, children without adequate food and clothing, and entire families with no medical insurance are becoming more and more common.

There is no sign of any serious economic upturn. Government economists predict that the unemployment rate will remain around 10 percent for some time. A "recovery" they say, might bring it down to 8 percent to 9 percent! Anyone who's expecting to get called back to the mill could be waiting a long time. Many will never go back.

There is simply no way that those



Militant/Kay Lewis

Steelworkers need a strong union that they control to defend their interests.

workers who are still working can provide enough aid to match the need. What union relief efforts do show is that thousands of workers are ready to act to improve the conditions of the unemployed. That willingness to act should be mobilized into a massive public campaign to demand a serious program of government relief for the jobless.

Program for jobs

What would this consist of? First, unemployment benefits should be paid at the scale of union wages. The national average unemployment check of \$102 a week is a crime! So is the 26-week limit on payments and the insulting red tape and bureaucracy workers have to wade through in those states where 13 weeks of additional benefits are available. Unemployment compensation should last as long as unemployment.

Many steelworkers have lost their jobs permanently either through plant shut-downs such as those in Youngstown or through the kind of job combination and elimination that is occurring at almost every mill. These workers deserve a retraining program that can prepare them for other jobs.

Along with these steps the labor movement could demand a broad and bold program of public works. Now that the epidemic of joblessness has clearly become catastrophic, both the Democrats and Republicans are paying lip service to this idea. But they envision, at most, putting only a few hundred thousand people back to work.

Rather than treating these political hucksters as if they were Santa Claus on Christmas Eve, the unions should instead launch a fight for the serious public-works program that's needed.

This would involve creating millions of jobs repairing and replacing highways, bridges, housing, pipelines, mass transit, and many of the other things in this society that the capitalists have allowed to fall apart.

It could also involve building new schools and hospitals and expanding the services that working people need. Priority for such projects should be given to the communities where oppressed minorities live.

Twin evils

Alongside the campaign for a public-works program the unions should demand protection from the twin evils of unemployment and high prices.

Workers need a sliding scale of wages and hours. The workweek should be shortened to 30 hours with no cut in take-home pay. This could spread the available work around to those who need it.

At the same time every worker — including those on social security and pensions — must be guaranteed a cost-of-living adjustment that will allow wages and benefits to keep pace with inflation. Government economists point with great pride to the lower inflation rate that they claim is

a result of "Reaganomics." But all this hoopla is calculated to divert attention from the fact that prices on many basic consumer goods and services are still going up! Working people need protection from this today, not promises that prices will go down in the future.

The idea of a shorter workweek is not exactly a revolutionary one and, in fact, has been part of the USWA's program on paper for many years.

It has been almost 100 years since the labor movement began the battle that led to the eight-hour day. Before that fight began a workweek of 60, 70, or 80 hours was not uncommon. Bethlehem's Sparrows Point plant had only two shifts: a 10-hour daylight shift and a 14-hour night shift. Only a powerful workers' movement that organized marches, rallies, and strikes forced the bosses to agree to more humane working conditions.

The rapid growth in the development of technology and labor-saving machinery is one of the factors that led to the big profits the employers have enjoyed for so many years. The time is long overdue for steelworkers and others to share some of the benefits. But the fact is that since the 40-hour week was won throughout most industry in the 1930s, the bosses have been chipping away at it through forced overtime and six-day weeks.

So, although the shorter workweek may not seem revolutionary, the employers respond to this proposal as if someone were suggesting the legalization of highway robbery. Workers can expect to find a united front of employer opposition to this demand.

This only reinforces the need for a united, class effort on the part of the entire labor movement to win this reasonable right.

In response to all of these demands, the employers and their government will undoubtedly cry poverty. Workers can offer two simple answers.

Balancing 'our' budgets

Tell the government to take the money from the military budget. The unions should not be taken in by the Democratic and Republican con game about deficit spending and the need for a balanced federal budget. We should be more concerned with balancing *our* budgets, so we can pay our bills. Our problem is that the money that is necessary to meet human needs and get people back to work is being used for ever more dangerous weapons and Vietnam-style military adventures.

To the employers who claim they have no money, workers should reply with a demand to open the books of the corporations and the banks that finance them, so that we can learn for ourselves how the capitalists manage, or mismanage, the economy.

This demand has nothing in common with the phony financial "revelations" that the steel companies offered us last summer and again this fall to try and prove why we needed to sacrifice for them.

To begin with, workers had nothing to do

Continued on Page 17

Farm workers in Nicaragua organize to defend revolution

BY MICHAEL BAUMANN

NORTHERN MATAGALPA PROVINCE, Nicaragua — This is the heart of Nicaragua's coffee growing region, number-one source of export income. Opponents of the Nicaraguan revolution are trying to disrupt the harvest. Their terrorist attacks are already underway to the north, closer to the Honduran border.

Locally based *contras* (counterrevolutionaries) and rightist exiles camped just across the border want to frighten away the thousands of seasonal workers who are beginning to flock to the north to pick the ripening coffee beans. Several coffee pickers have been killed, their bodies horribly mutilated. Others have been kidnapped.

This correspondent recently spent four days in the hills of this rugged area, just south of the emergency military zone of Jinotega, where there is daily fighting.

One of the aims of the visit was to see firsthand the degree to which rural workers are prepared and organized to defend the gains of the revolution.

The results were an eyeopener, particularly a visit to a union meeting of agricultural workers at remote La Sultana plantation, nestled in the deceptively peaceful-looking green hills between the northern cities of Matagalpa and Jinotega.

* * *

"You have to come with us," Ricardo Sánchez said after I explained the purpose of the *Militant's* visit. He introduced himself as the Matagalpa regional organizer of the Association of Rural Workers (ATC). This is the revolutionary union of farm workers that emerged during the war against Anastasio Somoza, the Nicaraguan dictator overthrown by a revolution in 1979. Nationally the union has about 30,000 members; more than a third of them are based in the Matagalpa-Jinotega region.

Both Sánchez and his companion, regional adult-education director Victor González, were about to leave the main plantation in the area, El Fundador, to go to an ATC meeting at La Sultana, some 10 miles away over a narrow, winding dirt road.

As we jolted along, dodging mudholes

and cows, Sánchez and González described the farm and the meeting we would be attending.

At La Sultana, before the revolution, the 75 agricultural laborers had no schools, no doctors, no running water, and no union. They worked a 12-hour day at little more than 10 cents an hour.

The plantation was owned directly by Somoza. So was the only store on it, which charged prices 60 percent to 300 percent higher than comparable prices in the city hours away.

Today it has a school for the children, an education program for the adults, medical visits, running water, electricity, an eight-hour day, a substantial pay increase, and the beginning of a strong unit of the ATC. Expropriated immediately after the 1979 revolution, the farm is today the property of the entire people of Nicaragua.

* * *

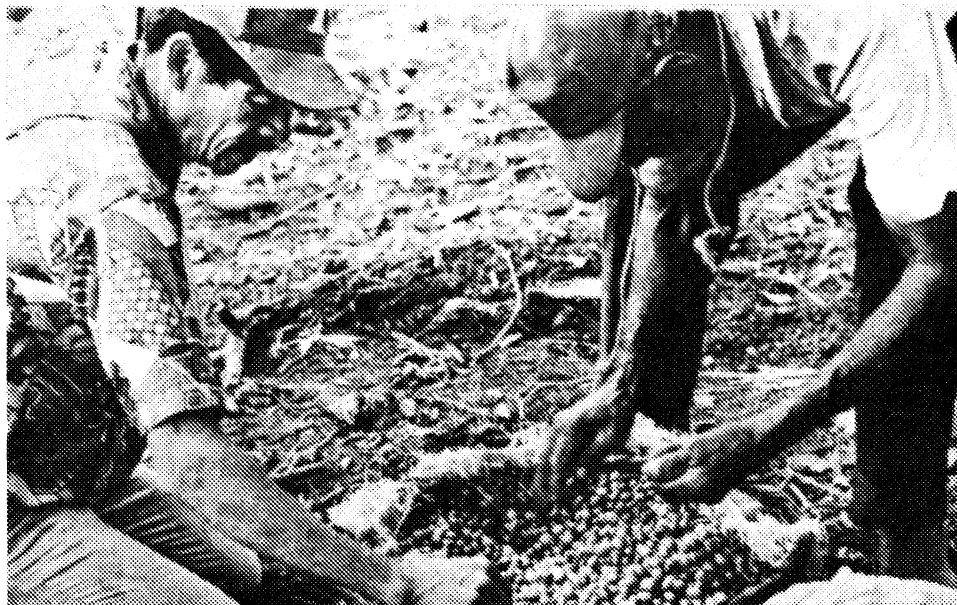
"Every two weeks," Sánchez said, "we have a political education meeting at each agricultural complex with a selected group of advanced workers. The aim is to help them further their political understanding of the revolutionary process, so they can lead discussion among other workers."

"We also use the meetings to distribute *El Machete*," he said. *El Machete* is the ATC's own twice-a-month newspaper. It deals with both broad political questions and the special problems of farm workers, with a clarity and simplicity of style that is well suited to an audience that in the main is still learning to read. It sells for two *córdobas* a copy, a formidable sum when reckoned against an average daily pay of 25 *córdobas* (1 cordoba = US\$0.10), and it is common for half a dozen workers to share a single copy.

* * *

The first thing you see when you enter La Sultana is a giant five-foot by seven-foot poster of Lenin, a modern truck assembly line, and a mechanized grain silo. In huge red letters it bears the simple inscription "Socialista, será el porvenir" (The future will be socialist.)

The poster is part of the political education campaign being waged by the ATC in



Barricada/Pablo E. Barreto

Nicaraguan coffee pickers. Counterrevolutionaries are trying to disrupt coffee harvest through terror attacks.

rural areas where daily newspapers, books, and TV are unknown. Its text, short and to the point, stresses the continuity between the victory of Russian urban and rural workers 65 years ago and the revolutionary process underway in Nicaragua today.

* * *

In fact, the meeting turned out to be much more than Sánchez had expected. Nearly 50 workers, men and women, attended. The step-up in counterrevolutionary attacks to the north had clearly had a great impact.

The workers didn't come all at once. Initially scheduled to start at 2 p.m., the meeting was postponed until 3 p.m. and actually started about three-quarters of an hour later. Workers at first sat far back on impromptu seats — an oil can here, a stack of coffee bags there — leaving the two long benches in front empty. But as the meeting started and participation began, the front filled up as well.

* * *

The four points on the agenda made clear the degree to which the ATC, as the mass organization of the rural working class, is shouldering major responsibility for organizing and advancing defense of the revolution.

The first point, the main political talk, was a concise account of the extremely difficult period the revolution has entered. It was given not by the visiting ATC official, but by a young agricultural laborer who has assumed major leadership responsibility at La Sultana.

He carefully explained the military and economic assault the revolution is under, and how this meant "there are not enough resources to cover everything that needs to be done."

The second point focused on the long-term weapon against the counterrevolution and political confusion — literacy. The ATC has major responsibility for carrying through the adult-education campaign in the countryside. This point was used to begin to organize La Sultana's participation in the next adult-education semester, scheduled to begin in March after the coffee harvest.

González, speaking for the Ministry of Education, explained that the revolutionary government had set aside funds to pay six La Sultana workers an additional 150 to 350 *córdobas* a month to take on the task of organizing themselves and the 70 others into an effective educational unit.

Monthly reports, in person, at the regional office in Jinotega were expected. And the volunteer organizers would spend a total of 16 days at classes themselves in Jinotega to prepare for this new responsibility.

"We don't want people who just want a little extra money," he explained. "Much of what you receive will have to be spent on your travel expenses and lodging. What we do want are people who understand how important it is to help our brothers and sisters learn how to read and write. Remember, this was impossible under Somoza. We owe it to ourselves to take advantage of the possibilities the revolution has given us."

After lengthy informal consultation among the audience, the first two volunteer organizers stepped forward and were accepted by general approval. It was agreed that La Sultana workers would discuss the matter further among themselves and come up with the additional organizers at the next meeting, in two weeks time.

Defense proper, from a military point of view, was the next point. Sánchez spelled out carefully the minimum number of people who should be scheduled for armed nightwatch (*vigilancia*) each night, and the number of automatic rifles and bullets that were available to be shared among the ATC members.

He reminded the meeting of the security measures that had been adopted earlier, at the beginning of the stepped-up military emergency. A total and complete curfew at 7 p.m. (about an hour and a half after dark at this time of the year here). No parties, no meetings of religious cults, absolutely no one on the roads or in the fields after dark.

The meeting closed with the selection of two new members to fill vacant slots in the local ATC leadership. One of the volunteers for the adult education campaign also stepped forward to accept for the first time a leadership post in the union.

Five copies of *El Machete* were sold. Another five were left with the local leadership for sales during the next two weeks.

* * *

On the way back to El Fundador, hurrying to make the curfew, Sánchez turned and said, "Now you understand that we mean it when we say to the *contras*, you may get in but you won't get out!"

Subscribe to the 'Militant'

2 North Carolina unionists fight frame-up

BY MATTHEW HERRESHOFF

RALEIGH, N.C. — The trial of two union activists, arrested while participating in a June 6 rally for the Equal Rights Amendment, was postponed for the fourth time by prosecutors here on November 19. The accused, Steve Craine and Jeff Miller, are charged with petitioning to put the Socialist Workers Party on the ballot at the June 6 demonstration. Both Craine and Miller are members of the SWP and of Teamsters Local 391.

Craine and Miller were arrested despite the fact that they, and other SWP campaign supporters, complied with an unconstitutional police order banning the SWP from campaigning among the 10,000 demonstrators. The SWP was the only group so silenced by the cops.

The two were arrested while discussing with rally organizers lifting the ban on free speech. The cops charged the two with "interfering" with the demonstration. Craine and Miller face six months in jail on this charge.

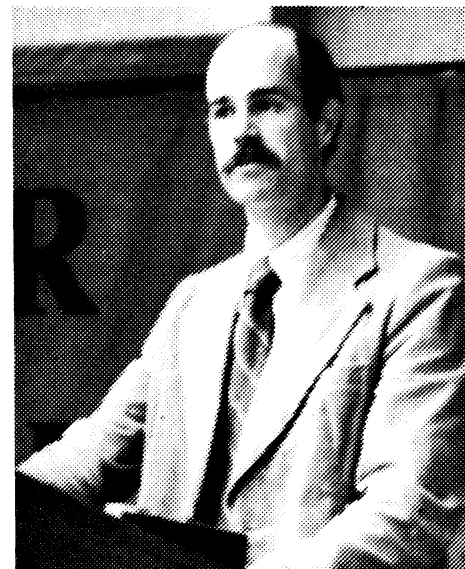
Craine and Miller have won broad support for their case among unionists, Black leaders, civil libertarians, and women's rights activists. This includes more than 100 members and leaders of the National Organization for Women who signed petitions at the recent NOW convention in Indianapolis.

Most significant is a unanimous resolution of support adopted by Craine and Miller's own union, Teamsters Local 391, demanding that the charges against the two be dropped. Local 391, with 10,000 mem-

bers, is the largest union in North Carolina. Despite this widespread support, Wake County District Attorney J. Randolph Riley has continued his efforts to victimize the two unionists.

On November 19, when the trial was most recently scheduled, the prosecutor waited until 10 minutes before the judge was scheduled to leave town to call Craine and Miller's case.

Attorney Irv Joyner charged that the postponements are part of a continuing pattern of harassment aimed at weakening support for Craine and Miller. "They've been given the runaround ever since they



Militant/Kelley Lawrence
Teamster Steve Craine

were arrested," Joyner told reporters. More than a dozen witnesses and supporters had come from around the state to attend the trial.

In an ominous development, two agents of the State Bureau of Investigation (SBI) also attended the November 19 hearing. This is the first indication that the state government is involved in the frame-up.

The *Raleigh News and Observer* noted that the SBI agents "kept a close eye on both the proceedings and the observers." One agent told a reporter that he had come to testify himself. The SBI has a long history of spying on working-class, Black, and women's groups in North Carolina.

At a November 24 news conference, Steve Craine blasted the SBI's complicity with the frame-up. "The involvement of the SBI," he said, "clearly confirms that this prosecution is a political frame-up. Their presence at the November 19 hearing was aimed at intimidating our witnesses and supporters."

At the news conference, supporters announced the formation of a Craine-Miller Defense Committee to coordinate defense efforts.

The CMDC is requesting protests demanding that the charges against Craine and Miller be dropped be sent to: J. Randolph Riley, Wake County District Attorney, Wake County Court House, Raleigh, N.C. 27602.

Copies of messages, and contributions, should be sent to the Craine-Miller Defense Committee, 216 E. 6th St., Winston-Salem, N.C. 27101.

How Marxists look at Mideast conflict and the PLO

BY DAVID FRANKEL

For the past 15 years the Middle East has been a focal point of the international class struggle. In that brief period the world has witnessed the rise of an independent mass movement for Palestinian national liberation, three Arab-Israeli wars, civil wars in Jordan and Lebanon, the Iranian revolution, the Iraqi invasion of Iran, and numerous smaller uprisings and conflicts.

This same period saw Israel's consolidation as an imperialist power in its own right. Among the factors resulting in this were Israel's territorial expansion and the incorporation of the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip as a new pool of superexploited labor for the Israeli capitalists. Along with the escalating conflict between imperialist Israel and its Arab neighbors, a class polarization developed inside Israel itself between the workers and the imperialist ruling class.

The Israeli invasion of Lebanon this June and its results have marked a turning point in this tumultuous history.

World imperialism dealt a grave blow to the Palestinian people and the Arab masses as a whole through this war. More casualties and greater destruction were inflicted by the Israeli army in Lebanon than in any previous Arab-Israeli war.

Summarizing the cost of this military defeat in a speech before the Arab summit conference in Fez, Morocco, this September, Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) chairman Yassir Arafat declared: "In this murderous war we have suffered 49,600 Lebanese and Palestinian civilians martyred or wounded, as well as 5,300 military personnel martyred or wounded. . . . We still have about 6,000 combatants missing."

Arafat estimated that the war had left about one million people homeless. In addition, the Israeli army "wiped out on its way to Beirut 14 Palestinian camps and destroyed 32 Lebanese villages and three other cities. This happened prior to the siege and destruction of Beirut."

Just looked at from the point of view of the human toll, Arafat explained, "The Israeli-US invasion has opened a wound in the body of the Arab nation that is deeper and bigger than all its wounds and sufferings from 1948 until now."

Moreover, Israel has taken over nearly half of Lebanon. The imperialists have installed a rightist government and have begun dictating the future of the country in a way they have not been able to do since the occupation of Lebanon by U.S. Marines in 1958. Now, the marines have returned, along with French and Italian imperialist forces.

"This meeting," Arafat told the Arab rulers assembled at Fez, "must evaluate truthfully the seriousness of this change on the map of the Arab homeland and the Middle East region, which seeks to establish an Israeli empire that lies in the US orbit. . . ."

U.S. diplomatic offensive

"This war was essentially a US war," Arafat declared. He pointed out that the Israeli aggression was "supported militarily, politically, economically and diplomatically by the United States. . . ."

Washington is now pressing to consolidate the political advantage that it has gained as a result of the Israeli military victory in Lebanon. This is the meaning of the so-called Reagan plan announced at the beginning of September, as PLO forces were being evacuated from Israeli-besieged West Beirut.

The U.S. government hopes that the demobilization of the Arab masses and blows to their morale following the war will enable it to pressure more Arab governments — those in Saudi Arabia and Jordan in particular — to join Egypt in granting recognition to the Israeli state. In exchange, the Palestinians are offered the promise that negotiations might eventually lead to Israeli withdrawal from some part of the West Bank and a vaguely defined form of "autonomy" under the supervision of the Jordanian regime.

A similar proposal was part of the Camp David ac-

cords in 1978, which only the Egyptian government went along with at the time.

Besides angling for recognition of Israel by more Arab governments, the U.S. diplomatic offensive has a second, related aim: to destroy the PLO.

To begin with, Washington is trying to isolate the PLO and downgrade its status. Reagan is demanding that the Arab governments rescind their recognition of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. He has proposed that King Hussein of Jordan be empowered instead to negotiate in the name of the Palestinians.

At the same time, U.S. policymakers are telling the PLO that if it does not retreat from its intransigent struggle for Palestinian self-determination and accept Reagan's proposals, the Palestinians will be left with nothing at all. Washington hopes that such blackmail will split the PLO. False reports in the imperialist press claiming that Arafat and other PLO leaders have already agreed to Washington's demands are intended to help this process along.

But it is one thing for the imperialist rulers to launch an offensive against the Palestinian national liberation struggle — even an offensive that is based on big military gains — and it is quite another thing for them to succeed in destroying the PLO. That fight is far from over.

The PLO has successfully brought the plight of the Palestinian people to world attention and made their cause the central issue in the politics of the Middle East over the past 15 years. Even the State Department officials responsible for carrying out the drive against this revolutionary nationalist organization have been expressing their doubts about the prospects for Washington's success.

As *New York Times* reporter Leslie Gelb admitted October 31 in a major article on the Mideast negotiations: "United States officials said they were not sure of Arafat's exact position, and most doubted that he would choose this course" of recognizing Israel.

Moreover, this entire fight is taking place in a world situation where the overall relationship of class forces has never before been so favorable to the Palestinians.

It is this fact that explains the political price that the imperialists have had to pay for their gains in the Middle East.

Shift in working-class consciousness

After the savage massacre in West Beirut, people around the world — including growing numbers in Israel itself — have been forced to look anew at the situation in the Middle East. And the vantage point of working people in 1982 is different from what it was even a few years ago.

The extension of the world socialist revolution in Vietnam and Central America, and the massive revolutionary mobilizations in Iran that brought down the shah, have put working people around the world in a stronger position in relation to the capitalist rulers. At the same time, exploitation and oppression are intensifying because of the worldwide capitalist economic crisis and the imperialist offensive against the working class. As a result, the working class and its allies are being drawn into struggles and are beginning to undergo profound changes in their consciousness.

With these experiences in mind, working people thought about the meaning of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and took a fresh look at Israel's 15-year occupation of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and the Golan Heights. New light was shed on Israel's increasingly murderous attacks against its Arab neighbors and its more and more brazen alliance with the most hated and reactionary forces in the world — from the racist rulers of South Africa to the gorilla dictators in Central America.

The massacre in West Beirut served as the catalyst to bring all this together. The result has been a leap in consciousness among working people around the world

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about the just and progressive character of the Arab peoples' struggle against Israel.

The Israeli state will never regain the moral standing that it has lost. Millions have come to realize that the image of Israel as a beleaguered underdog, repeatedly forced to go to war by fanatical Arab Jew-haters, is a lie.

Within Israel itself, masses of people came to the realization that their government was carrying out a war of aggression marked by atrocities from its opening day. An antiwar demonstration of more than 70,000 took place in Tel Aviv on July 3, and on September 25 some 400,000 people poured into the streets to protest the massacre in West Beirut. It was the biggest demonstration in the country's history.

These same events, which have posed big questions for working people in general, have also presented a challenge to the Marxist wing of the workers movement. How do communists see the Middle East and the political issues in the Arab-Israeli conflict? How has this analysis stood up to the test of events? What more can be learned from the war in Lebanon about the class lines in the Middle East and the evolution of the various forces in the struggle there?

Imperialist oppression

Except for Israel, all the countries in the Middle East are oppressed and exploited nations. Their economies are warped by imperialism and their natural resources — oil in particular — are looted for the benefit of the super-rich in New York, London, and Paris. Their political life has been repeatedly subjected to crude and brutal imperialist intervention.

This imperialist oppression, and the struggle of the oppressed peoples fighting for national liberation, is central to the politics of the Middle East, as it is to most of the world. It is one of the most important forms of the class struggle on a world scale.

Lenin, in this regard, insisted in his articles on *The Revolutionary Proletariat and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination*, written in 1914, that "the focal point of the [Marxist] programme must be that division of nations into oppressor and oppressed which forms the essence of imperialism. . . ." (Emphasis in original.)

During its first five years, the Communist International — founded under the leadership of the Bolsheviks in 1919 — further developed the program of the revolutionary workers movement in regard to the oppressed nations. Introducing a document on the question to the organization's second congress in 1920, Lenin stressed that "the cardinal idea underlying our theses. . . is the distinction between oppressed and oppressor nations."

This framework was reaffirmed by the Fourth International in its May 1940 resolution on "The Colonial World and the Second Imperialist War." The resolution explained:

"Colonies and subject lands cover more than half the earth's surface. More than one billion people, yellow, brown, and black, are subject to the insignificant minority of supercapitalists who rule the Western world. The striving of this great mass of dispossessed to be free represents one of the two great progressive forces in modern society. The other is the struggle of the proletariat in the advanced countries for its emancipation."

The 1940 resolution explicitly pointed to the role of the Arab peoples in the struggle for liberation from imperialism. "The World War of the Allies against Germany," it said, "continued after 1918 in the form of a world war of the Allies against the peoples they sought to keep in subjection. . . . Promises of independence freely given during the war to the Arab peoples of the near and Middle East were redeemed in the form of iron imperialist rule, asserted and maintained by bomb and bayonet and gallows. Nationalist insurrections swept Egypt and the rest of the Moslem world. The Turks alone successfully won their independence."

Role of Israel

Although the British and French rulers were forced to give up direct political control of their Mideastern colonies following World War II, the imperialists continue to control the economies and to determine, including through direct military power, the political destiny of these former colonies.

The coup organized by the CIA in August 1953 to return the shah of Iran to his throne is one of the best known examples of how the imperialists intervene in the political life of the semicolonial countries. But it is by no means an exception. In fact President Reagan publicly vowed in October 1981 that Washington would use military force against any attempt by the people of Saudi Arabia to rise up against the absolute monarchy that holds them in chains.

When push comes to shove, the system of imperialist oppression in the Middle East rests on naked force. That is where Israel fits in.

The Israeli state is an imperialist bastion in the Mideast. It offers the U.S. rulers something they lie awake at night wishing for in Central America — a coun-

terrevolutionary army of more than 400,000 troops, armed with the most advanced weapons, and backed by its own nuclear arsenal.

Because of its particular origin as a colonial settler-state, Israel has always been pitted against the Arab peoples as an ally of imperialism. Even during the 1920s and 1930s, when Palestine was still a British colony and Israel did not yet exist, the Zionist organizations supported the British against repeated uprisings of the Palestinian people fighting for their independence.

An independent Arab Palestine would have put an end to the Zionist scheme for the establishment of a Jewish state at the expense of the Arab majority. Therefore, "whoever betrays Great Britain betrays Zionism," declared David Ben-Gurion — later to become Israel's first prime minister — in 1935.

After World War II, the Zionist organizations came into armed conflict with the British, who tried to hold onto Palestine as a colony instead of supporting the creation of the Israeli state. But in the meantime, the Zionist forces gained the support of Washington.

Although some Zionists try to portray their conflict with the British as an anticolonial struggle, it was really a fight between thieves. The establishment of Israel in 1948, with the full support of Washington, was made possible only by the expulsion of 700,000 Palestinians from their homeland and the confiscation of their land. The Palestinians who remained became, by law, second-class citizens in their own country.

So hated was this illegitimate new state among the Arab masses that no regime in the region, however reactionary and subservient to imperialism, dared to recognize Israel.

The character of the Israeli state as an outpost of imperialism was made crystal clear in October 1956. Responding to the anti-imperialist measures of the Egyptian government, capped by its nationalization of the Suez Canal — a move that inspired the Arab world and the oppressed peoples as a whole — Israel joined Britain and France in an invasion of Egypt.

Rise of Palestinian struggle

Israel's aggression against Egypt, Syria and Jordan in June 1967 was motivated by the same aims as the 1956 invasion of Egypt. The Israeli ruling class hoped to be able to hold onto any territory it grabbed. In addition, it sought to bring down the nationalist regimes in Egypt and Syria and replace them with governments that would be more amenable to imperialist pressure — especially pressure for the recognition of Israel.

The June 1967 war proved to be a turning point for Israel and the Middle East as a whole. Before the 1967 war, Israel's capitalist economy had been heavily subsidized by aid from the United States and West Germany. This imperialist aid, which continued and increased after 1967, combined with Israel's territorial expansion in the war, laid the basis for Israel's transformation into an imperialist country in its own right.

A second outcome of the June 1967 war, however, was the rise for the first time of an independent mass movement among the Palestinian people fighting for their national liberation. Various Palestinian guerrilla organizations, such as Fatah, had existed previously. But until the 1967 war, the masses of Palestinian refugees looked to the Arab governments. They relied in particular on Egyptian President Gamal Abdul Nasser to win their demands for the restoration of their homeland.

The PLO was originally set up in 1964 at Nasser's initiative, but with the agreement of the other Arab governments. At first it operated under Egyptian control, with a staff of paid functionaries, who issued declarations in the name of the Palestinian people. Statements by the PLO's first chairman, Ahmed Shukairy, who declared that the Arab armies would drive the Jews into the sea, are still quoted by supporters of Israel to back up their claim that the Palestinian liberation struggle is anti-Semitic.

With the defeat of the Arab armies in June 1967, however, broad layers of the Palestinian people began to look for an alternative to Nasserism. Independent organizations such as Fatah and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) began to grow.

On March 21, 1968, Fatah commandos held their ground against a major attack by Israeli forces on the Palestinian refugee camp of Karameh, in Jordan. The battle of Karameh had an electrifying impact throughout the Arab world. As a report from a refugee camp in Amman, Jordan, in the Dec. 27, 1968, *New York Times* described it:

"The heroes now are the commandos, especially those of Al Fatah, the largest and most active group. Posters of guerrillas carrying automatic weapons are displayed in every prominent place. . . ."

"After Karameh, President Nasser, who had been lukewarm to the movement, recognized the commandos and gave Fatah an hour's daily radio time. That program is today probably the most popular in the Arab world. . . ."

By November 1968, after major clashes between Palestinian fighters and King Hussein's army in Amman, the guerrillas had established their right to operate openly

in Jordan. The guerrillas were also able to establish their control over the PLO, with Fatah leader Yassir Arafat being elected PLO chairman in February 1969.

A revolutionary nationalist movement

In the meantime, the PLO had been transformed from an office in Cairo functioning under the direction of a capitalist government, to a mass organization based in the Palestinian refugee camps. The various guerrilla organizations functioning under the umbrella of the PLO organized educational programs, newspapers, political discussion groups, health care, and other aspects of life in the refugee camps.

This transformation was a fundamental one. There was a *class difference* between the PLO as a mass movement of the oppressed Palestinian people and the creature of the Egyptian government that had existed previously.

This development was not something peculiar to the Palestinian struggle, but an example of a more general phenomenon in the oppressed nations — one that Lenin pointed to in his report on the national and colonial questions at the Second Congress of the Communist International, held in 1920. He noted that it was necessary to distinguish between bourgeois and revolutionary nationalist movements in the oppressed countries. Experience had shown, Lenin said, that the bourgeoisie in these countries would generally join forces with the imperialists against "all revolutionary movements and revolutionary classes."

What was decisive, in Lenin's view, was the attitude of the national movements in the oppressed countries toward the organization and mobilization of the masses. An effective struggle for the rights of the oppressed nation can only be carried out by relying on the toiling masses. Lenin proposed that national movements that do not stand in the way "of educating and organizing in a revolutionary spirit the peasantry and the masses of the exploited" be called "national revolutionary."

Such revolutionary nationalist movements, Lenin explained, are not communist, but they deserve the support of communists because they help to mobilize the toilers of the oppressed nations against imperialism.

Since World War II and the huge upsurge of anticolonial struggle that followed it, there has been a mushrooming of revolutionary nationalist organizations, such as those that led the independence struggles in Angola, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe. Others that are familiar today include the Polisario Front in the Western Sahara and the South West Africa People's Organisation in Namibia.

The July 26 organization in Cuba originated as a revolutionary nationalist organization that was based largely on petty-bourgeois, and even some bourgeois, forces. In the course of the struggle that led to the 1959 victory and under the impact of the subsequent revolutionary mobilizations of the Cuban workers and peasants which it encouraged, the July 26 Movement went through an evolution. It became clear that the struggle for national liberation could only be carried out consistently and to the end under the leadership of the working class, and as part of an anticapitalist social revolution. The central leadership of the July 26 Movement maintained its commitment to the democratic demands it had started out fighting for, and in the process became the nucleus of Cuba's revolutionary Marxist vanguard, the Communist Party.

The experience of the Cuban revolution and the internationalism of the Cuban CP leadership won a broad layer of national liberation fighters in Latin America to a communist perspective. In Nicaragua and Grenada today, the Sandinista National Liberation Front and the New Jewel Movement, while in the forefront of the struggle for national liberation, are not revolutionary nationalist movements. They are Marxist proletarian parties.

In the case of the PLO, the group's parliament in exile, the Palestine National Council, includes many prominent Palestinians from around the world, including some individual capitalists. But it is the guerrilla organizations, based on the masses in the refugee camps, that have the decisive say in the PLO's leadership councils.

Guerrilla organizations such as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Democratic Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine declare their support for socialism. Al Saiqa and the Arab Liberation Front follow the lead of the Syrian and Iraqi regimes, respectively. Fatah, by far the largest group, describes itself as a national liberation movement.

Arafat described the approach taken by Fatah in an interview with *New York Times* correspondent Dana Adams Schmidt that appeared Dec. 3, 1968.

"Our ideological theory is very simple," Arafat said. "Our country has been occupied. The majority of our people have been kicked out by Zionism and imperialism from their homes."

"We have waited and waited and waited for the justice of the United Nations, for the justice of the world and the governments gathering in the United Nations while our people were suffering in tents and caves. But nothing of this was realized. None of our hopes. But our dispersion was aggravated."

"We have believed that the only way to return to our homes and land is the armed struggle. We believe in this theory without any complications and with complete clarity, and this is our aim and our hope."

"We believe that resistance is a legal right of all oppressed peoples."

Responding to another question from Schmidt, Arafat replied: "We are not against the Jews."

"We welcome with sincerity all the Jews who would like to live with us in sincerity in an Arab state as citizens having equal rights before the law and constitution."

These basic positions — the right of the Palestinian people to return to their homeland, the establishment of a democratic, secular Palestine where both Arabs and Jews could live, and the need to carry out an independent armed struggle for these goals — have been upheld by the PLO to this day.

SWP's view of PLO

The political approach of the Socialist Workers Party is not to single out those in the PLO who call themselves socialist and counterpose them to those who don't. The PLO as a whole is a revolutionary nationalist movement, and it should be supported on that basis.

This approach by communists to movements of oppressed nations was spelled out in the 1940 resolution of the Fourth International referred to earlier in this article. The resolution explained:

"Nationalism in the West is a tool of capitalist power, a weapon used to pit exploited peoples against each other in wars fought by military and economic means for exclusively capitalist interests. But in the backward, subject countries of the East, the nationalist movements form an integral part of the struggle against world imperialism. As such they must be supported to the fullest possible extent by the working class of the entire Western world."

In keeping with this approach, the Socialist Workers Party adopted a resolution on "Israel and the Arab Revolution" at its August 1971 convention. The resolution stated:

"The Socialist Workers Party gives unconditional support to the national liberation struggles of the Arab peoples against imperialism, that is, we support all these struggles regardless of their current leaderships."

Israel, the resolution noted, "could be set up in the Arab East only at the expense of the indigenous peoples of the area. Such a state could come into existence and maintain itself only by relying upon imperialism. Israel is a settler-colonialist and expansionist capitalist state maintained principally by American imperialism. . . . It is an imperialist beachhead in the Arab world that serves as the spearhead of imperialism's fight against the Arab revolution. We unconditionally support the struggles of the Arab peoples against the state of Israel."

As the principal victims of the creation of Israel, the Palestinians have borne the brunt of the battle against the Zionist state. "The struggle of the Palestinian people against their oppression and for self-determination," the resolution said, "has taken the form of a struggle to destroy the state of Israel. The currently expressed goal of this struggle is the establishment of a democratic, secular Palestine. We give unconditional support to this struggle of the Palestinians for self-determination."

A democratic, secular Palestine

Usually, struggles for self-determination take the form of the oppressed nationality demanding the right to separate from the oppressor nation and form its own independent state, as today in Puerto Rico, Quebec, or British-occupied Ireland. In South Africa, the struggle for self-determination takes the form of the struggle for the rule of the Black majority.

Palestine presents still another variant. There, national oppression was carried out by the establishment of a colonial settler-state through the forcible partition of the country and the expulsion of much of its native population.

As Yasser Arafat noted when he spoke before the UN General Assembly in 1974: "This General Assembly, early in its history [1947], approved a recommendation to partition our Palestinian homeland. . . . The General Assembly partitioned that which it had no right to divide — an indivisible homeland."

"Furthermore, even though the partition resolution granted the colonial settlers 54 percent of the land of Palestine, their dissatisfaction with the decision prompted them to wage a war of terror against the civilian Arab population. They occupied 81 percent of the total area of Palestine, uprooting a million Arabs."

The demand for a democratic, secular Palestine arose out of this specific history. It flows from the reality that the Israeli state is antidemocratic, since it denies the rights of the majority of the country's original inhabitants and prevents them from determining or even participating in its future.

The PLO calls for a secular state in opposition to the state of Israel, where Jews, by virtue of their religion, are granted rights that are denied to Christians and Muslims. Jewish religious law bears down heavily on Israeli life, regulating everything from marriage to public transporta-



Palestinians forced off their land by Zionist state have lived as refugees for decades. Many have been repeatedly forced to move by new Israeli attacks.

tion. The fight for separation of church and state has been part of the program of democratic revolutions for more than 200 years.

Finally, the demand for a unitary Palestinian state addresses the forcible partition of "an indivisible homeland."

The class character of the social system that would be established is left open by the slogan of a democratic, secular Palestine. There are forces inside the PLO that favor the establishment of a capitalist Palestine, others that favor a socialist Palestine, and still others that are unclear on the question. But it would be the height of ultra-left sectarianism to oppose the demand for a democratic, secular Palestine for this reason.

At the same time, Marxists do not advocate the establishment of a capitalist state. For revolutionary socialists, the demand for a democratic, secular Palestine is a key demand for the mobilization of the toiling masses on the road to the establishment of a workers and farmers government in Palestine — a government that would lead the workers and peasants in the expropriation of the capitalists and landlords and the establishment of a workers state.

The struggle of the Palestinians for the democratic right to self-determination is thus an essential part of the program for social revolution in the Middle East.

What is self-determination?

The principle of self-determination means that an oppressed people has the right to choose whatever state forms it decides are necessary to end its oppression. To reverse their oppression, the Palestinians demand the dismantling of the colonial settler-state that took over their land, the right of the refugees to return, and the establishment of a united Palestine.

Any demand that the oppressor nationality have veto-power over the choice of the oppressed guts the demand for self-determination. This is the unilateral and unconditional right of an oppressed people.

Most political tendencies in the workers movement that claim to stand for the rights of oppressed peoples are opposed to the demand for a democratic, secular Palestine. Instead, they support the partition of Palestine between the two peoples living there.

Former Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev, for example, put forward a six-point proposal for a Middle East settlement this September. The proposal argued that "peace must be established between the Arab states and Israel. And this means that all sides in the conflict, including Israel and the Palestinian state, must commit themselves to mutually respecting each other's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity."

In keeping with this position, the Communist Party of Israel supports the maintenance of the Israeli state, as does the U.S. Communist Party, which has actively polemicized against the demand for a democratic, secular Palestine.

A similar stance is taken by the Socialist International, which numbers the Israeli Labor Party — the capitalist party that governed Israel until 1977 — among its members.

Shortly after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) passed a resolution saying:

"We continue to call for negotiations based on the right of self-determination for the Palestinian people through its own elected representatives and on the right of the state of Israel to a secure existence."

But self-determination for the Palestinians means the dismantling of the Israeli state and its racist institutions. How can the Palestinians exercise their right to self-determination if they are not allowed to return to their land? Yet if the Palestinians do return, and are accorded their full rights, then, as the Israelis themselves point out, it would mean the end of Israel as a separate Jewish state.

The real political position of the U.S. social democrats was made clear in the last point of their resolution. There they rejected participation in protests against the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and the murder of Palestinian protesters in the occupied territories except "under circumstances where our support for both Palestinian self-determination and the right of Israel to a secure existence is made clear." (Emphasis in original.)

Thus, for the DSA, support to the maintenance of the Israeli state is fundamental, taking precedence over the struggle of the Palestinians. This was shown in practice by the fact that the DSA refused to support the teach-ins and demonstrations against the Israeli invasion of Lebanon.

The 'Israel exists' argument

Defenders of the Israeli state use three key arguments in rejecting the demands of the Palestinians. First and most important is the argument of brute force.

Israel, we are told, exists. The big majority of Israeli Jews support its existence, as does the U.S. government. And the Israeli rulers have the military power to overcome any challenge from the Arab peoples. If the Arabs are smart, they had better recognize reality and negotiate with Israel for the best deal they can get.

This is the essence of Reagan's Mideast "peace" plan, which rests on the foundation of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon.

A good example of how this approach is presented in practice was an article by liberal columnist Anthony Lewis in the November 1 issue of the *New York Times*.

Lewis described how the Israeli regime is moving rapidly ahead with its de facto annexation of the West Bank. He put part of the blame for the Israeli land-grab on Arab leaders who, he claimed, "have maneuvered for years, avoiding negotiation. But unless they move now — unless they accept the fact of Israel and talk about ways to secure the rights of Palestinians in accommodation with that fact — there will be nothing left to negotiate."

Lewis talks about "facts" — above all, "the fact of Israel." But the simple truth is that the national oppression of the Palestinian people cannot be ended as long as the Israeli state is maintained. Just as there will be no peace in southern Africa as long as a racist, white-minority regime rules there, the Middle East will have no peace so long as the Israeli colonial settler-state continues to exist. That, too, is a fact.

The real alternatives were revealed by the war in Lebanon. Nothing short of actual genocide will stop the struggle of the Palestinian people for self-determination.

When does self-determination apply?

Since the "Israel exists" argument is, at bottom, merely an appeal to force, a waving of the big stick, it is generally mixed together with two ideological justifications for support to Israel. First is an appeal to the right of self-determination in the abstract.

According to this line of argument, the Jewish people, after being oppressed throughout the world, have a right to self-determination. The establishment of the Israeli state was the realization of that right. Because of the historical oppression of the Jews, their right to maintain the Israeli state supersedes the national rights of the Palestinian Arabs.

Another, more left-sounding version of this argument asserts that the national demands of both the Palestinians and the Israeli Jews are legitimate, or even that the demands of the Palestinians should take precedence, since they are oppressed by the Israeli state. Nonetheless, the argument continues, isn't it necessary to guarantee the Jews self-determination within the framework of a future democratic and secular Palestine? Isn't that the only way that Jewish workers inside Israel can be won to the fight for Palestinian national rights and social justice?

All variants of this argument mix together the plight of the Jews elsewhere in the world, who do face discrimination and oppression, and the situation of Jews in Israel, who are the dominant nationality in a state that oppresses the Palestinians. As we've seen, the right to self-determination

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nation means the right to form a separate state. The Israeli Jews already have a separate state — one constructed on the homeland of an expelled people, the Palestinians. That's the *source* of the problem, not one possible solution.

To demand self-determination for an oppressor nationality robs the concept of its democratic content. There is nothing progressive about the demand for self-determination in the abstract. It is a progressive demand insofar as it helps to mobilize an oppressed people against its oppression and the workers of the oppressor nationality against their own ruling class. Support by the toilers of an oppressor nationality for the right to self-determination of the oppressed lays the basis for an internationalist alliance between the working people of both nations.

Thus, self-determination for South African Blacks is progressive. The demand for self-determination of South African whites is reactionary. White working people in South Africa can fight effectively for progress and the interests of their class only if they unconditionally support the struggle of the Black majority for self-determination.

Similarly, in the United States the Socialist Workers Party stands for the right of the oppressed Black and Chicano nationalities to self-determination. This includes the right to set up their own separate states, if they so choose. But proletarian revolutionists are against whites having the right to set up a "white state" in North America. There could be only one political content to such a state. Like the demand for "white power" or "white rights" today, its purpose would be to perpetuate the oppression of Black, brown, yellow, and non-English speaking peoples, not to liberate whites.

In the case of Israel, the demagogic claim that Zionism is the national liberation movement of the Jewish people cannot hide its reactionary political content. A political movement that fights as part of the world imperialist system, and whose aim is to perpetuate the oppression of another people, is the opposite of a national liberation struggle. It is also an obstacle to the fight against anti-Semitism, which can only be waged and won in alliance with the workers and toilers of the world in their struggle against imperialist oppression and capitalist exploitation.

Specter of future oppression

A third argument raised in behalf of the Israeli state is that however much one may disagree with its present policies or the manner of its creation, Israel must be supported against the Arabs because its destruction would result in genocide, mass expulsion, or the oppression of the Jews currently living there.

At bottom, this is the same argument that was used against the Vietnamese revolution when Richard Nixon warned that there would be a "bloodbath" if the revolutionary forces triumphed.

Similar dire warnings about the fate of European settlers if the "natives" took over were raised by the French during the Algerian revolution and by the white-minority regime in Rhodesia. The same line is used today by the racist rulers in South Africa.

In every case it has been the imperialists and the imperialist-backed colonial settlers who have been responsible for the vast bulk of bloodshed and killing in these struggles. The criminals then turn around and accuse their victims. Psychologists call this process projection — the attribution of one's own motives and actions to others.

There is no reason whatsoever to suppose that the Palestinian people will institute a system of national oppression against the Jews. This would be contrary to everything that their leaders and organizations have stood for for the past 15 years, and contrary to the experience of national liberation struggles everywhere else in the world. There is a very simple reason for this — it is not in the interests of the oppressed to impose a system of national oppression.

Under the excuse of opposing a fake and nonexistent national oppression, the defenders of the Israeli state support the actual oppression of the Palestinian people taking place right now. This oppression is not reflected just in the refugee camps of Lebanon and Jordan, but inside Israel as well.

Per capita income of Palestinians inside Israel's pre-1967 borders averages less than half that of Jews. In 1973, while 25 percent of the Arab population in Israel lived in housing with four or more persons in one room, the corresponding figure for the Jewish population was 1.5 percent.

Infant mortality for Jews in Israel was 13.9 per thousand in 1977, compared to 31.1 per thousand for Palestinians. This is a far greater gap than exists even between whites and Blacks in the United States.

Similar figures could be provided in every other field, from education to employment.

Experience shows that historical patterns of oppression do not go away merely by the declaration, or even enforcement, of formal equality, even after a victorious revolution. A conscious policy of preferential treatment for oppressed nationalities — affirmative action — must



Palestinian women protest Israeli Independence Day parade in Jerusalem, April 25, 1968. Palestinian resistance in Israeli-occupied territories has continued since invasion of Lebanon.

be followed if the legacy of national oppression is to be overcome.

Lenin explained this in his 1922 notes on "The Question of Nationalities or 'Autonomisation.'" "Internationalism on the part of oppressors . . . must consist not only in the observance of formal equality of nations," he said, "but even in an inequality of the oppressor nation, the great nation, that must make up for the inequality which obtains in actual practice. Anybody who does not understand this has not grasped the real proletarian attitude to the national question, he is still essentially petty bourgeois in his point of view and is, therefore, sure to descend to the bourgeois point of view."

This also applies to Israel. Abolition of the racist institutions that make up the Zionist state would not, by itself, eliminate the inferior position of the Palestinian people in housing, education, health care, employment, etc. Guarantees for the oppressed nationality, including preferential treatment to eliminate the vestiges of inequality, would be necessary. That is the revolutionary working-class program on the national question in Israel.

Any idea that the Israeli Jews — the oppressor nationality — need to be guaranteed self-determination, as Lenin explained, can only lead to the bourgeois point of view, in this case, support for the Zionist state.

Zionist slanders

Although there is nothing in the program and actions of the Palestinian liberation organizations to support the idea that they want to annihilate or oppress the Jewish people, that doesn't stop those who oppose the Palestinian struggle from leveling this slander. Take the example of a September 29 speech given by DSA National Executive Committee member Irving Howe.

According to the account of Howe's speech in the October 1982 issue of the New York DSA publication *Democratic Socialist*, "The conflict in the Middle East involves two rights, Howe argued, but those on one side have pledged annihilation of the other side consistently."

Furthermore, the report said, "All the efforts to compromise were rejected and Arab leaders from 1948 onward clung to the aim proclaimed by Nasser 'to drive the Israelis into the sea.'"

By attributing the "drive the Israelis into the sea" slogan to Nasser, Howe tries to justify Israel's 1967 war of aggression against Egypt. But leaving that question aside, the fact is that the leadership of the Palestinian liberation movement not only rejected calls for the annihilation of the Israeli Jews, but also carried out a public political fight within the Arab world on precisely this issue. Palestinian youth in the refugee camps are educated by the PLO to understand that imperialism and Zionism, not Jews, are their enemy.

Real position of Palestinians

This position has been explained clearly by the major guerrilla organizations in the PLO. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, for example, said in a document prepared for its Second Congress in February 1969:

"The Palestinian liberation movement is not a racial movement with aggressive intentions against the Jews. It is not directed against the Jews. Its object is to destroy the state of Israel as a military, political, and economic establishment which rests on aggression, expansion and organic connection with imperialist interests in our homeland. . . . The aim of the Palestinian liberation movement is to establish a democratic national state in Palestine in which both Arabs and Jews will live as citizens with equal rights and obligations. . . ."

In an official statement published in Beirut in 1969, the Democratic Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine put forward its theses for "A Democratic Solution to the Palestine Question." It called for:

"Rejection of the chauvinistic solutions of some Palestinians and Arabs, which were put forward before and after June 1967, and based on slaughtering the Jews and throwing them into the sea. . . ."

"The establishment of a people's democratic Palestinian state in which the Arabs and (Israeli) Jews will live without any discrimination whatsoever . . . and which gives both Arabs and (Israeli) Jews the right to develop their national culture."

Similarly, in an interview in the January 1969 issue of *Tricontinental* magazine (which is also published in Arabic), Fatah leader Yassir Arafat stressed:

"We have not taken up arms to force two million Jews into the sea or to wage a religious or racial war. . . . We are a national liberation movement which is struggling just like the fighters of Vietnam, Bolivia, or any other people of the world. . . ."

If Howe had taken the trouble to read Arafat's speech to the United Nations General Assembly in November 1974 — a speech that was published in the *New York Times* and broadcast live throughout the Arab world — he would have heard this position reiterated.

In that speech, Arafat said that "if the immigration of Jews to Palestine had had as its objective the goal of enabling them to live side by side with us, enjoying the same rights and assuming the same duties, we would have opened our doors to them as far as our homeland's capacity for absorption permitted. . . ."

"But that the goal of this immigration should be to usurp our homeland, disperse our people and turn us into second-class citizens — this is what no one can conceivably demand that we acquiesce in or submit to."

Arafat further declared that "we deplore all those crimes committed against the Jews; we also deplore all the real discrimination suffered by them because of their faith. . . ."

"In my formal capacity as chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization and as leader of the Palestinian revolution, I proclaim before you that when we speak of our common hopes for the Palestine of tomorrow we include in our perspective all Jews now living in Palestine who choose to live with us there in peace and without discrimination. . . ."

"I call upon Jews one by one to turn away from the illusory promises made to them by Zionist ideology and Israeli leadership. Those offer Jews perpetual bloodshed, endless war and continuous thralldom. . . ."

"We offer them the most generous solution that we might live together in a framework of just peace in our democratic Palestine."

Real interests of Jewish people

As Arafat and other PLO leaders have repeatedly explained, the real issue in the Middle East is not whether or not the Israeli Jews can live there, but whether they have the right to dispossess and oppress another people. And as Arafat also explained, the oppression of the Palestinians is not in the real interests of the Jewish people.

This point was also taken up by the SWP's 1971 resolution on the Middle East. Like the PLO, the SWP advocates full civil, cultural, and religious rights for Israeli Jews within the framework of a democratic Palestine.

"The source of the oppression of the Jewish people in this era is the capitalist system, which in its period of decay carries all forms of racist oppression to the most barbarous extremes," the SWP's 1971 resolution said.

Moreover, "The struggle against anti-Semitism and the oppression of Jews is part of the struggle to abolish all forms of racism and national oppression. This struggle can be fully and finally won only in alliance with all the oppressed of the world. . . ."

"The imperialists and Zionists to the contrary, the basic interests of the Jewish masses of Israel reside in alliance with the Palestinian liberation struggle and support of the goal of a democratic Palestine. We have incessantly warned Jews throughout the world: Zionism leads you into conflict with your potential allies — the oppressed of the world — and has led you to ally with your worst enemy, imperialism. Imperialism in its death agony has already led to one holocaust against European Jewry; it can inflict similar catastrophes again unless it is overthrown in time by the mass force of the socialist revolution."

Not just an end to anti-Semitism, but also the national liberation of the Palestinian people, the SWP resolution explained, cannot be attained under the political leadership of the capitalist class. The capitalist rulers in the Arab countries fear that the mobilization of the masses around democratic demands such as self-determination for the Palestinians will spill over to other social questions in the region and within their own borders. Therefore, they seek to limit, suppress, and divert such democratic struggles.

Only the working class, at the head of all the toiling

masses, especially the peasantry, can fight effectively for democratic tasks such as an end to national oppression. That is why a consistent struggle for national liberation in the Middle East points toward the establishment of workers and peasants governments through revolutions against the imperialists — in particular the Israeli imperialists — and the Arab capitalists.

At the same time, democratic and anti-imperialist demands are central to the struggle of the workers and peasants for political power in these countries. The Palestinian struggle confirms this lesson from the history of revolutions in the colonial world in this century.

Pressures on the Egyptian regime

From the point of view of the capitalist rulers in the Arab countries, the Palestinian liberation movement represented a deadly threat because it pushed them into confrontation with the Israeli state, and thus with imperialism. Such confrontations caused the masses of these countries to demand effective military mobilization, the distribution of arms and military training, stronger steps against imperialist economic interests, the dismissal of corrupt and incompetent officials, and other measures. As the capitalist rulers demonstrated their inability to carry out an effective fight against imperialist domination, the struggle of the Palestinians began to destabilize Arab governments.

There was even pressure on the government in Egypt, where Nasser's anti-imperialist credentials were far stronger than those of King Hussein or the Lebanese rulers, and where the direct presence of the Palestinian refugee population was much smaller than in any of the other countries bordering Israel.

Thus, in February 1968, students and workers staged six days of demonstrations in Helwan, Cairo, Alexandria, Assiut, Tanta, and other major Egyptian cities. They were protesting light sentences meted out to air force commanders accused of negligence in the June 1967 disaster.

"The Israelis are practically at the gates of our main cities," one student declared, according to a report in the March 2, 1968, *Christian Science Monitor*, "and yet one group of overfed military men tries another group when they should all be on trial. What a mockery."

Beginning in October 1968, the Israeli regime initiated a policy of air raids, commando attacks, and artillery bombardment against Egyptian cities, which continued into 1970.

In March 1969, hundreds of thousands of people turned out in a spontaneous demonstration in Cairo on the occasion of the funeral of the Egyptian chief of staff, who was killed in an Israeli artillery barrage. "Give us guns!" they cried, and "Revenge, Revenge, O Gamal [Nasser]!"

Hundreds of thousands demonstrated once again in February 1970 after Israeli warplanes dropped napalm and fragmentation bombs on a factory outside of Cairo, killing 70 workers and wounding 90 more.

Radicalization in Lebanon

But it was in Lebanon and Jordan that the rise of the Palestinian resistance and Israel's brutal response had the greatest impact. In December 1968 Israeli commandos began the raids on Lebanon that have lasted up until this day with an attack on Beirut International Airport and the destruction of 13 aircraft.

Mindful of the anger among Lebanese citizens over the lack of resistance to the Israeli assault, the government banned all demonstrations and threatened to use the army against any that might be attempted. Nevertheless, on Jan. 4, 1969, some 25,000 students began a strike in Beirut. They demanded the introduction of universal conscription and the arming of frontier villages against Israel, punishment of those responsible for the lack of military defense against the Israelis, and the removal of restrictions against Palestinian organizations operating from Lebanon.

The uproar over the Israeli raid resulted in the resignation of the Lebanese cabinet.

Clashes between Palestinian forces and Lebanese troops in March and April 1969, after the army attempted to prevent the guerrillas from operating in southern Lebanon, led to a new crisis. Big demonstrations in support of the Palestinian fighters took place in Beirut, Saida, Tyre, Tripoli, Baalbek and Nabatiye. At least a dozen people were killed when police opened fire on demonstrators, and the government declared a state of emergency.

An editorial in the April 26, 1969, *New York Times* complained: "The resignation of Lebanon's Premier after clashes between Palestinian refugees and Lebanese troops constitutes another ominous manifestation of the emergence of the Palestinians as a militant, radical force in Middle East politics."

"Although they total only about 10 per cent of the Lebanese population, the Palestinians have gained widespread support for their cause among the Lebanese people."

"Jordan's King Hussein is at least equally threatened by Palestinians who make up nearly half [actually a majority — D.F.] of his subjects. Hussein has managed



Israeli aggression and repression has resulted in growth of a mass movement for national liberation among Palestinian people. Above, Palestinian children in PLO youth group in Lebanon.

to coexist with his Palestinians by giving their guerrilla forces practically free rein in his country."

The *Times* editors concluded by warning against a "grim development": "The Palestinian militants are bent on converting the entire Arab world into one big guerrilla camp dedicated to uncompromising struggle with Israel."

October 1969 confrontation

Further attacks by Lebanese government forces against the Palestinians took place in May, and reached a climax in October 1969 when two weeks of fighting brought Lebanon to the brink of civil war. Fatah passed out arms to the population in the Muslim quarter of West Beirut. In Tripoli, according to an Oct. 26, 1969, dispatch by *New York Times* correspondent Eric Pace, "the authorities today let armed leftist dissidents hold sway over neighborhoods containing 100,000 people — a third of the city's population."

At the same time, the guerrilla organizations were able to take control of the Palestinian refugee camps. An agreement signed in Cairo on Nov. 3, 1969, recognized the right of the refugee camps to administer their own affairs, and also the right of the PLO to maintain bases in southern Lebanon and carry out attacks against Israel from there.

From the beginning, the struggle waged by the PLO in Lebanon was closely tied to the social conflict between the workers and poor peasantry there and the country's ruling landlords and capitalists. The Palestinian movement was seen as the ally of all the progressive forces in Lebanese society, and its struggle changed the relationship of forces in Lebanon as a whole to the advantage of the working class.

An indication of this new relationship of forces came in August 1970, when the Lebanese government legalized the Communist Party and the Baath Socialist Party, along with the Arab Nationalist Movement, the parent-organization of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

U.S. pressure in Jordan

But after the big battles of 1969, 1970 was relatively quiet in Lebanon. The focus shifted to Jordan, where in February 1970, one day after meeting with the U.S. ambassador in Amman, King Hussein put his forces on alert.

Following a royal ultimatum to the guerrillas, Hussein's troops began erecting roadblocks around Amman. Two days of fighting followed. Although Hussein backed off, it was clear to all that tensions were reaching the boiling point, and the standoff was only temporary.

A new round of fighting broke out in June, after the Jordanian army attacked a unit of guerrillas from the Democratic Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

Hussein had apparently hoped that an attack on one of the smaller guerrilla organizations would not be answered in a united way, but he was proved wrong. The king was forced to retreat once again after five days of fighting.

In the meantime, however, pressure was coming from another direction. U.S. Secretary of State William Rogers had announced a plan for a Mideast settlement in December 1969. Like the Reagan proposal today, it held out the bait of Israeli withdrawal from some of the occupied territories in return for Arab recognition of the Israeli state.

When King Hussein announced his support for the Rogers Plan on July 26, 1970, U.S. officials responded

that his first step must be to assert control over the Palestinian guerrillas.

Nasser had already accepted the Rogers Plan and closed down the PLO's broadcasting center in Cairo. The PLO's refusal to back the U.S.-proposed plan set the stage for a decisive confrontation in Jordan.

Imperialist press campaign

Part of the pressure against the PLO in this period was an imperialist press campaign aimed at splitting the Palestinian national liberation movement. Then, as now, articles appeared in the imperialist press that were calculated to fan suspicions within the PLO and among its supporters worldwide. In particular, the campaign sought to play off the "moderate" Arafat against other sectors of the Palestinian movement.

For example, Dana Adams Schmidt wrote in the June 14, 1970, *New York Times* that "if Mr. Arafat decides to cooperate with the King, as he seems personally to desire, an alliance of the Army and Fatah could suppress P.F.L.P. and guarantee the King's future, at least for a while. Lacking the P.F.L.P.'s ideological hangups, Mr. Arafat is understood to favor the monarchy as a compliant framework within which the commandos can carry out their campaign against Israel."

Of course, the idea that Arafat or any other PLO leader viewed the Jordanian monarchy as "a compliant framework" for the activity of the Palestinian movement is laughable. When Fatah guerrillas began carrying out their attacks against Israel in 1965, they had to contend with Jordanian border guards as well as the Israeli army. Prior to the 1967 war there were 408 Palestinian guerrillas in Hussein's prisons. After the 1967 war, the PLO had to fight pitched battles against the Jordanian army to win its right to operate openly in Jordan, and at the time of Schmidt's article it had just come through another such battle.

But Schmidt's drivel is no different from the kind of stuff being written today about how Arafat has already decided to accept the Reagan plan and is just trying to figure out how to sell it.

PLO maneuvers for time

The stance of the PLO leadership in Jordan and Lebanon — and it was a prudent one — was to avoid confrontation with the government, while continuing to build up the strength of the independent Palestinian mass movement and its ties with the working people in these countries.

Arafat, in a June 1968 interview with the magazine *Jeune Afrique*, declared: "Since there is no interference on our part in the internal affairs of the Arab countries, where we have no ambitions; since we have a common objective with the Arab states and peoples, which is principally ending the Israeli occupation; we do not see why there should be any conflict between us."

Similarly, Fatah leader Abu Omar explained in an interview that appeared in the June 14, 1970, *New York Times*: "Our policy is not to interfere in the affairs of Jordan. The only condition is that the Government should not interfere in our affairs to organize and arm ourselves. The only government we aspire to is the government of Palestine."

While insisting, "We do not welcome clashes with the Government," Abu Omar added: "But the Palestinians, who are now a majority of what's left of Jordan, insist on their right to organize, to meet publicly, and to carry arms for the liberation struggle against Israel."

Nobody had any doubt about the implications for Hussein's dictatorship if the Palestinians continued to exercise their democratic rights. Eric Pace described Hussein's capital in mid-1970, saying:

"Once a quiet desert town, Amman is now drenched in fedayeen prose. Commando broadcasts resound from radios everywhere. The strident new newspaper published by Al Fatah, the largest fedayeen group, is eagerly read. Commando leaflets are legion and commando handbills shout silently from hundreds of walls."

At its meeting ending on June 4, 1970, the Palestine National Council had refused to seat the official Jordanian delegation and had recognized an opposition group, the Jordanian National Union. The council also called for the formation of joint committees by the Palestinian and Jordanian people.

Danger of adventurism

But a frontal attack on the Arab governments by the PLO would have been an irresponsible, ultraleft adventure. In Lebanon, and even more in most other Arab countries, the Palestinians were a small minority. Any attempt to substitute the Palestinian national liberation movement for the whole of the working class and its allies would have been a bloody fiasco that could only have ended with the destruction of the PLO.

In the case of Jordan, although the Palestinians were a majority and the PLO was in the leadership of a mass movement, the Palestinian population was by no means unanimous, and the massive Bedouin minority was still

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ied to the monarchy. Meanwhile, Hussein's army, which remained loyal to the king, outnumbered the PLO's forces by nearly 3-to-1, with some 700 tanks and armored cars, compared to none for the guerrillas.

Therefore, the PLO sought to gain time. By declaring its adherence to the principle of nonintervention in the internal affairs of the Arab countries, and by challenging the Arab governments to live up to their verbal support for the Palestinian struggle against Israel, the PLO exposed the unwillingness of these regimes to confront imperialism. At the same time, the PLO made it as difficult as possible for the Arab governments to take action against the Palestinian movement.

Time finally ran out for the Palestinian fighters in Jordan in September 1970. On September 16 Hussein proclaimed martial law and demanded that the guerrillas turn in their arms. The next day his army opened up full-scale assaults on Palestinian refugee camps and commando offices throughout the country.

People's committees in Irbid

Hussein's assault did not take the Palestinians by surprise. It had been expected for months, and on September 14 Arafat told a group of Arab ambassadors in Amman: "Gentlemen, please inform your governments that King Hussein has deliberately prepared a detailed plan which must culminate in a blood bath. I have irrefutable evidence that he intends to liquidate the Palestinian resistance fighters. I presume that your governments cannot or will not wish to do anything for us. But I insist on informing you of this matter so that you cannot one day wash your hands of all responsibility." (*Le Monde*, Sept. 17, 1970.)

The PLO leadership called for a general strike and other forms of mass opposition to the government. In Irbid, Jordan's third-largest city, the PLO organized popular committees and began fortifying the city a few days before Hussein's declaration of martial law.

According to a report by Loren Jenkins in the Sept. 28, 1970, issue of *Newsweek*, "To replace the city administration, the commandos set up on every street 'people's committees,' which in turn elected members to larger district committees. These groups, composed of commando commissars as well as leading residents of Irbid who support the Palestinian cause, held evening meetings to discuss such matters as the future organization of the city and preparations for its defense."

Some of the work that had preceded the establishment of what *Newsweek* called the "Irbid Soviet" was described by A. Yoldachs in the Sept. 28, 1970, issue of the French revolutionary socialist weekly *Rouge*. According to Yoldachs:

"There was a campaign for building shelters to defend the population against the daily bombings to which the Israeli army subjected the city for a long period. There was a literacy campaign. Palestinian militants worked in the union federations. There was a training program involving the creation of craft workshops (the craft sector absorbs essentially women and young high school students)."

Defeat in Jordan

But the decisive battle was fought in Amman, and there the Palestinians were unable to carry the day against the heavy weapons of Hussein's army. As AP correspondent Alex Efty described in the Sept. 25, 1970, issue of *Le Monde*:

"After six days of fighting, it is rare to find an undamaged house; certain neighborhoods have been pulverized by artillery, especially the vast refugee camps in the outlying districts where thousands of Palestinians live cramped up as many as a dozen to a room."

Arthur Chesworth reported in the Sept. 24, 1970, *Washington Post*: "Two-thirds of a once proud royal capital of 600,000 has been utterly destroyed. . . .

"The commandos say that at least 8000 Palestinians have died and that their total casualties number tens of thousands."

Although the Palestinian forces still controlled sections of Amman, as well as the cities of Irbid, Ramtha, and Jerash when a cease-fire was agreed to 10 days after the eruption of the civil war, Hussein had proved that his forces held the balance of power. The Jordanian army was able to move step by step, driving the Palestinian guerrillas out of one position after another, until another all-out attack forced the PLO out of Jordan altogether in July 1971.

Abu Omar, in an interview with *Intercontinental Press* that appeared in its Nov. 22, 1971, issue, commented on some of the conclusions drawn by the PLO leadership following the defeat in Jordan.

"We have learned some lessons from our experience in Jordan and have not adopted too defiant a stance vis-a-vis the Lebanese government that might lead to confrontations that we might not be able to handle," Abu Omar explained.

In regard to Syria, where President Hafez al-Assad had

come to power in November 1970, right after the defeat in Jordan, the PLO leader said, "The present regime is not as enthusiastic about the people's war slogan as the previous one. . . .

"I think it is quite natural given the type of regime, which is based mostly on the bureaucracy and the military, with a very weak mass party.

"Most of our forces are in Syria at the present time, not secretly but at open bases. This means that we cannot but take Syrian attitudes and policy into account. We are quite vulnerable in our presence in Syria."

Attitude to Jordanian regime

Speaking of the need to engage in diplomatic activity involving the various Arab regimes, Abu Omar noted, "There are powers that exist around us, influence us. We cannot define them out of existence. We have to take them into account, even though our main dependence is on our internal resources and the mass support that we might have."

When asked about the stance of the PLO toward the Jordanian regime, Abu Omar explained:

"I think there is really no disagreement in the resistance movement about the nature of the Jordanian regime. There is disagreement about how things are put forth — the kind of slogans."

In this regard, Abu Omar added, "The question is not whether one wants [Hussein] or not, but what slogans to use; what public pronouncements do you make — the PLO and Fatah, for example, have tended to emphasize moderate slogans, rather than big slogans.

"We want freedom of action. We know very well we cannot have freedom of action, except if we get a democratic national government.

"The problem is the level of activity that we need to bring down the regime and to create a political organization among the Jordanian masses and establish some sort of Jordanian-Palestinian framework or a national front."

In general, Abu Omar commented, "The more the movement of the masses is weakened around us, the more vulnerable we are."

Polarization in Lebanon

The defeat in Jordan had a big impact throughout the rest of the Arab countries. Nevertheless, despite regular Israeli attacks on southern Lebanon and frequent clashes with the Lebanese army and police, the PLO was able to maintain its presence in Lebanon.

A major attempt to wipe out the PLO was carried out by the Lebanese army in May 1973. It followed an Israeli terror raid on Beirut in which scores of people, including three PLO leaders, were killed. As in the December 1968 raid on the Beirut airport, the lack of government response to the Israeli outrage brought big protests. On April 12, the funeral for the slain PLO leaders drew as many as 300,000 people into the streets of Beirut in what became probably the largest antigovernment demonstration in Lebanon's recent history.

Continuing protests against the government were answered with an attack by the Lebanese army against Palestinian refugee camps. Although the army used heavy artillery, and called in the air force as well, it was unable to repeat King Hussein's defeat of the PLO.

For a while, events in Lebanon were overshadowed by the October 1973 Mideast war. But there was no let-up either in the Israeli attacks or in the mounting anger of the population over the government's refusal to take action against the murderous raids.

According to a dispatch by John Cooley in the May 17, 1974, *Christian Science Monitor*, "Lebanon's Council of the South, which tries to help Lebanese refugees from the border area, estimates that nearly half of this region's people have fled their homes in the past year."

Le Monde correspondent Edouard Saab reported from Beirut on May 19, 1974, that "a wave of hatred for Israelis has spread across the country. At the same time, fraternization between the Lebanese and Palestinians has never been more sincere, more spontaneous."

During the latter half of 1974 there were almost daily Israeli attacks on southern Lebanon. Meanwhile, social tensions were intensifying within Lebanon. Christian rightist forces were opposed by a largely Muslim coalition grouping together the PLO, the traditional leadership of the Druse community, the Communist Party, various Arab nationalist parties (Baathists, Nasserists, etc.), and many smaller groups. A majority of the Lebanese people were united in their support for the Palestinian struggle, their desire to eliminate Lebanon's discriminatory political system, and their anger over social inequality and exploitation.

Civil war breaks out

In February 1975, demonstrations broke out in Saida against the government's decision to grant a monopoly

on fishing rights to a newly formed company — one that happened to be headed by Tony Franjeh, the president's son, and Camille Chamoun, a former Lebanese president who was at that time minister of the interior.

Eleven demonstrators were gunned down by the army, provoking an uprising by the Lebanese and Palestinian population, who seized control of the city.

The right-wing Phalangist militia responded to this action on April 13, 1975, by machine-gunning a busload of Palestinians returning from a rally. These proved to be the opening shots in the Lebanese civil war.

If the civil war in Lebanon had been decided according to just the relationship of forces within that country, there seems to be little doubt that the Palestinian-Muslim-leftist coalition would have won the war. As these forces gained ground in the conflict, however, they were opposed by an increasingly active Syrian intervention — a military intervention that had the blessing of Washington, and the tacit agreement of Israel.

The Syrian armed forces were far stronger than those of King Hussein, which had defeated the PLO in Jordan. Acting in conjunction with the rightist forces in the civil war, they had little difficulty in turning the tide of battle. Faced with this unfavorable relationship of forces, the PLO negotiated to try to get the best deal that it could out of the situation.

The result was that the PLO was able to preserve its freedom of action in the south and its autonomy within the major refugee camps. The cities of Tyre, Saida, and large parts of southern and western Lebanon were left in the hands of the Muslim-Palestinian-leftist coalition. The Syrians occupied West Beirut and eastern Lebanon above the Litani River, while the rightist forces were left in control of East Beirut and the traditional Christian strongholds in north-central Lebanon. This de facto partition of the country remained in force until the Israeli invasion in June 1982 rearranged the map.

PLO's activity in Lebanon

The PLO did much more in Lebanon than just fight. It was a social movement that ran schools, vocational training facilities, clinics, and other services for the Palestinian population. It helped organize popular committees, political education, and other activities. Many of these involved sectors of Lebanon's toiling population, as well.

A revealing indication of the PLO's activity in Lebanon during the years leading up to the latest Israeli invasion was given by David Shipler in the July 25, 1982, *New York Times*. Shipler's article, an attack on the Palestinian movement, was titled, "Lebanese Tell of Anguish Of Living Under the P.L.O."

Among the anguished victims interviewed by Shipler was Dr. Ramsey Shabb, whose country estate was occupied by the PLO. Shabb "stopped taking his family there for weekends, staying instead in an apartment he kept in the private hospital he owned in Sidon."

Dolly Raad, an executive for Middle East Airlines, was reduced to keeping her "well-kept Mercedes Benz" locked up in the garage and driving "an old, beat-up Mercedes."

Another heart-wrenching story was told by the wife of a wealthy importer who said that "she protected her luxurious house in the hills outside Nabatiye by never leaving it empty, by never going away on trips, by staying alert to any sign of P.L.O. encroachment."

However, Shipler admitted, "Some in the crowded camps recall the pitifully low wages the citrus-pickers once received in the south, and they credit the P.L.O. with forcing employers to improve the pay. The results were reflected in rising living standards.

"'Conditions improved,' said Sami Masri as he stood amid the rubble of the Rashidiye camp on the outskirts of Tyre. . . .

"'There used to be no electricity here. In all of Rashidiye there were no refrigerators, no automatic washers.' The P.L.O., he said, organized not only military training for the youngsters of the camp, but also soccer teams, chess clubs, Ping-Pong tournaments. A youth recreation center was set up in a concrete building that now lies crushed under the weight of war."

One government official complained to Shipler, "Men repairing roads were supposed to work eight hours a day, but they worked five or six. They would come at 10 and be gone by 4."

"The rank and file of the guerrillas seemed to come from the lowest strata," according to Shipler, who made clear his class bias by accusing "the P.L.O.'s armed muscle" of "a bitter material greed."

Clearly, Shipler doesn't think these people are worthy of sympathy — not like the hospital owner trying to hold onto his country estate, or the airline executive defending her Mercedes-Benz.

During the years that the PLO was fighting arms in hand to defend its existence and to advance the Palestinian

struggle, it was also fighting a political battle to win world public opinion.

Fighting in the diplomatic arena

In 1974, intensive diplomatic activity was in progress, and the possibility of a Geneva conference on the Middle East was being raised. The PLO correctly insisted on its right to speak for the Palestinian people in any Mideast negotiations.

At the same time, the PLO took a step forward by placing more emphasis on the transitional step of an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories. Moreover, it asserted the PLO's right to govern those territories, as opposed to the Jordanian or Egyptian government, or to some kind of puppet authority set up by Israel.

Meeting in Cairo June 1-9, 1974, the Palestine National Council declared, "The PLO will fight by all means at its disposal, by armed struggle in particular, to liberate the territory of Palestine and construct an independent and fighting people's national authority on any part of Palestinian territory that is liberated."

Liberation of the occupied territories was seen as a step in the fight for a democratic, secular Palestine. Points three and four of the 10-point program adopted at the Cairo meeting said in this regard:

"The PLO will fight against any plan or Palestinian entity that would entail recognition of the enemy, conclusion of a peace with it, and the renunciation of our people's historic right to return to their homeland and decide their own future.

"The PLO holds that any measure of liberation is only a step toward the realization of its strategic objective, namely the construction of a democratic Palestinian state in conformity with the resolutions of previous sessions of the Palestine National Council."

Other points in the 1974 program called for continuing the PLO's underground work in Jordan and asserted that the organization would "fight to strengthen its links with the socialist countries and the liberation movements around the world."

Just how successful the PLO was in bringing the cause of the Palestinian people to world attention was shown when Yasser Arafat addressed the UN General Assembly in November 1974. Arafat presented a powerful statement of what the Palestinians are fighting for. The General Assembly had voted by 105 to 4 in October 1974 to recognize the PLO as the "representative of the Palestinian people." Following Arafat's speech, the PLO, against Washington's opposition, won permanent UN observer status. The General Assembly also voted to recognize the right of the Palestinians to independence and sovereignty in Palestine.

PLO's 1981 program

As indicated earlier in this article, the PLO has maintained its basic program for the national liberation of Palestine since the rise of the guerrilla organizations as a mass movement following the June 1967 war. This was clearly reflected in the resolution approved at the April 1981 meeting of the Palestine National Council. At the same time, the PLO has gone through big experiences, broadened its political vision, and responded to new developments around the world.

Thus, the final political statement of the April 1981 national council meeting warned of Washington's "attempts to impose its control and domination on the Arab homeland and the neighbouring areas by various means, in particular the establishment of military bases and the call for the establishment of pacts on the pretext of an alleged Soviet danger."

The meeting "stressed the importance of close alliance between the forces of revolution throughout the world," and in particular "expressed its concern for the unity of the Non-aligned Movement on the basis of its hostility to imperialism, Zionism and racism." It also "affirmed its resolute support for the struggles of the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean area, and condemned the aggressive moves of the American government in that area."

The council's emphasis on mass organization and struggle was also evident in the statement, which "expressed its great pride in the level of struggle attained by the uprising of our people in the occupied homeland." It pointed out in particular:

"The Council laid emphasis on the importance of support for trade unions, students' and women's organizations and all professional associations and municipalities, to enable them to perform their role in consolidating the steadfastness of our people in their land."

In reaffirming its call for "the development and escalation of armed struggle against Zionist occupation," the council also "reaffirmed the necessity for all Arab fronts to be opened up to the valiant fighters of our revolution."

It singled out "the importance of firm relations in struggle between the Palestinian and Jordanian peoples and affirmed its support for the Jordanian nationalist movement in all fields." It also declared that "the oil wealth of the Arab homeland should be utilized in the interests of the welfare and progress of the Arab nation and



A survivor in ruins of Tyre, Lebanon, destroyed by Israeli bombs and artillery in June 1982.

of its current issues, headed by the cause of Palestine."

Finally, "The Council expressed the view that no initiative can be valid if it regards the Camp David agreements and methods as the basis for a solution, and does not recognize the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and the right of our people to return, to self-determination and to establish an independent state on the soil of our homeland."

Fifteen years of struggle

Over the past 15 years, the PLO has remained true to its original goal of building a mass, independent struggle of the Palestinian people for their national rights. As an organization, the PLO is based firmly on the masses of the Palestinian people. No Arab government has been able to take over the PLO and turn it into a puppet organization.

To defend its independence, the PLO has demonstrated its readiness, when forced to, to fight not only Israel, but also the regimes in Lebanon and Jordan, arms in hand. Its political activity has served to advance the class struggle throughout the Middle East. And when the Israeli army invaded Lebanon, it found the Palestinian refugees there armed and organized, and ready to resist Israel's vastly superior firepower, thanks to the PLO.

While continuing to call on the Arab governments to unite in support of the Palestinian struggle, the PLO has also been quite critical in pointing out their failures. For example, an editorial in the Aug. 8, 1982, issue of the official PLO newspaper *Filistin al-Thawra*, written during the siege of West Beirut, declared: "We have expected the confrontation and steadfastness front, but no one came, we have expected the Arabs, but no one came. We have expected our friends in the world, but no one came."

Arafat himself, speaking to the Arab heads of state at the Fez conference, described the "world's ineffectual reaction to the events in southern Lebanon." He told the assembled rulers, "You control the Arab decision. You are all responsible, initially and ultimately, for the fate of this nation." He added, "At this point, the feeling of guilt will not help," and said:

"Let our Arab nation unite and wake up from its deep sleep in order to face facts and events and in order to confront the challenges to our destiny and civilization."

Although the Arab rulers declined to live up to Arafat's challenge, the point has not been lost on the Arab masses. "The man in the street had more intense feelings about this war than any other war in the Arab-Israeli history," a professor at Kuwait University told *New York Times* reporter Thomas Friedman.

"For the first time, an Arab capital was being besieged and the resistance was being mounted not by an Arab army, but a popular movement. People tried to volunteer, they tried to demonstrate, but in almost every case they were prevented from doing so by their governments."

Finally, the PLO has won through struggle the allegiance of the Palestinian people as a whole, as well as the respect of the toilers of the world. The PLO is in fact the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. This fact has been clear in Lebanon for a long time.

In the West Bank, in addition to the hundreds of demonstrations where the PLO flag has been flown, and the election of mayors throughout the area who solidarize with the PLO, two polls were conducted shortly before the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. One, conducted for *Time*

magazine by the Israeli Public Opinion Research Institute (PORI), found that 88 percent of those on the West Bank considered the PLO to be their sole legitimate representative. Eighty-six percent wanted a Palestinian state under its leadership.

A second poll, taken by Najah University in the West Bank city of Nablus, found that 66 percent viewed the PLO as their sole legitimate representative. Seventy-six percent favored an independent state under its leadership.

The *Time* poll also found that 56 percent favored a democratic, secular Palestine (35 percent favored an Islamic government), and 57 percent favored a socialist economic system.

Since the PLO's heroic resistance against the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, its standing and support in the occupied territories, among Palestinians inside Israel, and among working people around the world have risen dramatically. But there is no denying that with the outcome of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the Palestinian struggle for self-determination and the anti-imperialist movement in the Middle East as a whole have suffered a grave defeat.

Retreat from West Beirut

While exacting the biggest political price that it could from the Israeli rulers for their aggression in Lebanon, the PLO was ultimately forced to lead a retreat from West Beirut.

West Beirut was surrounded by a military force whose central political aim was to destroy the PLO. The Israeli army, which as Leslie Gelb noted in the October 31 *New York Times*, is now "the equal of West Germany's in numbers of front-line weapons," faced a numerically smaller force that had no tanks, no aircraft, and no open line of supply.

After holding off the Israeli army for 88 days, the Palestinian fighters marched out of West Beirut with their banners flying.

The alternative to the course taken by the PLO leadership would have been a futile last stand in West Beirut. Such a decision would have resulted in far more civilian casualties. Nor would such a fight to the finish have accomplished anything, beyond helping the Israelis in their aim of wiping out the PLO. It would not have prevented the consolidation of a rightist government in Lebanon, ended the occupation of Lebanon by Israeli forces, or prevented massacres of Palestinians such as those at the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps.

Surrounded as it was in West Beirut, the PLO leadership had to make the best of a bad situation. To facilitate the withdrawal of the Palestinian fighters under conditions less likely to expose them to Israeli army attacks, the PLO leadership agreed to the deployment of U.S., French, and Italian troops in the city as part of the disengagement agreement.

What Washington wants

To understand the lessons of the events in Lebanon and the prospects for the Palestinian struggle in the wake of this defeat, it is necessary to look at the latest war in the context of what has been happening in the Middle East as a whole over the past dozen years.

Many things have changed in the Middle East since 1970. From Washington's point of view, however, one fundamental problem has remained the same. The existence of the PLO and its continued authority among the Arab masses have prevented the consolidation of a stable political relationship between Israel and the Arab countries. Failure of the Israeli state to gain recognition from the Arab regimes closes the Israeli ruling class off from the markets and arenas of investment that it needs. Within the Arab countries, the ongoing conflict with Israel destabilizes the most proimperialist governments.

But the U.S. ruling class does not want stability in the abstract in the Middle East. It wants to stabilize its own domination. It cannot do this through concessions to the anti-imperialist aspirations of the workers and peasants, who would only be encouraged by such measures to advance their struggles.

Nor can Washington strengthen its position by weakening Israel, which is the main imperialist bulwark in the Middle East.

Thus, when the U.S. government put forward the Rogers Plan in 1969, its purpose, despite what Rogers said, was not to pressure Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories. Rather, it was to pressure the Arab regimes to recognize Israel, and in the process to join in the effort to crush the PLO.

Imperialism and the Arab regimes

Precisely the same thing is involved in the Reagan Plan today. U.S. policymakers issue public declarations about the need for Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories, just as they talk about the importance of human rights and land reform in El Salvador. Washington's real policy, however, is to support the Israeli occupation.

The U.S. ruling class is well aware of the crucial role that the West Bank now plays in the Israeli economy and

Continued on next page

Continued from preceding page

in the ability of the Israeli rulers to project their military power throughout the Middle East.

Nor is Washington about to give up on imperialist Israel, with its massive military machine, and switch to the governments of semicolonial Egypt or Saudi Arabia as its main ally in the Middle East.

Because the Arab countries are oppressed by imperialism, their governments cannot be relied upon by Washington in the same way that it can rely on any government in Israel. No State Department official or brass hat in the Pentagon can say what kind of government will be in power in Egypt, Syria, or Saudi Arabia a few years from now — a fact they were reminded of once again when the Iranian masses tossed out the shah.

The unreliability of the Arab rulers from the point of view of the imperialists has nothing to do with the intentions or desires of the capitalists in the Arab countries. It stems from the objective workings of the imperialist system.

Foreign domination and exploitation have given rise to deep nationalist sentiment and periodic mass movements in the oppressed Arab countries. At the same time, such domination has kept the Arab ruling classes weak, making it more difficult for them to stand up to mass anti-imperialist movements that develop in their countries.

Moreover, the Arab capitalists themselves come into conflict with imperialism. They chafe under their subordinate political status, and seek a better price for their oil and other exports on the world market.

Insofar as the capitalist governments in the Arab countries stand up to imperialism and to the Israeli dispossession of the Palestinians, the working people of those countries and of the whole world have an interest in fighting alongside them. Marxists support such struggles by an oppressed nation unconditionally, that is, regardless of the leadership involved.

Insofar as these regimes retard the fight against national oppression, ally more and more openly with imperialism, and exploit and oppress the workers and peasants of the Arab countries, they are subject to internal turmoil and revolutionary change at the hands of the toilers.

Clearly these governments are not as reliable allies for Washington as the Israeli imperialist state. The rise of the Palestinian movement, Arab nationalism in general, and the Iranian revolution have all driven this point home to Washington time and again.

The October 1973 war

All of this bears directly on the October 1973 Middle East war.

Once the PLO had been defeated in Jordan, Washington dropped the Rogers Plan. It gave every indication of being willing to live indefinitely with the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, and even of Egypt's Sinai Peninsula. This, by the way, is further proof of what Washington was really after in the first place when it proposed the plan.

What was acceptable for U.S. imperialism, however, threatened to prove deadly for the Arab rulers, especially in Egypt. By 1973, the pressure that had already been building up in Egypt prior to Nasser's death in September 1970 had become explosive.

President Anwar el-Sadat had promised that 1971 would be the "year of decision" in the conflict with Israel. Then he announced that 1972 would be the "year of inevitable confrontation."

But no confrontation came.

In September 1972, in an indication of what lay in store, a battalion of the Egyptian army on the Suez front mutinied over Sadat's inactivity in the face of the murderous Israeli raids on Lebanon.

Ultimately, the mass pressure on Sadat became so great that he was forced to go to war with Israel. Sadat's purpose in going to war was quite clear at the time. He wanted to force Washington to stop ignoring Egyptian demands and to put pressure on Israel for a negotiated settlement. Thus, Sadat attacked the imperialist bastion of Israel in hopes of ultimately strengthening his collaboration with imperialism.

What was decisive, however, was not Sadat's plans and intentions, but the objective fact that Egypt was an oppressed nation fighting to improve its position against imperialism. As the Fourth International explained in its October 1973 statement, the war marked "a new phase in the armed resistance of the Arab peoples to the counter-revolutionary policy of aggression systematically practiced by the Zionist state. Even though this war pits the armies of bourgeois Arab regimes against the Zionist armies, its character is that of a struggle against Israeli colonialism and expansionism. It follows that revolutionary Marxists affirm the legitimate character of the struggle of the Arab states against Zionism and call for their victory."

And the showing of the Arab armies in the October 1973 war did put the Palestinians and the other peoples of the Middle East in a stronger position against imperialism. This was reflected in the dramatic diplomatic

gains made by the PLO in the year following the war, and in an unprecedented mass upsurge by the Palestinian population in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

The 1973 war did not end in a decisive victory for the Arab side, however. Because of this, Sadat was able to move step-by-step toward realizing his plan for a deal with imperialism.

While U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger negotiated in Cairo and Tel Aviv, Sadat began denationalizing various state enterprises and passing laws to reduce restrictions on foreign capital. When President Richard Nixon visited Cairo in June 1974, he was met by a forest of American flags and signs saying, "We Trust Nixon." In March 1976, Sadat repudiated his treaty of friendship with the Soviet Union.

It was in this international political context that the Syrian regime collaborated with Washington in moving to prevent a victory by the Muslim-Palestinian-leftist coalition in the 1976 Lebanese civil war. Like Sadat, Syrian President Assad was hoping for some kind of agreement that would enable him to regain the Golan Heights in return for recognition of Israel.

An essential part of U.S. diplomacy, however, was to insist on recognition of Israel as the precondition for any deal with the Arab regimes. In the meantime, Sadat was left hanging. Soviet arms supplies to Egypt had been cut off, but Washington refused to give substantial military aid. The Egyptian economy was in drastic straits, but the hoped-for imperialist investment and aid failed to materialize.

The pressure finally forced Sadat to capitulate and make his trip to Jerusalem in November 1977.

As the Fourth International explained at the time, Sadat's decision to go ahead with a separate deal at the expense of the Palestinians and the Arab peoples as a whole could only result in strengthening Israel's hand against Lebanon and Syria, and new military attacks by the Israelis against these countries. This was borne out by the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in March 1978, which devastated the southern part of the country and created some 300,000 refugees. The Camp David accords also set the stage for the current Israeli invasion and the blow that has been dealt to the PLO.

Role of the Iranian revolution

Sadat's trip to Jerusalem and the signing of the Camp David agreement were among the biggest political victories for imperialism in the Middle East since the establishment of the Israeli state. What requires explanation is not that five years later the Israelis were finally able to deal such a heavy blow to the Palestinians in Lebanon; that was the function of the Camp David accords. What needs explanation is why the Israelis had to wait so long to strike this blow and why they have been forced to pay such a high price for their victory.

What forced the Israelis to delay so long was above all the impact of the Iranian revolution, which reached its climax as the final negotiations over Camp David were taking place. The triumph of that revolution in 1979 left Sadat holding the bag. Neither King Hussein of Jordan nor the Saudi rulers were about to step into the Camp David framework just as the Iranian masses in their millions were shouting "death to America!" and getting a sympathetic response throughout the Middle East.

Washington, Tel Aviv, and the Arab governments all feared that revolutionary uprisings elsewhere in the region would be sparked by the Iranian revolution, and they gauged their moves accordingly. The drive against the PLO in Lebanon was slowed down, while President Carter initiated the development of the Rapid Deployment Force and the Pentagon began acquiring new bases throughout the Middle East.

Changing consciousness of working class

As for the political price that the imperialists paid for their invasion of Lebanon, the biggest credit must of course go to the PLO fighters and their allies among the Lebanese workers and farmers. The worldwide sympathy and support that their fight won, and the kind of shift it sparked in the way Israel is viewed, is an indication of how the world has changed over the past few years.

Not only did the struggle of the Palestinians in Lebanon highlight changes in working-class consciousness on a world scale, it also contributed to further advancing that consciousness.

The Israeli invasion was an indication of what imperialism has in store for the oppressed peoples of the world. The massacre in West Beirut was no fluke — it fit in completely with the kind of devastation that Washington carried out in Indochina, is sponsoring in Central America today, and will sponsor elsewhere tomorrow. Moreover, the agreement between Washington and Tel Aviv on the basic aims of the invasion, and their close military and political coordination in carrying it out, was a further step in Israel's integration as an essential partner in the international imperialist mafia.

Finally, the massive antiwar protests inside Israel itself were dramatic testimony to the fact that the Jewish workers there are undergoing the same changes in work-

ing-class consciousness that are being manifested in other imperialist countries.

When was the last time in history that a victorious army came slinking home, not to victory parades and cheers, but to protests and recrimination?

Massive pressure inside Israel forced Prime Minister Menachem Begin to reverse his original position and establish a commission of inquiry into the massacre in West Beirut. Public testimony by Begin, Defense Minister Ariel Sharon, and other Israeli leaders has laid bare many of the government's lies to Israeli working people.

Commenting on the impact of the war within Israel, *New York Times* reporter David Shipler pointed out November 14: "The morality of the Government, the ethics of the army and the use of military power for political ends have been questioned so profoundly that some feel the country's future maneuverability may be diminished."

Disillusionment with the Israeli government's war policies, widespread realization that what was involved was a war of aggression, and exposure of the government's lies have all come in the context of a deep economic crisis. Inflation in Israel has been running at the rate of 130 percent. Widespread cutbacks in social programs, such as government subsidies to basic foods, are being implemented. Even as the war in Lebanon was in progress, workers of the El Al airline were fighting against a government attack on jobs, wages, and working conditions.

All this is the background to the wave of antiwar protests inside Israel. Imperialist Israel, at the moment of its greatest victory, has never been so divided.

As a result of the colonialist adventure in Lebanon, an increasingly large layer of Jewish workers have begun to realize that the Israeli ruling class is taking them on a road to new wars, new attacks on the living standards and democratic rights of the working class at home, and into an alliance with the most hated forces on our planet.

'Our nation has remained'

For the imperialists, the central question in the wake of the war in Lebanon is whether or not they can now use the military victory they have scored to force the PLO into a political retreat, above all by getting it to recognize Israel.

Washington failed to get the PLO to abandon its struggle for Palestinian self-determination with the Rogers Plan in 1970-71, with Kissinger's years of diplomacy following the 1973 war, or with the Camp David proposals for a phony Palestinian autonomy. Now, based on the bloody imperialist onslaught in Lebanon this year, a new chapter in this long political fight has opened up.

An indication of how the prospects in this fight are viewed inside Israel was a poll released October 4 by the Israeli daily *Ha'aretz*. It found that 32.3 percent of Israelis believed that the PLO's political influence had been strengthened by the war, while 37.5 percent felt that it was unchanged.

On November 25 the PLO's Central Council, the broadest leadership body to convene since the defeat in Lebanon, met in Damascus and denounced the Reagan Plan. "The Reagan Plan," the council said, "ignores the right of our people to self-determination and to establish its own independent state under the leadership of the P.L.O., without which there can be no just and lasting peace in the Middle East."

Barely able to conceal their anger and dismay, the editors of the *New York Times* complained November 28 that "the P.L.O.'s Central Council still refuses to recognize the reality of Israel and lays claim to all its land for a state that the P.L.O. alone would run."

Resorting to new threats of force — imperialism's only answer to the just demands of the Palestinian people — the *Times* editors declared: "If defeat in Lebanon, the futility of Soviet and Arab support and the dispersal of its guerrilla forces cannot rouse the P.L.O. from its fantasies and shake its commitment to violence, there is, sad to say, only one remaining source of pressure: the relentless absorption by Israel of the West Bank and Gaza, where 1.3 million Palestinians can still make a plausible territorial claim."

But underneath the complaint of the *Times* that "those who make a bad war cannot make a good peace" is fear of the deepening polarization in the Middle East. The U.S. rulers are well aware that short of breaking the PLO, their victory in Lebanon may turn out to be hollow. As one U.S. official remarked to *Times* reporter Thomas Friedman, the impact of the war in Lebanon is likely to be "wider in its revolutionary potential than the war of 1948, which led to the downfall of almost every important Arab leader."

Arafat himself, speaking to the current Arab rulers at the Fez conference, reminded them that the PLO has no intention of giving up its struggle.

"I have great confidence and faith that our nation is capable of facing the challenges and ordeals," Arafat declared. "This nation has faced many, many invaders and tyrants, all of whom have moved on. They tried to humiliate, defeat and harm this nation. All of them have gone and our nation has remained on this good earth."

Motivation—key to fund drive's success

BY HARRY RING

There are profound political differences between the Socialist Workers Party and the Communist Party. The main one is that the SWP has a program for revolutionary struggle to replace the capitalist system, while the CP is committed to trying to reform capitalism — a utopian idea that has resulted in costly defeats for the workers' movement.

This basic difference between the two parties is reflected in the level of political consciousness and commitment evidenced by the members and supporters of both groups.

For instance, consider the progress of our Socialist Publications Fund. With the largest goal yet, we have good prospects for completing it ahead of schedule and actually exceeding it by the New Year's deadline.

This is being made possible by the members and supporters of the SWP, who are the backbone of the drive.

And they too were responsible for the successful outcome of our just-concluded sales drive. We had set an eight-week goal of selling 45,000 copies of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*. That goal was exceeded by more than 10,000 copies.

We believe the success of the fund and sales campaigns bears testimony to the depth of conviction of our campaigners that capitalism is indeed in fundamental crisis and that this crisis is having a profound effect on the consciousness of American working people.

The same cannot be said for the members and supporters of the Communist Party. That's not simply our opinion. It's theirs.

A striking confirmation of this was offered in the November 27 issue of the *Peo-*

ple's World, the west coast weekly which reflects the views of the Communist Party.

In a column entitled, "Getting the Word Out," the *PW*'s promotion manager Alan Weinerman, bemoans the difficulty in getting supporters to circulate the paper.

He writes that "the hardest part of my work is the Political Inspiration Department."

"This entails convincing people to get out to the public with the *People's World*."

One problem, he says, is that many supporters "are not overjoyed at the prospect of becoming one of those oddball radicals out on the street hawking their papers."

In a somewhat murky paragraph, he adds: "But I think a more basic explanation of the hesitancy of some to aggressively circulate the *PW* is that many people in this country, although they see the seriousness of the domestic and international situations, don't really believe that basic and very real changes are actually possible in this country, and these changes will happen fairly soon, as time flows by."

What's obscure is whether he means its the *PW* supporters, or Americans in general, who see the seriousness of the situation but don't believe change is likely.

But it becomes apparent that he's talking about *PW* supporters when he adds:

"If one believes that 50 years from now working people in the U.S. are still going to be struggling with the same problems as they are today, then there's really no reason to get excited about the prospect of thousands and thousands of new people reading the *People's World*."

To round out the bleak picture, he continues:

"I know that to some mine will appear to be naive opinion. Often people will point to the seemingly hopeless level of con-

sciousness amongst the populace of our country, and they will say, 'How can we possibly expect any real change, at least in our generation?'"

Weinerman offers no clue as to why this problem exists for the *PW*.

Certainly, it's still not easy to sell a radical paper in large numbers. The process of rethinking among workers is in its initial stage and circulation of all radical papers is small. Supporters do have to be politically motivated to get out and sell.

But it's not really surprising that the Communist Party finds it so difficult to motivate its supporters.

The heart of the problem is not with the CP membership, but with the leadership and its policies.

For years, the CP leadership has oriented its membership toward activity in support of liberal capitalist politicians and instructed its unionists in the art of snuggling up to "progressive" labor bureaucrats.

Such class-collaborationist politics make it less than meaningless to talk about the very real prospects for a deepening of the class struggle and growing radicalization among the workers.

But the members of the SWP are armed with a perspective, a revolutionary one. This perspective stems from their comprehension of a Marxist program and analysis as confirmed by their own experiences in

the workplace and the union movement.

They see the impact the crisis is having on working people. They know that while workers are still groping for answers, increasing numbers of them are ready to consider the socialist alternative.

They find that when they take our press into the shops and mines, sell it at the plant gates and in the communities, they are getting an increasingly favorable response.

They are convinced that our revolutionary socialist ideas are contributing to moving the workers movement forward and confident that these ideas will gain ever more ground in the days ahead.

That's why our sales drive was so successful and why our fund campaign is proving a record-breaker.

And why we don't consider motivating our supporters "the hardest part" of our work.

Enclosed is my contribution of:

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Charles Lane, New York, N.Y.
10014.**

Hearings attack rail workers, whitewash ICG rail line

BY JOHN CHARBONNET

NEW ORLEANS — Federal officials recently charged that drinking and drug use by railroad workers is a major cause of train accidents nationwide. This claim was made during National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) hearings on a September train derailment in Livingston, Louisiana.

Calling the hearings a "hoax," the vice president of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers walked out of the final session.

Louisiana's worst railroad disaster forced the evacuation of some 3,300 area residents for two weeks while hazardous chemicals on the Illinois Central Gulf train burned out of control.

After the accident federal and state officials together with ICG moved to place the blame on three workers. They charged that the engineer, Edward Robertson, and the brakeman, James Reeves, were drunk and that a clerk, Janet Byrd, was operating the train. All three are facing felony charges by the state police of "reckless handling of hazardous materials."

Shortly before the hearings, ICG fired the train's entire crew as well as Byrd, who was hitching a ride to another station during the accident.

The three days of hearings, held November 15-17 in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, focused almost entirely on the charges against the workers. Safety board members downplayed the extensive testimony on what some Livingston residents originally suspected was the real cause of the derailment — poorly maintained tracks.

State police found a broken rail at the initial point of derailment. The end of the rail was battered, indicating it had been broken for some time.

In addition, a state inspector found 86 defects in the tracks, including hairline cracks, insufficient ballast, defective crossties, missing spikes, and too much distance between crossties.

Confronted with the list of defects, J. B. Jordan, ICG section foreman in charge of inspecting the tracks, replied, "We may have missed them, but nobody's perfect."

Hannon Stewart, a Livingston resident whose home was destroyed, testified he had called the railroad about problems near a culvert running under the track. "When

the train came by, you could see mud squirting up out of the ground," he said.

Testimony also showed the locomotive's emergency brakes were defective.

In the face of all the evidence of poorly maintained tracks, ICG continued to insist the "official" cause of the accident was a broken center pin on one of the cars, which was owned by another company.

The line along which the derailment occurred has a history of accidents. NTSB records state that nationally ICG has had 28 major derailments since 1969, in which 62 people have died and 808 have been injured.

Nevertheless the character of the hearings was colored by NTSB chairman James Burnett's charge that alcohol abuse is a major cause of railroad accidents and that it contributed to the Livingston derailment. Burnett referred back to a speech he made in June to railroad executives in which he criticized the federal government for "doing nothing to get the drunks off the railroad."

He used the hearings to float a proposal for a federal law prohibiting railroad workers from drinking alcohol for a specific period before they go to work. He also suggested forcing workers to take sobriety tests before going on duty.

Robert Delaney, locomotive engineers' union vice president countered that there was no evidence to substantiate that the engineer was drunk and he charged the NTSB with attempting to "cloud the issue."

Witness after witness, including state officials and even some ICG supervisors, testified that Robertson appeared sober after the accident and that the crew reacted well. The only evidence presented for the charges were alleged statements by Byrd made after the accident.

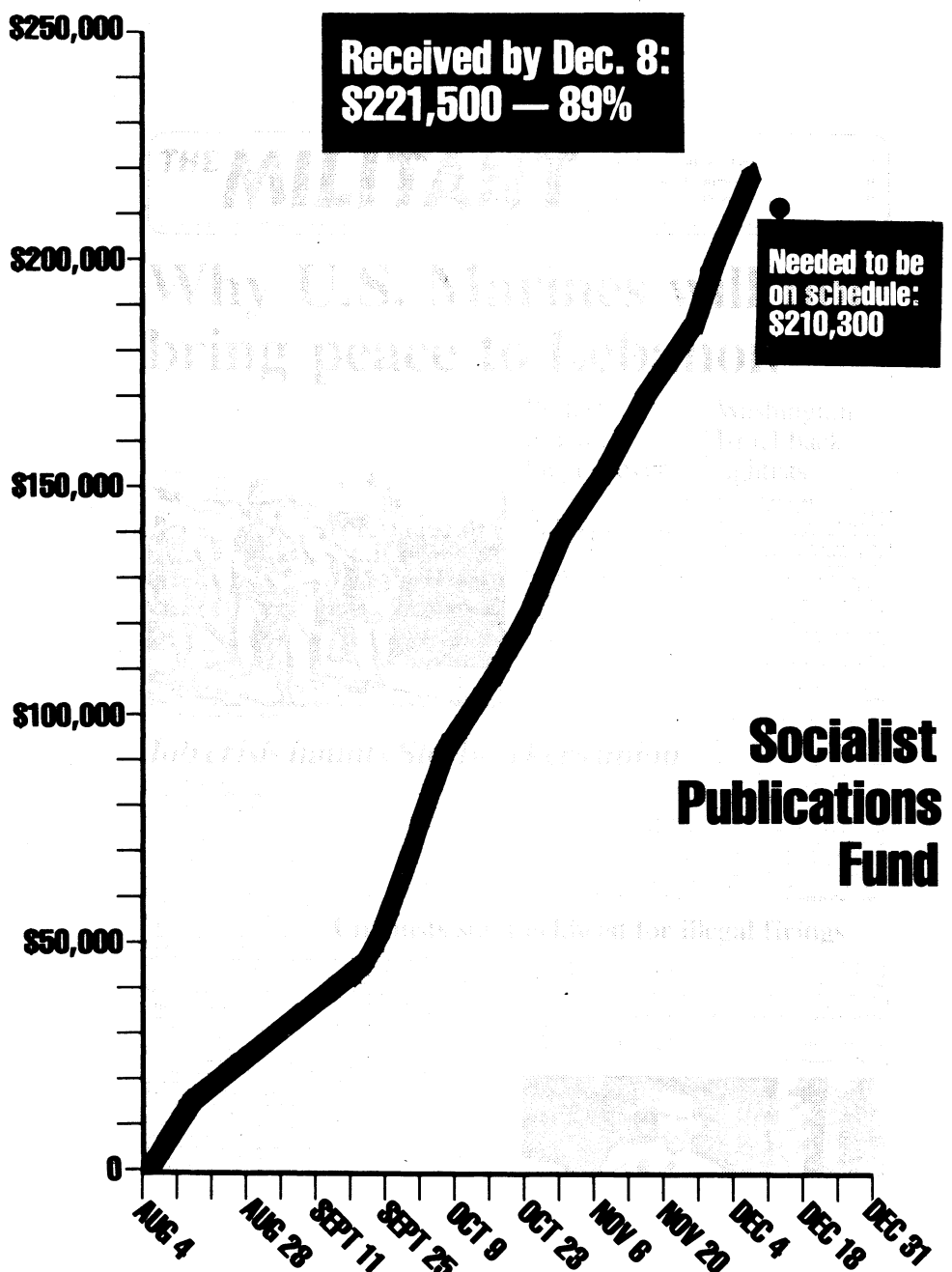
In a newspaper interview after the accident, Byrd accused the railroad of looking for scapegoats.

Delaney tried repeatedly to have a tape recording of radio conversations between Robertson and ICG dispatchers admitted as evidence to prove the engineer was sober. When NTSB officials refused to play the tape, claiming the recording was unclear, Delaney walked out of the final session.

The NTSB stated it will release its findings in about four months.



Militant/Lou Howort



Semantics dep't — Dubbed the "Peacekeeper," the proposed new MX missile was initially going to be called the "Peacemaker," but



Harry Ring

hen the Reagan team decided people would confuse it with peacemaker. Meanwhile, columnist Russell Baker suggested that the

nuclear-tipped warhead be known as the "peacehead."

Gangbusters (I) — New York cops have busted a number of people for trying to use 17.5 cent Connecticut Turnpike tokens in lieu of the 75 cent ones required in subway turnstiles. They face six months in jail and \$500 fines. Mayor Koch denounced them as "outright thieves" and "leprous." After protests from lepers' groups, he changed it to "pariahs."

Gangbusters (II) — Pleading guilty to criminal price-fixing over a 10-year period, 25 New York

milk dealers were given modest fines and told to make some refunds. They faced possible jail terms, but it was agreed prison isn't desirable for "white collar" thieves.

Bark in B-flat — A New York composer is auditioning dogs. He says that, accompanied by a piano, their barks, howls and growls will make "natural" music. Which reminded us of the old wheeze about the fellow who had his dog and canary auditioned for vaudeville. The canary sang operatic arias accompanied by the dog on the piano. Offered a contract, the

owner lost his nerve and confessed, "That canary can't sing. The dog's a ventriloquist."

Catch 22 — First the administration said it couldn't regulate industries responsible for acid rain until it did more research. Then it slashed research funding 70 percent. One of the researchers suggested, "Our group erred in making too much progress." He suspects the administration prefers to get its info from industry.

Be well — NEW YORK (UPI) — Rising medical costs will force hospitals to face crucial ethical decisions in the next decade such as

which patients should live and die according to cost effectiveness, a hospital administrative leader said.

Sheer coincidence — A reporter for the Minneapolis *Twin Cities Reader* did a piece on Brown & Williamson Tobacco's Kool Jazz Festival. He included a list of jazz greats who died of lung cancer. He was fired the next day. In New York, a writer for *Savvy* magazine reviewed a book, "The Lady-killers: Why Smoking Is a Feminist Issue." Her name was yanked from the masthead. The tobacco industry invests \$1.24 billion a year in advertising.

—CALENDAR—

ALABAMA

Birmingham

The Marxist View of Economic Crisis: An Educational Weekend.

Three classes: Wage-Labor and Capital. Speaker: Tom Moriarty, member Socialist Workers Party National Committee. Sat., Dec. 11, 11 a.m.; Value, Price, and Profit. Speaker, Tom Moriarty. Sat., Dec. 11, 2:30 p.m.; The Economics of Imperialism Today. Speaker: Andy Rose, SWP National Committee. Sun., Dec. 12, 11 a.m.

Militant Forum: Washington's War Against Working People at Home and Abroad. Speaker: Maceo Dixon, SWP candidate for 5th Congressional District in Atlanta. Sat., Dec. 11, 7:30 p.m.

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Why Can't Everyone Have a Job? Speaker: James Harris, member of National Committee of Socialist Workers Party, laid-off auto worker. Translation to Spanish. Fri., Dec. 17, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W Pico Blvd. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Perspectiva Mundial-Militant Forum. For more information call (213) 380-9460.

San Francisco

Struggle for Liberation in Ireland. Speakers: Elizabeth Platt, Irish Republican Youth Movement na Finna Eireann, Executive Committee of S.F. H-Block/Armagh Committee; Peter Urban, Irish Republican Socialist Party; Ken Davies, Young Socialist Alliance. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Dec. 11, 7 p.m. 3284 23rd St. Ausp: S.F. H-Block/Armagh Committee and YSA. For more information call (415) 824-1992.

ILLINOIS

Chicago

Washington's War on Nicaragua: An Eyewitness Report. Speaker: Jane Harris, Managua correspondent for *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Dec. 11, 7:30 p.m. 555 W Adams. Donation: \$2.50. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (312) 559-9046.

INDIANA

Gary

Washington's War Against Nicaragua, An Eyewitness Report. Speaker: Jane Harris, Managua correspondent for *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*. Mon., Dec. 13, 7:30 p.m. East Chicago Public Library, 2401 E Columbus Dr. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (219) 884-9509.

MARYLAND

Baltimore

Nicaragua: Workers and Peasants in Power: Eyewitness Report. Speaker: Rick Higgins, member Socialist Workers Party, recently returned from Nicaragua. Slide show. Fri., Dec. 17, 7:30 p.m. 2913 Greenmount Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (301) 235-0014.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

What Are the Polish Workers Fighting For? Speaker: Ernest Harsch, staff writer for *Intercontinental Press*, recently returned from fact-finding tour of Poland. Sun., Dec. 12, 7:30 p.m. 510 Commonwealth Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (617) 262-4621.

MICHIGAN

Detroit

On Our Land. A Film About Palestinians in Israel. Sun., Dec. 12, 7 p.m. 6404 Woodward.

Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (313) 875-5322.

MINNESOTA

St. Paul

The Fight for Black Liberation Today and Grenada: An Eyewitness Account — Black Workers' Revolution in the Caribbean. Two classes by Melvin Chappell, Young Socialist Alliance leader. Sat., Dec. 11, 11 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. 508 N Snelling. Donation: \$1. Ausp: Young Socialist Alliance. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

For An End to War, Racism, and Unemployment: The Fight for Socialism. Speaker: Melvin Chappell. Sun., Dec. 12, 4 p.m. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

MISSOURI

Kansas City

Socialist Publications Fund Rally. Speakers: Doug Jenness, editor, *Militant*; Dennis Goodden, National Lawyers Guild; others. Translation into Spanish provided. Sat., Dec. 11, 7:30 p.m. Dixon Inn, 12th St. and Baltimore. Ausp: Young Socialist Alliance, Socialist Workers Party. For more information call (816) 753-0404.

Labor's Allies on the Land: A Marxist Analysis of the Farm Question. Two classes. Speaker: Doug Jenness. Translation into Spanish provided. Sun., Dec. 12, 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. 4715A Troost. Donation: \$1. Ausp: Young Socialist Alliance, Socialist Workers Party. For more information call (816) 753-0404.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

Liberation Struggle in Guatemala. Film: *Guatemala, Images of Dictatorship*. Speakers: Lisa Maya, Network in Solidarity With the People of Guatemala; a recent refugee from Guatemala. Translation to Spanish. Fri., Dec. 17, 7:30 p.m. 11 A Central Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (201) 643-3341.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

Farewell party for the fifth contingent of the Antonio Maceo Brigade. Sat., Dec. 11, 8 p.m. Casa de las Americas, 104 W 14th St. Ausp: Venceremos Brigade. For more information call (212) 447-5891.

NEW YORK/NEW JERSEY

Manhattan

Capitalism in Crisis: Socialist Solutions. An educational conference. Sat., Dec. 11. Registration, 12 noon. 1. Presentation: Capitalism in Crisis, Socialist Solutions, 1 p.m.-2 p.m. 2. Classes 2 p.m.-4 p.m.: a. Communist Manifesto, b. Manifesto Comunista (en Español), c. Origin of Women's Oppression, d. Where Does Unemployment Come From? A Marxist Explanation. 3. Classes 4 p.m.-6 p.m.: a. The Changing Consciousness of the U.S. Working Class, b. La concientización de la clase obrera en EE.UU. (en Español), c. Racism — How It Began, When It Will End, d. The Fight Against Imperialist War and the Draft. 4. Dinner, 6 p.m.-8 p.m. 5. Eyewitness Report from Nicaragua, 8 p.m., followed by a party. Translation into Spanish for all classes and talks. Presentation and classes (noon to 6 p.m.) at N.Y.U. Loeb Student Center (La Guardia Pl. and W 4th St.). Dinner and Eyewitness Report (6 p.m. on) at 79 Leonard St. (5 blocks south of Canal). Donation: Classes only, \$2; Dinner, \$3; Eyewitness Report, \$2; All events, \$5. Ausp: Young Socialist Alliance. For more information call (212) 226-8445 or (201) 643-3341.

Conrail at the Crossroads. Rail workers speak out against proposed layoffs, givebacks, and unionbusting. Speakers to be announced. Translation to Spanish. Fri., Dec. 17, 7:30 p.m. 79 Leonard (5 blocks south of Canal). Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (212) 226-8445.

OHIO

Cincinnati

Defend Affirmative Action in Hiring and Layoffs. Speakers: Art Slater, Executive Director of Cincinnati NAACP; Charles Hummons, Vice-president of Cincinnati Black Firefighters Assoc.; Sarah Gardner, President of Cincinnati Coalition of Black Trade Unionists. Sun., Dec. 19, 7:30 p.m. 4945 Paddock Rd. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (513) 242-7161.

PENNSYLVANIA

Pittsburgh

Drugs, Crime, and Capitalism. Speaker: Bill Kalman, former Socialist Workers Party candidate for Congress, 14th District. Fri., Dec. 17, 8 p.m. 141 S Highland Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (412) 362-6767.

TEXAS

San Antonio

Advance of the Black Revolution in Africa. Speaker: Gary Trabue, member, Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers, Young Socialist Alliance. Translation to Spanish. Fri., Dec. 17, 8 p.m. 337 W Josephine. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (512) 736-9218.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Native American Political Prisoner Leonard Peltier. Seminar. Sun., Dec. 19, 4 p.m. George Washington Univ., Marvin Center, Rooms 402 and 404, 800 21st St. NE. Ausp: Leonard Peltier Support Group.

WEST VIRGINIA

Morgantown

The Fight Against Imperialist War and the U.S. War-makers; The Marxist Approach. 1. Nicaragua: Workers and Farmers Taking All the Steps to Defend Their Revolution From U.S. Imperialism. Speaker: Jane Harris, Nicaraguan correspondent for *Militant*. Fri., Dec. 10, 7:30 p.m. Monogalia County Courthouse (corner High St. and Walnut). 2. What Is Imperialism? Lenin's View. Speaker: Fred Feldman, Socialist Workers Party National Committee. Sat., Dec. 11, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. 3. Slide Show on Nicaragua. Sat., Dec. 11, 1:30-2:30 p.m. 4. Lenin on the National Question and Self-determination. Speaker: John Hawkins, SWP National Committee.

NEW YORK MILITANT BOOKSTORE EXPANSION SALE 10%-40% Discounts.

Fri., Dec. 10 through Wed., Dec. 22. Venta Especial, Libros En Español. Hours/Horas, Mon.-Fri. noon to 8 p.m.; Sat. 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Militant Bookstore, 79 Leonard St. (5 blocks south of Canal St.) Manhattan.

5. Imperialist Powers Versus the Struggle for National Liberation Today. Speakers: South African student; representative of the Revolutionary Democratic Front of El Salvador; representative of the Palestinian Student Organization. Sat., Dec. 11, 7 p.m.-9 p.m. Party to follow. All Sat. sessions will be held in Collegiate Room of Mountainlair, W. Va. Univ., 1st floor. Donation: weekend, \$5; per session, \$2. Ausp: Young Socialist Alliance, Pathfinder Bookstore. For more information call (304) 296-0055.

WASHINGTON

Seattle

Cuba's Internationalist Foreign Policy. Class by Mary-Alice Waters, National chairperson Socialist Workers Party, visited Cuba last spring. Sat., Dec. 18, 2 p.m. **Film: The Moncada Program.** Sat., Dec. 18, 8 p.m. Social to follow. **Building a Socialist Society in Cuba.** Sun., Dec. 19, 11 a.m. Class by Mary-Alice Waters. Classes translated to Spanish. 4868 Rainier Ave. S. Donation: Classes, \$1.50 each; Film, \$2. For more information call: Seattle, (206) 723-5330; Portland, (503) 222-7225; Vancouver, B.C. (604) 879-3413.

WISCONSIN

Milwaukee

U.S. War Against Nicaragua. Speakers: Jane Harris, Managua correspondent for *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*; Jon Hillson, member Socialist Workers Party, recently returned from Nicaragua; Charlie Dee, Central America Solidarity Coalition. Translation to Spanish. Sun., Dec. 12, 7 p.m. 4707 W Lisbon. Donation: \$1.50. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (414) 445-2076.

New button available "Nicaragua Libre! U.S. Hands Off!"

Order from Nicaragua Solidarity Committee, 2000 S 5th St., Minneapolis, Minn. 55454. Please prepay orders of 10 or more buttons at 50 cents each.

Toledo Machinists back fired workers

BY KURT LANDEFELD

TOLEDO — At its monthly meeting November 11, International Association of Machinists Lodge 105 unanimously adopted a resolution of support for 15 workers fired from the Lockheed-Marietta plant in Georgia for their union activities and political ideas. This demonstration of support was backed up with a \$100 contribution to the Political Rights Defense Fund, which is defending the fired IAM members. The unionists have filed suit against the giant aircraft company and government officials for spying on them and illegally firing them.

Copies of the proposed resolution were distributed before the meeting by Bob Burlage, Directing Business Agent for IAM District 57, which includes Lodge 105.

The resolution noted that the fired workers are members of the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialist Alliance. It stated that the firings are "a threat to all labor — aimed at intimidating unions from defending their members' rights free from company and government spying."

Crimes of the Salvadoran military

"Roses in December," a television documentary coproduced by Ana Carrigan and Bernard Stone; narrated by John Houseman; 55 minutes. Videotape available for rent from First Run Features, 144 Bleecker St., New York, N.Y. 10012, (212) 673-6881.

BY MARK SCHNEIDER

This month marks the second anniversary of the brutal murder of four U.S. women missionaries in El Salvador on December 2, 1980.

On January 28 the Reagan administration has to present Congress with a recertification of "human rights improvements" in El Salvador. In that month five low-ranking soldiers are being brought to trial for their rape and murder of the missionaries. The State Department said it

TELEVISION REVIEW

was "obviously pleased" by this development and will use it as a handle in its attempt to pump millions of dollars more into the hands of a government responsible not only for the murders of the missionaries, but also tens of thousands of Salvadoran workers and peasants.

Already at the end of July the State Department "certified" that the government of El Salvador was making progress in the field of human rights. Based on this certification, the U.S. government increased military aid to El Salvador dramatically from \$6 million to \$81 million, despite overwhelming opposition in the United States to supporting the Salvadoran regime.

Part of the justification then for alleged progress in human rights was the February arraignment of the five soldiers, members of the National Guard.

"Roses in December," a television documentary aired

by the Public Broadcasting System last August, exposes the hypocrisy of this claim in a lucid, touching presentation of the life and death of one of the victims.

Jean Donovan was a lay sister working with Maryknoll sisters Maura Clarke and Ita Ford and Ursuline sister Dorothy Kazel when the four were raped and murdered by the guardsmen. The documentary opens with somber and unforgiving footage of the unearthing of the corpses from a shallow grave. The reality that every statistic of death in El Salvador stands for an individual person emerges at once and pervades the entire film.

We are offered interviews with the parents, brother, roommates, teachers, and lover of Donovan as they grapple with their own emotions and political ideas and try to accept the fact that the vibrant, compassionate woman they knew has been slain.

The brothers of Ford and Donovan are shown testifying before the congressional committee that has approved military aid for the government over the last three years.

On January 22, 1982, Bill Ford told the committee that "the secretary of state told us that the United States would press for a full investigation. We were promised that we'd be informed every step of the way. Speaking for the Ford family, I can testify that not one call we made to the State Department has been returned."

We see then Secretary of State Haig, whose blithe statement to the committee is now infamous:

"One of the vehicles may have been perceived to be running a roadblock, and perhaps was involved in an exchange of fire."

The implication is that the women shot it out with the National Guard. This was a complete and calculated lie, one that is not repeated in the press coverage of the events leading up to the trial.

Haig's statement contrasted with the statement of Bill Ford. "There were no bullet holes in the van. The women

were shot execution style in the back of the head."

Then there was the cold-blooded statement of United States UN Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick.

"The nuns were not just nuns, they were political activists." The rest of her uncompleted thought, of course is "So they got what they deserved."

The film traces the course of Donovan's life, which led from a comfortable Connecticut family life to a religious and political awakening in the Ireland of the early 1970s. Donovan was influenced by the radical priests who are part of the Irish national liberation struggle.

"Roses in December" documents the repression of the Salvadoran priests who identified with the oppressed workers and peasants. As these priests were mercilessly assassinated by the junta, Archbishop Oscar Romero called upon the national guardsmen to disobey their officers:

"In the name of God, I beseech you, I command you, stop the repression."

On March 24, 1980, Romero was gunned down while saying mass.

The documentary leaves out the grisly, horrifying scene at Romero's funeral, where the National Guard opened fire on the thousands of mourners.

"Roses" concludes by detailing the rape and murder of the women by reading from the confession of one of the guardsmen. The congressional testimony of Bill Ford more than one year after the event again underscores the hypocrisy of the Reagan administration in whitewashing the affair.

"There is no group in El Salvador investigating the affair," Ford testified. "There is supposed to be a three-judge panel investigating it. Two judges resigned in fear of their lives. If five low-level soldiers were all who were involved in this — what do these judges have to be afraid of?"

Can steelworkers fight bosses' attacks on union?

Continued from Page 5

with compiling that information and should not take it at face value. Trusting the steel companies is not a good rule of thumb for steelworkers.

Workers have a right to know the whole story — not just what the employers want to tell us. When U.S. Steel presented its financial picture, did it include the millions they are enjoying from their purchase of Marathon Oil or the tens of millions more they stand to make from their oil reserves?

What about all the other holdings the steel barons control as a result of their well-known diversification programs? What connections do all these links in their corporate empires have to the banks, the insurance companies, and so forth?

The only way workers will ever know the truth about the financial wheeling and dealing of the steel corporations is if the books are examined by committees of workers with accountants and other experts who are responsible to us. On this count we will have to find replacements for McBride's economic "experts" who are so quick to testify that the companies are tel-

ling the truth when they claim they're going broke.

In drawing up a program to defend workers interests, we should remember that the employers' attacks do not fall equally on all sections of the working class. Blacks, Latinos, and women have taken the sharpest blows as the result of years of discrimination, which continues today.

The only way the unions can successfully unite the entire class in struggle against the employers is by standing up for the interests of the most oppressed workers.

The strike of USWA Local 8888 at the Newport News shipyard several years ago proved again that Black and women workers will be in the forefront of union struggles. But this requires that the labor movement fight for their interests in an uncompromising way.

A good example of this was the USWA's historic battle in opposing Brian Weber's challenge to affirmative action in the late 1970s. Weber sued to eliminate a training program that allowed unskilled

workers to bid into skilled maintenance jobs at Kaiser Aluminum in Louisiana because this program gave preferential treatment to Blacks and women. The affirmative action attempted to compensate for the years that Blacks and women were completely excluded from these jobs.

Weber's case against the union-supported plan was rejected by the U.S. Supreme Court. But today the gains from programs like this one are being gutted by the discriminatory nature of the current layoffs. Until the unions are strong enough to put an end to layoffs, we must fight to insure that the employers not use them as a tool to decrease the percentage of minorities and women on the job. Any other approach means accepting a return to the status quo of unmoderated employer racism that existed in many plants before affirmative action programs were implemented.

Other special victims of the crisis are young people who face the prospect of no job at all. The unions should demand that unemployment compensation be paid to all who want a job once they leave school.

To some this program of demands may

seem "unrealistic." Of course to the owners of the corporations anything that cuts into their profits is unrealistic. That is because they are constantly protecting their class interests.

The working class needs to begin with our class interests. We need to start with our right to a decent job, to a decent standard of living, and to a better future.

A program that begins with our class interests does not guarantee victory in advance. This can only be decided in struggle — the same way we won anything else, from a 40-hour week, to social security, to the very existence of the unions themselves.

However, a program that tries to *combine* our class interests with those of the employers is doomed from the start. So is a strategy that says don't fight because we might not win. The fight is on, whether we like it or not. It has been begun by the employers. Our responsibility is to chart a course of action that can defend ourselves and our unions and win the reasonable demands we've discussed.

(To be continued)

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Where to find the Socialist Workers Party, Young Socialist Alliance, and socialist books and pamphlets

ALABAMA: Birmingham: SWP, YSA, 205 18th St. S. Zip: 35233. Tel: (205) 323-3079.

ARIZONA: Phoenix: SWP, YSA, 611 E. Indian School. Zip: 85012. Tel: (602) 274-7399. Tucson: SWP, P.O. Box 2585. Zip: 85702. Tel: (602) 622-3880 or 882-4304.

CALIFORNIA: Los Angeles: SWP, YSA, 2546 W. Pico Blvd. Zip: 90006. Tel: (213) 380-9460. Oakland: SWP, YSA, 2864 Telegraph Ave. Zip: 94609. Tel: (415) 763-3792. San Diego: SWP, YSA, 1053 15th St. Zip: 92101. Tel: (714) 234-4630. San Francisco: SWP, YSA, 3284 23rd St. Zip: 94110. Tel: (415) 824-1992. San Jose: SWP, YSA, 46½ Race St. Zip: 95126. Tel: (408) 998-4007. Seaside: Pathfinder Books, 1043A Broadway, Seaside. Zip: 93955. Tel: (408) 394-1855.

COLORADO: Denver: SWP, YSA, 126 W. 12th Ave. Zip: 80204. Tel: (303) 534-8954.

FLORIDA: Miami: SWP, YSA, 1237 NW 119th St., North Miami. Zip: 33167. Tel: (305) 769-3478.

GEORGIA: Atlanta: SWP, YSA, 504 Flat Shoals Ave. SE. Zip: 30316. Tel: (404) 577-4065.

ILLINOIS: Chicago: SWP, YSA, 555 W. Adams St. Zip: 60606. Tel: (312) 559-9046.

INDIANA: Bloomington: YSA, Activities Desk, Indiana Memorial Union. Zip: 47405.

Gary: SWP, YSA, 3883 Broadway. Zip: 46409. Tel: (219) 884-9509. Indianapolis: SWP, YSA, 4850 N. College. Zip: 46205. Tel: (317) 283-6149.

IOWA: Cedar Falls: YSA, c/o Jim Sprall, 803 W. 11th St. Zip: 50613. Des Moines: YSA, P.O. Box 1165. Zip: 50311.

KENTUCKY: Louisville: SWP, YSA, 809 E. Broadway. Zip: 40204. Tel: (502) 587-8418.

LOUISIANA: New Orleans: SWP, YSA, 3207 Dublin St. Zip: 70118. Tel: (504) 486-8048.

MARYLAND: Baltimore: SWP, YSA, 2913 Greenmount Ave. Zip: 21218. Tel: (301) 235-0013.

MASSACHUSETTS: Boston: SWP, YSA, 510 Commonwealth Ave., 4th Floor. Zip: 02215. Tel: (617) 262-4621.

MICHIGAN: Detroit: SWP, YSA, 6404 Woodward Ave. Zip: 48202. Tel: (313) 875-5322.

MINNESOTA: Mesabi Iron Range: SWP, YSA, 112 Chestnut St., Virginia, Minn. 55792. Send mail to P.O. Box 1287. Zip: 55792. Tel: (218) 749-6327. Twin Cities: SWP, YSA, 508 N. Snelling Ave., St. Paul. Zip: 55104. Tel: (612) 644-6325.

MISSOURI: Kansas City: SWP, YSA, 4715A Troost. Zip: 64110. Tel: (816) 753-0404. St. Louis: SWP, YSA, 6223 Delmar Blvd. Zip: 63130. Tel: (314) 725-1570.

NEBRASKA: Lincoln: YSA, P.O. Box 80238. Zip: 68501. Tel: (402) 475-8933.

NEW JERSEY: Newark: SWP, YSA, 11-A Central Ave. Zip: 07102. Tel: (201) 643-3341.

NEW MEXICO: Albuquerque: SWP, YSA, 1417 Central Ave. NE. Zip: 87106. Tel: (505) 842-0954.

NEW YORK: Capital District (Schenectady): SWP, YSA, 323 State St. Zip: 12305. Tel: (518) 374-1494. New York, Brooklyn: SWP, YSA, 335 Atlantic Ave. Zip: 11201. Tel: (212) 852-7922. New York, Manhattan: SWP, YSA, 79 Leonard. Zip: 10013. Tel: (212) 226-8445. New York: City-wide SWP, YSA, 79 Leonard. Zip: 10013. Tel: (212) 925-1668.

NORTH CAROLINA: Piedmont: SWP, YSA, 216 E. 6th St., Winston-Salem. Zip: 27101. Tel: (919) 723-3419.

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PENNSYLVANIA: Edinboro: YSA, Edinboro State College. Zip: 16444. Tel: (814) 734-4415. Harrisburg: SWP, YSA, 803 N. 2nd St. Zip: 17102. Tel: (717) 234-5052. Philadelphia: SWP, YSA, 5811 N. Broad St. Zip: 19141. Tel: (215) 927-4747 or 927-4748. Pittsburgh: SWP, YSA, 141 S. Highland Ave. Zip: 15206. Tel: (412) 362-6767. State College: YSA, P.O. Box 464, Bellefonte. Zip: 16823. Tel: (814) 238-3296.

RHODE ISLAND: Providence: YSA, P.O. Box 261, Annex Station. Zip: 02901.

TEXAS: Austin: YSA, c/o Mike Rose, 7409 Berkman Dr. Zip: 78752. Tel: (512) 452-3923. Dallas: SWP, YSA, 2817 Live Oak. Zip: 75204. Tel: (214) 826-4711. Houston: SWP, YSA, 6333 Gulf Freeway, Room 222. Zip: 77023. Tel: (713) 924-4056. San Antonio: SWP, YSA, 337 W. Josephine. Zip: 78212. Tel: (512) 736-9218.

UTAH: Price: SWP, YSA, 23 S. Carbon Ave., Suite 19. P.O. Box 758. Zip: 84501. Tel: (801) 637-6294. Salt Lake City: SWP, YSA, 677 S. 7th East, 2nd Floor. Zip: 84102. Tel: (801) 355-1124.

VIRGINIA: Tidewater Area (Newport News): SWP, YSA, 5412 Jefferson Ave., Zip 23605. Tel: (804) 380-0133.

WASHINGTON, D.C.: SWP, YSA, 3106 Mt. Pleasant St. NW. Zip: 20010. Tel: (202) 797-7699. Baltimore-Washington District: 2913 Greenmount Ave., Baltimore, Md. Zip: 21218. Tel: (301) 235-0013.

WASHINGTON: Seattle: SWP, YSA, 4868 Rainier Ave. South. Zip: 98118. Tel: (206) 723-5330.

WEST VIRGINIA: Charleston: SWP, YSA, 1584 A Washington St. East. Zip: 25311. Tel: (304) 345-3040. Morgantown: SWP, YSA, 957 S. University Ave. Zip: 26505. Tel: (304) 296-0055.

WISCONSIN: Milwaukee: SWP, YSA, 4707 W. Lisbon Ave. Zip: 53208. Tel: (414) 445-2076.

Political assassination in N.Y.

Flora "Terry" Santana died in a suspicious fire in her apartment December 4. There are many indications that she was the victim of political assassins.

Santana was a well-known activist. For several years in the mid-1970s, she worked for the *Daily World*, which reflects the views of the Communist Party. Later she worked with the short-lived leftist magazine *Análisis Latinoamericano* and most recently with the Salvadoran press service *ES-Info*. She helped organize and participated in countless political actions, especially against U.S. intervention in El Salvador.

Police found rags soaked in a flammable liquid in her apartment. Literature on Cuba and El Salvador was thrown around the apartment, including over her body. Shortly before her death, friends say, Santana reported that she had received threats and would have to move. As a Cuban who supported the revolution in her homeland, she would have been a logical target for counterrevolutionary terrorists. Santana had been active in exposing U.S. government complicity with right-wing Cuban groups such as Omega 7 for many years.

Nevertheless, police refuse to consider the case a mur-

der. They first tried to smear Santana as a terrorist and then suggested she committed suicide or accidentally set the fire herself. The Joint FBI-Police Terrorist Task Force — which has been carrying out a concerted witch-hunt against political activists — hinted she had been under surveillance. Two FBI agents arrived at her apartment within minutes of the blaze and removed her political papers. Later the FBI announced they had "found nothing suspicious" and withdrew from the case, while keeping her political papers for review.

Santana's friends discount the suicide theory. She had been in good spirits, had recently started a new job and had just gotten paid, and had various political projects mapped out. Hours before her death she agreed to meet friends the next day.

As for the accident theory, police should explain how one accidentally soaks rags in flammable liquids, sets the place on fire, and fails to escape while scattering political literature around the apartment and on one's own body.

The official investigation is a transparent coverup. Who are the FBI and police trying to protect with such outlandish theories? Why?

Reagan's tour escalates war

Continued from front page

"According to intelligence sources who have proved highly reliable," Crile wrote, "the C.I.A. pulled a number of its most seasoned operatives from assignments around the world and rushed them into Honduras to direct a 'quick strike' attack on Managua which was set for the beginning of March."

Crile continued:

"... the plan was built around several hundred elite commandos — at least half trained by the Argentines, with a sizable contingent said to have been trained by the Israelis. They were apparently to have moved in a coordinated series of attacks on the nerve centers of Nicaragua's capital city and serve as the spearhead of a larger effort. The key to the success of the plan, however, was the unspecified military support of several neighboring countries. Across the Gulf of Fonseca, in El Salvador, more than 1,000 of the late President Somoza's Guardsmen who had enlisted in the Salvadoran Army, along with some 200 serving in the Guatemalan security police, were rehearsing to move on a few hours' notice to join the attack."

"The full nature and dimensions of the plan are unclear. But certainly back in February and March something very big and very risky was being considered and, as Guatemala's most powerful general, Benedito Lucas, told me at the time: 'For it to begin and for it to succeed, there must be a green light from Washington.'"

The Argentine government's April 2 decision to restore sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands came just as this plan was in its final preparatory stages. Buenos Aires's move against the imperialist outpost, and London's subsequent U.S.-backed war against Argentina, set back Washington's plans for an anti-Nicaragua offensive. The Malvinas War galvanized public opinion against U.S. imperialism throughout Latin America. The Reagan administration saw no hope then of lining up support for counterrevolution in Central America, especially at a time when the Sandinistas and Cuban leaders were taking the lead in calling for solidarity with the Argentine people.

The Malvinas War bought Nicaragua precious time. In the past eight months the Sandinista People's Militias have been greatly expanded and steered in combat against the counterrevolutionary bands. The Sandinista Defense Committees have been reorganized to deal with the concrete tasks of securing the revolution from sabotage and infiltration. Sixty thousand residents in Managua alone take part each night in standing watch over neighborhoods, factories, and government installations. A diplomatic offensive has been waged to bring the truth about Washington's counterrevolutionary drive to the world's peoples and governments. A big victory was scored on this front in October with Nicaragua's election to a two-year term on the United Nations Security Council, despite a vigorous opposition campaign by Washington.

The Sandinista leadership also used the time gained to deepen the masses' understanding of the revolution's perspectives. In mobilizing the workers and peasants for their interests, they have made clear that the aim of the revolution is socialism, a society where exploitation and oppression have been eliminated and where the toilers rule.

Washington remains determined to stamp out this example the Nicaraguan people are setting for all Latin America. A major aim of Reagan's tour was to get in a better position to do this by repairing some of the damage done to U.S. relations with the region during the British-U.S. war against Argentina.

But the tour was less than successful.

Before stopping in Costa Rica and Honduras, Reagan

visited Brazil and Colombia, whose regimes had been among the least supportive of Argentina during the Malvinas War. In Brazil, Reagan presented a \$1.2 billion loan to President João Figueiredo — money that will go straight to the imperialist banks that hold Brazil's \$89 billion foreign debt.

Reagan had high praise for Figueiredo's recently announced austerity measures, which were imposed at the behest of the International Monetary Fund. He likened them to his own antilabor economic program.

While Figueiredo was glad to get the loan and gave Reagan a warm welcome, he declined to line up publicly with Washington's anti-Cuba, anti-Nicaragua campaign. He said only that in Central America, "the right of the peoples and the sovereignty of governments must be respected without foreign interference or pressures." Figueiredo also praised the efforts of the Mexican, Venezuelan, and Colombian regimes to foster negotiated solutions to the conflicts in Central America — efforts that Washington has ignored.

The reception on Reagan's brief stop in Colombia was far less agreeable. President Belisario Betancur scolded Reagan for his attempts to "isolate" and "exclude" Cuba and Nicaragua from the rest of the hemisphere. He called for "nondiscriminatory aid" to Latin American countries and warned that the region's dire economic straits meant that Latin America "could see itself swept along by social forces to declare itself insolvent."

Betancur's predecessor, Julio César Turbay, had broken relations with Cuba and taken an openly hostile stance toward Nicaragua. Turbay also refused to back Argentina against London's aggression. But Betancur publicly reminded Reagan that U.S.-Latin American relations "have deteriorated considerably ever since" the war over the Malvinas.

In El Salvador, Betancur went on, the "30,000 graves" ought to "shock the drowsy conscience of leaders." Reagan gave no sign of being shocked at this statistic, but the *New York Times* did report that the president and his aides were in a mood "of extreme anger" after Betancur's toast. In a private meeting later, the *Times* reported, the Colombian president even "explicitly told Mr. Reagan that Cuba should be restored to full O.A.S. [Organization of American States] membership."

Trade unionists and students held protest demonstrations in several Colombian cities during the visit. "Anti-Reagan slogans were scrawled on downtown walls along the route of the motorcade from the airport into Bogota and there were unfriendly shouts at his only public appearance," the *Washington Post* reported.

In Costa Rica and Honduras, Reagan deepened his public commitment to Central America's most brutal and reactionary regimes.

After a meeting with Salvadoran President Alvaro Magaña, Reagan declared that he had already decided to certify to Congress in January that "progress" is being made in remedying human-rights violations in El Salvador — despite the fact that all evidence is to the contrary.

After talks in Honduras with Guatemalan dictator Gen. Efraín Ríos Montt — whose armed forces have been slaughtering Indian peasants by the thousands — Reagan said this butcher had been getting "a bum rap."

Reagan enthusiastically told reporters later that Ríos Montt is "totally dedicated to democracy in Guatemala" and that U.S. military aid to the country should be resumed.

The Guatemalan dictator summed up his notion of democracy to journalists who wanted to know if his army was pursuing a scorched-earth policy against rural guerrillas. "We have no scorched-earth policy," Ríos Montt replied. "We have a policy of scorched Communists."

Lenin's writings on the United States

BY MAGGIE TROWE

Most of us who learned the "official" U.S. history in school received a sketchy and fragmented impression of a series of wars, presidents, and seemingly unpredictable economic booms and busts. *Lenin on the United States* on the other hand helps give us a different, clearer picture, at least of the first two decades of this century.

This selection of Lenin's pamphlets, articles, speeches, and letters describes the oppression of Blacks, developments in agriculture, Washington's drive for colonies, and its participation in World War I as part of the international struggle between the very few who own and the great many who work.

The book includes the pamphlet "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism" in its entirety. This work presents statistics that show that World War I was the

LEARNING ABOUT SOCIALISM

military expression of the struggle among the finance capitalists of the industrialized countries to maximize economic exploitation of the large majority of the world's people.

One of the best articles on the war is the excerpt from a short pamphlet called "Socialism and War — the Attitude of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party toward the War," written in July-August 1915. A one-page table, entitled "Partition of the World Among the 'Great' Slave-Holding Powers," concisely shows the leap in colonial expansion made by Britain, Russia, and France (and to a lesser degree Germany, Japan and the United States) between 1876 and 1914.

Lenin describes the colony-grabbing nature of the world war going on among the "great" powers and then advises socialists to "... take advantage of the struggle between the robbers to overthrow all of them. To be able to do this, socialists must first of all tell the people the truth, namely, that this war is, in three respects, a war between slaveholders with the aim of consolidating slavery."

While Lenin urged workers to oppose imperialist wars, he was no pacifist. In a "Letter to American Workers," which was printed in 1918 in socialist periodicals and pamphlet form in the United States, Lenin explained the imperialists' attack on Soviet Russia and asks the working class to take the side of the Russian effort:

"At this very moment, the American multimillionaire, those modern slaveowners, have turned an exceptionally tragic page in the bloody history of imperialism by giving their approval — whether direct or indirect, open or hypocritically concealed, makes no difference — to the armed expedition launched by the brutal Anglo-Japanese imperialists for the purpose of throttling the first socialist republic." (p. 334) He then appeals to Americans, who have a revolutionary war as part of their heritage, to oppose the attack:

"The American workers will not follow the bourgeoisie. They will be with us, for civil war against the bourgeoisie. The whole history of the world and of the American labor movement strengthens my conviction that this is so. I also recall the words of one of the most beloved leaders of the American proletariat, Eugene Debs, who wrote in the *Appeal to Reason* ... that he, Debs, would rather be shot than vote credits for the present criminal and reactionary war; that he, Debs, knows of only one holy and, from the proletarian standpoint, legitimate war, namely: the war against the capitalists, the war to liberate mankind from wage slavery."

Lenin followed political and economic developments in the United States such as the plight of Blacks and immigrant workers and the trade union movement. Lenin explained as early as 1916 that Blacks were an oppressed nation in the United States with the right to self-determination. The fight of Blacks in the United States against oppression is the subject of several articles.

In the 1913 article "Capitalism and Workers' Immigration" Lenin comments on the enormous increase in the immigration of workers to the United States — over seven million from 1901 to 1909. He notes the progressive aspect of this development: "There can be no doubt that dire poverty alone compels people to abandon their native land, and that the capitalists exploit the immigrant workers in the most shameless manner. But only reactionaries can shut their eyes to the progressive significance of this modern migration of nations. Emancipation from the yoke of capital is impossible without the further development of capitalism, and without the class struggle that is based on it. And it is into this struggle that capitalism is drawing the masses of the working people of the whole world, breaking down the musty, fusty habits of local life, breaking down national barriers and prejudices, uniting workers from all countries in huge factories and mines in America, Germany, and so forth."

Lenin on the United States, 674 pages, is available in paperback from Pathfinder Press, 410 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014 for \$3.65 plus \$.75 for postage and handling.

San Antonio strikers defend job, seniority rights

BY MARK CHALKLEY

SAN ANTONIO — On November 1, 122 members of International Union of Electrical Workers (IUE) Local 1127 went out on strike against the Stainless Ice-Tainer Co. (SITCO). SITCO manufactures beverage dispensers.

The plant is located on the city's near West Side, in one of the oldest *barrios* in San Antonio. Over 90 percent of the workers are Chicano.

The contract between the union and SITCO had run out the day before. Negotiations came to a standstill

UNION TALK

when company representatives refused to back down from proposals that threatened seniority and job security for SITCO employees.

Money is not an issue in the strike. What motivated most workers to walk out were company proposals on job promotions, layoffs, and sick leave.

SITCO representatives had demanded that seniority be only one among several factors to be considered in cases of layoffs or promotions. The other factors would be "ability" and "demonstrated job performance." SITCO proposals defined "demonstrated job performance" as including obedience to all company rules.

In practice, this would mean that a worker with high seniority who forgot his I.D. badge two days in a row could be laid off before a worker with lower seniority.

The company had also demanded that when a worker bid on a higher-paying job, he or she would be on trial for 90 days. If the worker did not meet the company's expectations within that period, then, at the company's "sole discretion," he or she could be laid off.

SITCO proposals included a giveback of two of the current three days' paid sick leave. The company also wanted to be free of "any further obligation" to a worker who is out more than three months after a work-related injury.

Workers angrily rejected these proposals. The overwhelming majority walked out. The handful who crossed the picket line were met with derisive cries of "*pinche rata*" (damn rat) and "*lambusco*" (lackey).

The company has tried to keep production going with probationary employees hired in the last weeks before the strike and scabs hired since then.



Militant/Sherry Fekete

Electrical workers on strike at SITCO chanting as scab bus goes by, "Who are we? IUE. Who are they? Scabs!"

Scabs are brought in daily in rented buses. Security guards patrol all entrances. Recently the company brought in a police dog to guard the gate during the twice-daily confrontation when the scab bus enters and leaves.

The company has also sought to get union charges of unfair labor practices thrown out. This would mean that workers now on strike could legally be replaced by scabs permanently. As part of this effort, SITCO induced scabs and a secretary, Nancy Jones, to swear affidavits alleging union "violence." In one case a picketer was described as having thrown rocks and boards when, in fact, he was at home with a cold that day.

None of these measures by SITCO management has weakened the strikers' determination.

"They thought we were just playing around," said Carlos, a 26-year-old worker. "They didn't think we could get serious. But they found out."

Another striker, Chris, said, "They underestimated us. Mexicans are stubborn."

The strikers have received solidarity from other local unions in San Antonio. Contingents from the Communication Workers of America, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers' local at Levi-Strauss, and three other IUE locals have visited the picket line to show their support. Members of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 171 on strike against the Handy Andy grocery chain have also come to the picket line at SITCO.

Working people around the city who learn about the strike identify with it. One day on the picket line as we listened to KISS-FM, a local rock station, the disk jockey dedicated a song to us. "Here's one for you guys at SITCO," she said. "Hang in there."

Mark Chalkley is a member of IUE Local 1127.

LETTERS

Some criticisms

I highly approve of the changes in the *Militant* this year, except of course for the smaller size. The editorial writing has also improved.

I do think though that the treatment of nuclear arms and war could be strengthened by making it less abstract, putting the empirical history of the arms race more upfront, dropping the whining hint of a this-is-a-diversion attitude, and expanding more on Soviet foreign policy, military position, etc., rather than simply making statements on Moscow's non-expansionism that must leave many new readers puzzled or incredulous ("But what about Afghanistan? or Eastern Europe? And how about Eritrea?").

Whatever economy measures you're forced to adopt, don't drop Harry Ring's Great Society (although a more up to date title might be in order). It's often the first item I read all the way through.

The most boring feature of any issue is an article on a local Socialist Workers Party election campaign that makes vague, general charges the against the local politicians followed by a spiel by the SWPer that could be made anywhere in the country and adds nothing to the other articles and editorials in the paper. In other words, reports on local campaigns should be centered around hard local news or contain some distinctive analysis. The Peter Seidman piece on taxation is an excellent example of what should be published. I also question the policy of front paging articles on subscription drives or even the publication fund. Phrases about feeding on oneself and staring at your own belly button come to mind. Perhaps related to that is a certain distance from U.S. affairs dis-

played by the neglect so far of such page-one issues as the balanced budget amendment, book banning, insanity defense, and drunk driving. The economy also needs more than just the ABCs-of-economics coverage.

But enough of criticism. The serious, professional way the paper is put out is only one reason why I'm sending in for first class mailing.

Thomas Robinson
Oregon City, Oregon

U.S. in Mideast

I thought that your article in the November 5, 1982 *Militant* entitled, "U.S. expands military presence in Mideast," was very good at explaining the motivation of the U.S. government in expanding the size of the Rapid Deployment Force and sending marines to Lebanon. Unfortunately I believe that there was a typographical error. In the second paragraph you state that the RDF is currently 230,000 soldiers. I believe that you meant 23,000. The former figure would be almost 10 percent of the personnel in all four military services.

Ron Richards
Portland, Or.

(In reply — The figure I gave in my article was not a typographical error. The October 25, *New York Times* carried a report from Tampa, Florida, which included the following sentence: "With 230,000 soldiers, sailors, marines, and Air Force personnel available for duty now, the new unified command [of the Rapid Deployment Force], with headquarters at MacDill Air Force Base here, will acquire nearly twice that many in coming months."

(In other articles in the big business press, figures like 210,000

and 250,000 have been reported indicating that this is not a typographical error on the part of the *New York Times*.)

(The Rapid Deployment Force is not a new branch of the U.S. armed forces. It's merely marshaling members of all four branches into a unified strike force. As the *Militant* explained in an article entitled "What Rapid Deployment Force is all about" in our July 18, 1980 issue, "The Rapid Deployment Force put a new label on military forces that have long had no other purpose but rapid intervention in countries where the interests of U.S. big business are threatened.")

Margaret Jayko

PLO

So far the news has been interesting, although I hesitate to believe it was the courage and skill of the PLO fighters that kept the Israelis outside of West Beirut. The Israelis were perhaps wise not to try and fight it out in the streets, in terms of human lives (their own) and that is why I believe they didn't advance in the weeks before the withdrawal.

Guy Hunter
Peterboro, Ontario, Canada

Ode to Reagan

Enclosed is a copy of a poem that appeared hanging up at work during the recent 1982 elections. It was kind of interesting and lots of people read and laughed about it:

Reagan is my shepherd, with him in the oval office, I shall always want.

He leadeth me beside the still factories.

He guideth me to the path of unemployment, for the party's sake.

I fear no evil for thou art against me.

Thou insisteth my wages be frozen, so that my expenses runneth over my income.

Surely poverty and hard living shall follow the Republican Party and I shall live in a rented house forever.

Sue Skinner
Cincinnati, Ohio

Tenosynivitis

I was interested to see your article in the Oct. 1, 1982, *Militant* based on the *Direct Action* coverage of tenosynivitis.

I thought you might be interested in some further information that has been produced by the trade union movement here in Australia on the whole issue of over-use diseases.

Tenosynivitis is the particular variant rampant in Australian manufacturing. This is due, no doubt, to substandard and outdated machinery and a heavy reliance on labor-intensive productive techniques. As an example, which is in no way an exception, in the factory in which I worked there were several machines that were pre-World War I, and one that was made before the turn of the century. So tenosynivitis is a real hazard here.

We have been campaigning on this issue as part of health and safety campaigns on the job and in the unions. We have also taken the question into the Labor Party and the women's movement.

If you have discussed, or produced material, on this or on any issue of health and safety, we would be interested in seeing it. If there is anything that we can supply for you, please don't hesitate to ask.

Pat Garcia
Haymarket, Australia

Soviet Union, China

In her article in the December 3 issue of the *Militant* on the talks between Soviet and Chinese leaders following Leonid Brezhnev's funeral, Cindy Jaquith stated that the two countries "severed relations" in the early 1960s.

Some readers might get the impression that the Soviet Union and China broke diplomatic relations, withdrawing their ambassadors and the like. In fact, despite the bitter disputes between China and the Soviet Union, they continued to maintain formal diplomatic relations and some trade throughout the whole period.

G.K. Newey
Hoboken, N.J.

Mayor Koch

When New York City Mayor Koch discovered that cheaper highway tokens were interchangeable with 75 cent subway tokens, he went on television to say, "You are crooks. You! I mean you!"

What the television news shows neglected to mention is that the transit fare is robbery. This crime is committed against the working class every day, and the transit police act as bandits for the wealthy interests who are milking us dry.

More power to those who either refuse or can't pay the transit fare. It is racist Mayor Koch who should be arrested. Under socialism we would have a mass transit system that serves the people, not the bankers.

Robert D'Avanzo
New York, New York

Correction

In issue 46 of the *Militant* on page 11, a picture of Greg Zensen was incorrectly identified as Jeff Rogers.

Salvador trade unionist speaks to U.S. miners, public meetings

BY BILL KALMAN

PITTSBURGH — The tour of Alejandro Molina Lara, an exiled Salvadoran trade union leader, is generating an enthusiastic response from American workers.

This past week Molina Lara received the support of the Allegheny County Labor Council. In addition, coal miners donated hundreds of dollars to aid trade union leaders imprisoned by the U.S.-backed dictatorship in El Salvador.

Molina Lara, who has just completed the third week of a five-week tour of western Pennsylvania, Ohio, and West Virginia, has spoken at numerous union meetings and public forums. He has been explaining to working people why it is in their interest to support the struggle of his people against both the Salvadoran oligarchy and the U.S. government. His tour is being sponsored by the Pittsburgh Central America Mobilization Coalition (CAMC).

Molina Lara, a leader of the National Federation of Salvadoran Workers (FENASTRAS) and general secretary of the Fishing Industry Union (SIP), addressed 80 union officials at a meeting of the Allegheny County Labor Council. According to Mark McColloch, a delegate to the council from American Federation of Teachers (AFT) Local 3414, Molina Lara was introduced by the president of the labor council. He talked about the need for solidarity between the workers of the United States and El Salvador. The labor

council then passed a resolution supporting the immediate release of 11 union leaders who have been jailed by the Salvadoran dictatorship.

In addition, the local district of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union donated \$100 to the fund to aid these unionists.

The labor council meeting was a highlight in a week filled with activity. Molina Lara also spoke at two citywide meetings in Pittsburgh and Charleston, West Virginia. The Pittsburgh meeting drew 175 people. During the meeting, the Salvadoran unionist exposed the Reagan trip to Central America as an attempt to shore up reactionary forces against the fight for liberation. Molina Lara also blasted the "media blackout" in the United States of the military and political advances of the Revolutionary Democratic Front of El Salvador. Afterwards a video tape entitled, "El Salvador, Nowhere to Run," was played. The tape, which Molina Lara brought with him from El Salvador, depicted the plight of Salvadoran refugees, mostly women and children, and the horrible repression carried out against them by the regime's soldiers.

In Charleston, 45 people attended a meeting sponsored by the Central American Human Rights Coalition. This group, recently formed to organize Molina Lara's tour, is now considering continuing solidarity activities.

In addition, Molina Lara spoke at Mar-

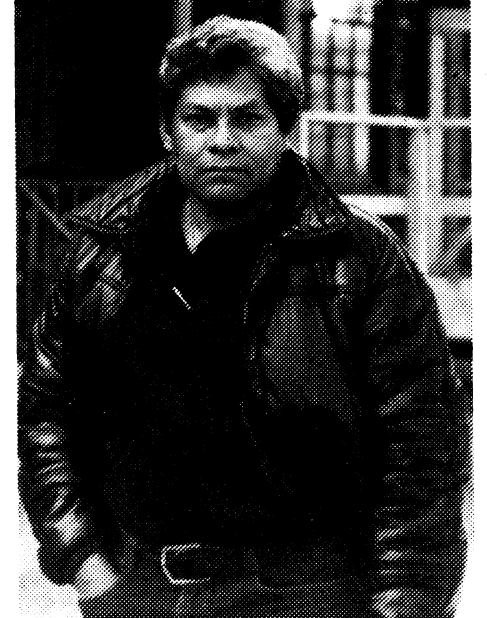
shall University in Huntington, West Virginia, to 100 people. These three public meetings garnered over \$500 in honoraria and collections. This money will be used to defend and aid leaders of FENASTRAS imprisoned by the Salvadoran regime for their trade union activity.

Molina Lara was also able to speak to three locals of the United Mine Workers. He is scheduled to speak to two other locals. According to Mari Hawkes, a CAMC organizer, he spoke before UMWA Local 1197 (Bethlehem-Cokeburg), UMWA Local 1190 (Bethlehem-Ellsworth), and UMWA Local 2300 (U.S. Steel Kirby), to a total of almost 100 coal miners. The Ellsworth local donated \$200 to the FENASTRAS fund. Not to be outdone, the Kirby local donated \$300 from the local itself and another \$40 in individual contributions.

Molina Lara also spoke before meetings of the executive board of the Community College of Allegheny County AFT, the Pennsylvania Alliance for Jobs and Energy, and the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.

Some important work was done to get support from religious groups in Pittsburgh as well. A public memorial service commemorating the second anniversary of the four U.S. missionaries killed in El Salvador attracted 125 people.

Even though the local media is still boycotting the tour, Molina Lara spoke on a



Militant/Ginny Hildebrand

Alejandro Molina Lara

50-minute radio program on WTKN in Pittsburgh and for the second time in two weeks made the front page of the *Pitts News*, the student newspaper at the University of Pittsburgh.

A sure sign of the success of the tour is the fact that so far over \$2,200 has been collected to help publicize the fight of Salvadoran workers.

March against Nazis, Klan set for Oroville, Calif.

BY CATHY SEDWICK

OROVILLE, Calif. — A march against the Nazis, Klan, and racism is scheduled to take place here December 11. The march has been called by the Concerned Parents of South Oroville. It has received backing from a wide range of civil rights and labor organizations and leaders around the country.

For a long time the 800 Blacks in this northern California town of 9,400 have been intimidated by racist attacks. Their rights and safety have been disregarded by the police and the city government. Many people say that racism here is a fact of life.

Anger against this situation has intensified since the arrest in October of Perry "Red" Wharthan, a local Nazi leader charged with murdering a 17-year-old white youth. For four years local officials knew that Wharthan was behind a number of Nazi-related activities in the town. Wharthan moved to Oroville because he "heard there were Nazis up here."

Since moving here Wharthan has made an appeal to the youth of this economically troubled lumber town. He recruited several teenagers with his white supremacy lectures, Nazi uniforms, and drugs. He set up a Dial-a-Nazi tape of slurs against Blacks. He was suspected of being behind the stuffing of racist literature in school lockers in 1980 and again earlier this year. Racist literature was put on the windshields of cars owned by Blacks and many Blacks received threatening phone calls.

Police said they suspected Wharthan put his followers up to stuffing the racist literature in the school lockers but said they could do nothing. They claimed they didn't want to infringe on Wharthan and his followers' right to free speech. Lewis Forbes, president of the Butte County NAACP says, "If it had been Black men who had Black teenagers putting antiwhite literature in school lockers they would be in Sing-Sing."

Then, on October 17 the body of Joe Hoover was found with eight bullet holes

in the back and head. Wharthan has been arrested for the murder of the teenager. Two of his young followers accused of being accessories to the murder named him as the killer. Police suspect Wharthan killed Hoover because the youth gave the police information about Wharthan's Nazi activity.

The media and local officials here are downplaying Wharthan's Nazi activities and the issue of racism in Oroville. They portray Wharthan simply as a crazed killer.

The opponents of racism here, however, have launched a campaign to expose and beat back the pattern of racist attacks. Denise Johnson, chief founder of the Concerned Parents of South Oroville explains that now is the time to change the environment that made it possible for Wharthan to function for so long unchallenged.

A few of the more flagrant racist attacks in the past several years include:

- In 1976 a white man stalked a group

of Blacks and fired a shotgun injuring a Black woman.

- In 1979 two white deerhunters, frustrated by their failure to get a deer, shot and killed Jimmy Campbell, a 22-year-old Black man, in a nearby town. They then went into Oroville shooting at Blacks as they drove through town. No details of the shooting were released to the public until after a plea bargain had been accepted by the district attorney and the two were already sentenced.

- In January 1982, five Black youth were forced from their car by local cops and forced spread-eagle on the ground for 45 minutes. No arrests were made. The pretext was a string of robberies allegedly involving Blacks. In November the five sued the city and state lawmen for \$14 million for violating their civil rights.

At a December 2 news conference in Sacramento, the state's capital, representatives of Concerned Parents, Sacramento

Area Network, National Organization for Women, and other groups announced that they have requested an investigation of racial violence in Oroville by the state attorney general's office.

Denise Johnson also announced that since organizing began for the December 11 protest there have been a number of threatening phone calls to Blacks, vandalism of Black property, and the beating of a Black youth.

Endorsers for the December 11 action include: California Congressman Ronald Dellums; Michigan Congressman George Crockett; Eddie Carthan, former mayor of Tchula, Mississippi; the Tchula Seven; Southern Christian Leadership Conference; American Indian Movement leader Dennis Banks; International Longshoremen's Local 10; Jerry Goldberg, C.A.P. chair, United Auto Workers Local 900 MTP; Harry Britt, San Francisco Board of Supervisors; and others.

U.S. continues frame-up of 'Kiko' Martinez

BY MAUREEN McDOUGALL

DENVER — The U.S. attorney's office here announced November 29 that it plans to continue its attempt to convict Francisco "Kiko" Martinez on a 10-year-old bomb charge.

The Chicano activist lawyer was framed up in 1973 on charges of mailing three letter bombs, none of which exploded. His 1981 trial on the first count ended in a mistrial. The charge was dropped after it was revealed that the judge and prosecution had plotted to deprive Martinez of a fair trial.

After a five-week trial last month on the second count, the jury took less than four hours to find him not guilty.

During the recent trial defense attorneys Walter Gerash and Ken Padilla presented the case as a political attack against Martinez for his role as an activist in the Chicano movement. Witnesses testified to the at-

mosphere of violence against the Chicano movement in the early 1970s and to the media slander campaign against Martinez, which made a fair trial impossible. Martinez fled to Mexico and was arrested in 1980 as he attempted to reenter the United States.

Despite the setbacks the government has suffered in its attempt to railroad Martinez to jail, it plans to go ahead with a trial on the third count — the alleged mailing of a bomb to a Denver school board member.

The Francisco "Kiko" Martinez Defense Committee's efforts to publicize and organize support for the case played an important part in the acquittal on November 20.

More information on the case can be obtained from: Francisco "Kiko" Martinez Defense Committee, P.O. Box 753, Alamosa, Colorado, 81101.



Francisco "Kiko" Martinez