

## Massive U.S. firepower pounds Lebanese towns

BY FRED MURPHY

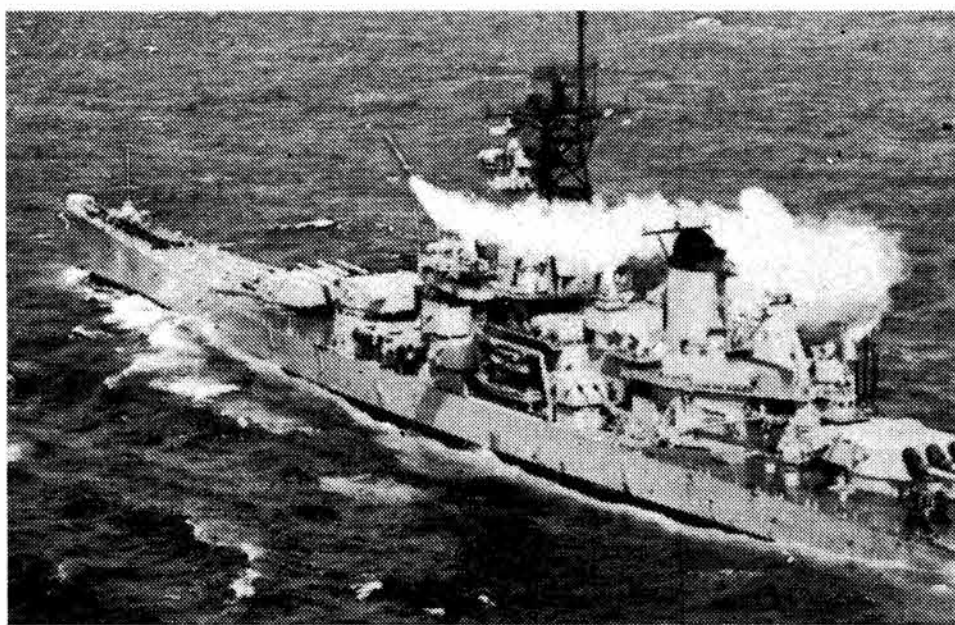
Under the pretext of defending U.S. spy flights over Lebanese territory, the Reagan administration is threatening an expanded war to force Syria to withdraw its troops from Lebanon.

The Syrian regime, meanwhile, has weakened its own defense against mounting U.S. and Israeli attacks by driving Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Chairman Yassir Arafat and 4,000 PLO fighters out of Lebanon.

On three occasions between December 13 and 18, Washington sent F-14 fighter-bombers on low-altitude "reconnaissance" flights into the mountains east of the Lebanese capital, Beirut. Each time, the planes drew anti-aircraft fire from Syrian positions; this served as the pretext for what U.S. officials termed "instant retaliation" by warships just off the Lebanese coast.

Washington brought its most powerful conventional weapon into the fight on December 14. The battleship *New Jersey* opened fire with its 16-inch guns, lobbing 11 one-ton shells onto the Syrian forces. Each shell packs enough explosives to devastate an area equivalent to two football fields.

The battleship opened fire again with smaller guns the next day against militia units of the Progressive Socialist Party (PSP), which opposes the right-wing



**Battleship USS New Jersey, shown here on maneuvers, has rained death on Syrian troops and Lebanese opponents of minority right-wing Gemayel government in Lebanon.**

Phalangist regime in Lebanon. Shells from the *New Jersey* fell on three PSP-controlled towns southeast of Beirut.

"The strongest, the most powerful weapon used against Lebanese people!" a PSP militia member exclaimed to a *Washington Post* correspondent just after the shelling. "It is wrong."

Such an attack "means that the United States is allied with the Phalangist government of [President] Amin Gemayel, and not all the Lebanese people," another PSP fighter said. "We ask the Americans, would you like to have another Vietnam in the Middle East? This is the big question

**Continued on Page 2**

## El Salvador regime in deep crisis; danger grows U.S. will send troops

BY HARRY RING

Liberation forces are making substantial military and political gains in El Salvador's civil war and the U.S.-supported regime there is in the process of disintegrating. The crisis of the dictatorial regime strongly increases the danger that President Reagan will order an invasion by U.S. troops in a last-ditch effort to stave off a revolutionary victory by El Salvador's workers and peasants.

The government in San Salvador is responding to the blows it's suffering with increased bloodletting. This reality was dramatized when Roberto D'Aubuisson was nominated to run for president. D'Aubuisson, president of the Constituent Assembly, heads the far-right ARENA party. A ruthless killer, he is the head of El Salvador's death squads. He planned the assassination of the late Archbishop Romero, and many more.

Accepting the nomination, D'Aubuisson boldly rapped the Reagan administration for urging a halt to death-squad assassinations. With the Salvadoran regime more dependent than ever on U.S. guns and dollars, D'Aubuisson's open defiance of Washington makes clear that he sees the threat of an aid cutoff as empty talk.

But the public criticism on the death-squad issue does underline Washington's concern about how badly things are going for its client regime.

Since this past September, the Salvadoran liberation forces, grouped in the Revolutionary Democratic Front-Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front have gained ground. During this same period, death-squad activity has escalated correspondingly.

During September and October, the right-wing killers gunned down 100 trade-union leaders alone. In most cases these

were not leaders of unions actively allied with the liberation fighters, but of organizations trying to function within the existing structure.

Another example of the back-to-the-wall stand of the Salvadoran oligarchy was the recent decision of the Constituent Assembly to further gut what passed for a land-reform program.

The assembly voted December 13 to boost the legal limit on large landholdings. Under the reform law, designed to placate the host of landless peasants in the nation, individuals could own only up to 360 acres of land. That figure has now been in-

creased to about 600 acres. This means that instead of an estimated 173,000 acres being available for distribution, the amount will be 72,000 acres.

And that's not really true either since the new amendment includes a hooker which permits big landholders to escape distribution of their land by turning it over to a "corporation." There are no bars to the landlords becoming corporations.

Under the first phase of the land program, some 260 big farms were turned over to army-administered "cooperatives." One-third of these are already bankrupt

**Continued on Page 6**

## Miners prepare for battle with coal bosses

BY GEOFF MIRELOWITZ  
AND LINDA MAY O'BRIEN

PITTSBURGH — "Anyone who thinks that we're not going to war with the coal companies has a very vivid imagination."

That's what one West Virginia delegate to the 49th Constitutional Convention of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) said to indicate the situation facing the union.

The five-day convention, which closed December 17, registered the determination of the union's ranks and its leadership to resist the attacks by the coal operators and government and win a decent contract in 1984.

The convention heard greetings from several top union officials, including Lane Kirkland, president of the AFL-CIO, which the UMWA is not affiliated with. The delegates also endorsed Walter Mondale's bid for the Democratic Party presidential nomination. Mondale spoke to the

convention, and received an enthusiastic response.

The main discussion at the convention, however, centered on the 1984 contract negotiations.

On Sept. 30, 1984, the union's national agreement with the soft coal operators, the Bituminous Coal Operators Association, runs out.

Virtually every delegate sported a large button reading "No backward steps. No take-away contracts." They unanimously approved a Collective Bargaining Committee report which unambiguously affirmed that this "no concessions" stance will be the union's position in the coming showdown with the coal operators.

This was also the theme of UMWA Pres. Richard Trumka's convention address, presented on the first day. Trumka refuted the idea that concessions by workers create jobs. He received strong applause when he said, "This generation of UMWA members

## Socialist councilman runs for president

BY LYNDIA JOYCE

SEASIDE, Calif. — Mel Mason announced his decision to accept the Socialist Workers Party nomination as candidate for the president of the United States and to resign from his seat as city councilman of Seaside at the end of a heated session of the city council December 15.

Mason was nominated to head the SWP ticket at a National Committee meeting of the party in New York in November. Seaside is a city of 37,000 located on the Monterey Peninsula in central California.

Landlords and tenants had come to the city council session to debate a proposed ordinance that would have required landlords to prove "just cause" when evicting tenants. Mason was the sole councilman siding with the tenants, who comprise 65 to 70 percent of Seaside's population.

In the course of the debate over the ordinance, Mason exposed the profit-hungry landlords' arguments against the measure. The principal victims of arbitrary evictions over the years, Mason explained, have been Blacks, especially single women with children.

The council rejected the ordinance with only Mason favoring it.

Almost all the people who had come to the city council meeting stayed until the end to hear Mason's announcement. To an unusually hushed silence, Mason delivered his resignation speech (see page 5). The city council accepted the resignation and voted to present Mason with a plaque at his final meeting February 2.

After the meeting, Mason was surrounded by well-wishers, some of them obviously quite moved. They wanted to know how they could get an entire city council that would be like him.

The media in the area started covering Mason's candidacy even before the official announcement. The *Seaside Post* featured Mason on the front page. The *Monterey Peninsula Herald* ran several stories and an editorial. Local TV stations covered the announcement and one aired an interview with the councilman.

Radio stations in a wide area played interviews with Mason. He also appeared live on the six o'clock news of the local Spanish-language station, KCBA in Salinas, where he declared his solidarity

**Continued on Page 5**

does not have the right to willingly give up the contractual gains made by our fathers and their fathers before them."

The committee report pointed to the wave of concession contracts in auto, steel, trucking, and other industries, as well as the union-busting climate encouraged by the government. "It is time to put an end to this alarming trend," the convention declared.

The attacks on workers are "motivated by corporate greed . . . reminiscent of the attempts by the employers during World War II to use the world crisis to lower wages in the face of rising profits. At that time, the UMWA defied public opinion and government order by striking to maintain decent standards for the wages and working conditions of American workers.

"Once again," the miners decided, "as all workers must fight an all-out war against the rising tide of antiunionism, the

**Continued on Page 21**



# —SELLING OUR PRESS AT THE PLANT GATE—

BY PEGGY BRUNDY

Socialists around the country are mapping out aggressive plans to reach more industrial workers at plant gates beginning January 1, 1984. They will be campaigning for the Socialist Workers Party U.S. presidential ticket of Mel Mason for president and Andrea González for vice-president and distributing tens of thousands of the Socialist Workers election campaign feature that appeared in the Dec. 23, 1983, issue of the *Militant*.

They have also projected special efforts to reach steelworkers with the Pathfinder Press pamphlet *Steelworkers Under Attack: How to Fight Back and Defend Jobs* by Geoff Mirelowitz. The pamphlet will be offered free with a subscription or renewal to the *Militant* or *Perspectiva Mundial* and at a reduced price of 25 cents with the purchase of single copies.

Both these special efforts will be carried out alongside regular sales of the *Militant* and *PM* at

plant gates. Salespeople in the northern states report that they are reorganizing these sales so that they can continue weekly as arctic weather settles over much of the region. Socialists in Toledo, Ohio, for example, have increased the number of people on each sales team. They keep a car nearby with the heater running. Salespeople rotate sitting in the car to thaw out. Sales organizers in other cities suggest scheduling plant gate sales on Monday or Tuesday. That way if a blizzard or sleet storm forces sales to be cancelled, they can be rescheduled for a day later in the week.

The reduced-price offer of *Steelworkers Under Attack* will expire March 29, 1984, date of the special presidential elections in the United Steelworkers of America (USWA). In addition to making sure that the press and pamphlet are available every week at basic steel mills, the socialists are stepping up sales at other steel-organized workplaces.

As the special USWA presidential election campaign unfolds, ongoing discussion among rank-and-file members about how best to advance their interests will deepen. The steel bosses' drive to push through more plant closings, layoffs, and takeback demands will lead many Steelworker unionists to seek out alternative views to those offered by the top leadership.

*Steelworkers Under Attack*, along with continuing *Militant* and *PM* coverage have been part of this discussion from its beginning. Socialists in the Washington, D.C.-Baltimore area have sold around 100 copies of the pamphlet since it was first published in February of this year.

Although the pamphlet deals specifically with the strategy for fighting against the steel bosses' and government's antilabor offensive, the issues it discusses have broader relevance. In 1984 national contracts covering tens of thousands of workers in shops or-

ganized by the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union, United Mine Workers of America, USWA, and United Auto Workers will expire, along with hundreds of local contracts in other unions. These workers are also discussing how to fight back and will find the pamphlet, along with the *Militant* and *PM*, useful for their discussions.

The socialists in Baltimore and Washington, D.C., decided to take the pamphlet everywhere they took the *Militant* and *PM*. They sold it at the clock houses, at union meetings, on the job, and on street corners.

They report good sales at workplaces organized by other unions. At a Bendix plant organized by the IAM, for example, many workers were especially interested in the pamphlet's proposals for fighting back after a rotten contract was forced on them.

Socialists in Birmingham, Alabama, plan to use the special sales and distribution efforts to get

to know workers in basic steel in a new way. They plan to start regular sales at U.S. Steel's Fairfield Works, along with door-to-door sales and discussion in communities where these workers live. U.S. Steel is demanding concessions at Fairfield that would weaken the union by removing 15 to 20 percent of the work force from union protection.

Birmingham socialists report that there is increased consciousness about the union-busting character of concession-contract proposals. Many workers have told them that they would rather see the plant shut down than make more concessions — and then have the plant shut down anyway.

Maintaining weekly sales during the winter months will be essential to the success of the special efforts to reach out with the socialist election campaign and participate in discussions among steelworkers about how to fight back.

## Massive U.S. firepower pounds Lebanese towns

Continued from front page

we ask of the people of America."

A further provocation by U.S. F-14 jets occurred December 18. When the planes came under fire, U.S. warships fired 60 rounds against Syrian positions.

U.S. Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger claims such naval shelling is required "to interdict and to try to destroy any forces that try to prevent our legal and necessary reconnaissance." But ex-CIA di-

### Iraq shells Iran; firms up U.S. ties

On another Middle East war front, missiles fired from Iraq hit five Iranian cities December 13, killing at least 24 persons and wounding more than 280. The Iraqi regime's news agency asserted these attacks were partly in retaliation for the bombings of the U.S. and French embassies in Kuwait the day before. Washington had accused Iran of responsibility for those bombings and threatened retaliation. The Iranian government categorically denied any involvement in the bombing attacks.

In an apparent show of gratitude for the prompt reprisal against Iran, Reagan's special Mideast envoy Donald Rumsfeld traveled to Baghdad, the Iraqi capital, on December 19. Rumsfeld is the highest-ranking U.S. official to visit Iraq since 1967.

According to the December 20 *New York Times*, "American officials said they did not anticipate any dramatic change as a result of Mr. Rumsfeld's trip, but they did expect that the Iranians would see it as a further sign that the United States and Iraq are improving relations."

rector Stansfield Turner has pointed out that Washington could easily use high-altitude SR-71 spy planes instead of the F-14 warplanes.

The Syrian government maintains that its forces are in Lebanon only to deter an Israeli attack on Syria itself. Israeli units occupy large areas of southern Lebanon and control the strategic heights overlooking the Bekaa Valley, within easy striking distance of Damascus, the Syrian capital.

Syrian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Farouk Sharaa explained to the *Washington Post* that by seeking to repel the U.S. fighter-bombers that fly over Syrian positions in Lebanon, his government has only acted in self-defense: "We have said [to the U.S. government], 'Would you give the same rights to overfly the 6th Fleet?' They said, 'No.' Then we are not talking on an equal footing. You are talking like a superpower to a smaller country. You want us to give you rights you have denied us."

Washington and Tel Aviv demand that Syria drop its opposition to last May's agreement between the Israeli and Lebanese governments, which legitimized Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon and called for the severing of Lebanon's political ties with other Arab countries. Sharaa rejected this demand, saying the pact "undermines the existence of Lebanon and undermines our security. It allows Israeli guns 12 to 15 miles from Damascus."

Emboldened by stepped-up U.S. military aid and a new "strategic cooperation" agreement with Washington, the Israeli regime has escalated its own aggression in Lebanon. Israeli gunboats shelled the port of Tripoli on the northern coast seven times in 10 days in mid-December in an attempt to block the evacuation of PLO Chairman Arafat and Palestinian fighters loyal to the

organization.

Arafat and some 4,000 Palestinians managed to leave Tripoli on December 20, however, traveling on Greek vessels under French military escort. The guerrillas were to go to several Arab countries, including Tunisia, Algeria, and Yemen.

The PLO fighters and Arafat were forced to leave Lebanon after being surrounded at Tripoli by renegade elements of the PLO backed militarily by the Syrian and Libyan regimes. The evacuation is a big blow to the PLO's character as an independent or-

ganization fighting for Palestinian national self-determination. It opens a further stage in the ongoing effort by the Syrian regime to split the PLO and bring a wing of it under Syrian control.

Washington and Tel Aviv have welcomed Damascus's anti-PLO moves. But this has caused no slackening in their military moves against Syria. While Israeli gunboats were threatening the PLO at Tripoli December 19, Israeli warplanes bombed and strafed Syrian and rebel Palestinian positions in central Lebanon.

## Iranian revolutionary held one year

BY MARGARET JAYKO

It's been almost a year since Iranian revolutionary Babak Zahraie was arrested and placed in Tehran's Evin Prison. No one has been allowed to visit him since then. He has been held in solitary confinement on and off.

On Jan. 17, 1983, Zahraie was called to the prison for questioning by the prosecutor's office. He was placed under arrest there and has been held since.

No charges have ever been made public against Zahraie.

Zahraie, a central leader of the Revolutionary Workers Party (HKE) of Iran, spent years in exile during the tyrannical rule of the shah. Living in the United States, Zahraie was active in the anti-shah student movement and in the movement against the Vietnam War.

Zahraie returned to Iran in early 1979 and participated in the insurrection that toppled the monarchy.

He and the HKE have participated in the

mobilizations against the invasion of Iran by Iraq. He served as editor of *Kargar*, a socialist newspaper, until it was banned in 1982.

HKE leaders Bahram Atai and Mohammad Falsafi and other HKE supporters are also being held in Evin Prison.

Supporters of the Iranian revolution are urged to send messages calling for Zahraie's release. Such messages should request:

"As a supporter of the Iranian revolution and an opponent of U.S. imperialist attacks against that revolution, I urge you to free anti-imperialist fighter Babak Zahraie, currently held in Evin Prison.

"His continued imprisonment — based on no crime against the revolution — can only harm the just struggle of the Iranian people."

Messages should be sent to:

Ayatollah Musavi Ardebili, Shoraye Ali Dhazie (Supreme Council of Justice) Tehran, Iran.

Copies should be sent to the *Militant*.

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# Greyhound workers vote to end strike, gear up for next time

## Unionists weigh leaders' shortcomings

BY GEORGE JOHNSON

Striking Greyhound workers have voted 7,404 to 2,596 to accept a contract, the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) announced in Phoenix December 19.

The contract, which is retroactive to October 31, contains concessions in wages and benefits of about 14.8 percent. It was approved by a majority of ATU's Greyhound Council December 3 after intense pressure on them by federal mediators.

Greyhound workers in late November rejected by 96 percent a contract that contained wage and benefits concessions of 17 percent.

The company provoked the strike, which began November 3, by demanding more than 20 percent in concessions. The

**See editorial, page 26**

contract just ratified will give Greyhound an estimated \$160 million over its three-year life.

Major concessions included 7.8 percent in wages for present employees, loss of two holidays, and higher worker contributions for pensions and health care.

The new contract also allows the company to pay new hires less, but does not allow part-time workers, which Greyhound originally demanded.

Of concern to Greyhound ATU members is what will happen to strikers charged with damaging company property or injuring scabs. Greyhound originally said they were fired, but an ATU Local 1202 spokesperson in New York told the *Militant* that so-called major charges would be arbitrated through the grievance procedure, while minor ones have been dropped.

In San Antonio, it is unclear at this writing if Edwin Bunte, a driver arrested by the FBI on frame-up charges that were later dropped for lack of evidence, would get his job back.

Following the ratification, the 12,700 ATU members were scheduled to return to work at midnight December 20.

### Hard-fought strike

The strike was notable for the determination and unity of the ATU's ranks, and for the labor support they won in the face of an aggressive attack on the union by Greyhound's chairman, John Teets.

Teets was only able to run buses on 10 percent of Greyhound's routes, and these were often all but empty.

Teets had mounted an expensive advertising campaign against the strikers and demonstratively began hiring scabs. At one point he threatened to lease out bus operations.

Cops attacked pickets in a number of cities, and arrested several hundred. In Zanesville, Ohio, a striking driver was killed when a supervisor waved a scab trainee driver through a picket line and stop sign. A grand jury decided not to file charges.

But only a handful of ATU members crossed picket lines to scab. Other unionists actively supported the strikers, on picket lines, at rallies, and by giving financial donations. Many passengers rode on Greyhound's rivals.

Solidarity rallies were able in several cities to shut down or slow Greyhound's operations, particularly over Thanksgiving weekend.

### Difficult choice

Despite the large number of strikers who voted for the contract — 74 percent — none of them are happy with it.

"From day one we'll be preparing for the next strike," a Black Greyhound worker with 18 years' service told the *Militant* in New Orleans. "We'll be working under this thing, and every day we'll be reminded

of what we lost."

When he goes back to work, a San Antonio driver told us, "all I'll be doing is driving a bus. I won't take tools, like before. If it breaks down, I call a wrecker."

In deciding how to vote, the strikers faced a hard choice. They had to determine whether they could win more by staying out, which would require a determined and unified leadership. Most workers clearly felt the top leadership's decision to support the second concession contract, after opposing the first, meant such a leadership wasn't there. In addition, the workers knew they would need greater solidarity from the entire labor movement.

Under these circumstances, most workers felt they had won all they could for the time and needed to beat a tactical retreat.

Looming large in their calculations was Greyhound's traditional large layoff from after the Christmas holidays until Easter.

In the 17 days between the December 3 approval of the contract by the ATU Greyhound Council and the membership's ratification, the strikers have been considering what they could have done to win and how to win next time.

They have held these discussions on the picket lines, among themselves and with supporters, including socialist workers who have reported them to the *Militant*. Some ATU members and leaders have spoken at Militant Labor Forums around the

## Big stakes in British printers' fight

BY DOUG JENNESS

The British labor movement suffered a big blow this month when the Trades Union Congress (TUC), Britain's equivalent of the AFL-CIO, refused to back the country's leading printers union, the 133,000-member National Graphical Association, in a key struggle against union-busting laws.

The NGA's six-month struggle to defend unionized shops in the printing industry has led to a major challenge of antiunion laws enacted by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's Conservative government. The laws are part of a serious attack that the employers have launched on all fronts against British workers.

At an important turning point in the fight, the TUC general council voted to abide by the antiunion laws rather than extend badly needed support to the NGA.

The confrontation began last July when Selim Shah, owner of the Messenger Group newspapers, a chain of six free local newspapers published in the Manchester area, refused to accept only union workers — that is, a closed shop — at two of his printing plants. When six union typesetters at another of his plants in Stockport "withdrew" their labor and began picketing in protest, Shah fired them. They were replaced with nonunion scabs.

The NGA then sought to pressure local businessmen not to advertise in Shah's papers and to organize picketing at the nonunion plants.

On October 14, the High Court issued two injunctions against the union, one forbidding further calls to boycott the newspapers and one barring mass picketing. The rulings were made in accordance with the 1980 and 1982 Employment Acts.

These laws seek to narrow the scope for union action by making it harder to set up or maintain a closed shop; by opening union funds to seizure when officials engage in "unlawful" acts; and by outlawing most secondary protests, such as boycotts of products and mass picketing at places other than the pickets' place of work.

In other recent incidents, where the courts have issued injunctions under the new laws, the unions complied with the or-



Militant/Lynn Allen

**Hard fight by Greyhound strikers has inspired other unionists to solidarize with each others' struggles. Above, Los Angeles rally December 4 drew 4,000 unionists and families from strikes at Greyhound; by UAW at McDonnell Douglas; garment workers at Davis Pleating; and pilots and attendants at Continental Airlines.**

country, where they related some of their thinking.

Many of the workers are far from being demoralized. As a driver in Detroit said, "We'll be able to fight another day. Three years from now, we'll be stronger."

Roger Barry, an officer with ATU local 1303, told a Detroit Militant Labor Forum, "When they took us on, Greyhound figured we were so scattered we'd be pussycats, but we sure weren't."

Barry added that ATU members "learned a lesson from PATCO," the air traffic controllers' union, and went out and solicited labor support. "We can't go it alone," he said, "nor can other unions."

### Leaders and solidarity

Several solidarity actions were held while ATU members were voting. A rally was held in Detroit December 18 that drew 350 people, and a spirited demonstration of 500 took place in New York City December 14 as a memorial for Ray Phillips, the driver killed in Ohio.

Nevertheless, solidarity actions slowed

down after December 3, and ATU members noted it. A San Antonio picket charged that top ATU officials didn't encourage solidarity actions following December 3 "because they wanted us to vote for the contract."

Strikers in Cleveland said they were told by their representatives that the AFL-CIO had advised them to accept the settlement. "They said if we wanted to continue, we'd be alone," one declared.

At a Dallas Militant Forum, Bernie Nauta, president of the Dallas-Fort Worth division of ATU Local 1313, charged that the AFL-CIO had done little other than declare a boycott.

"This type of lip service is a damn shame," he said. If the ATU had been able to organize a real show of support — "Labor council rallies in every city, 500 pickets at every terminal" — Teets would have thought twice, he said.

In Newark, Al Brown, a picket captain with ATU Local 1210 in Philadelphia, told a Militant Forum, "We have to get rid of ineffectual leadership, we have to clean house."

Employment Policy and Organization Committee (EPOC).

It also won the support of the militant coal miners' union. Arthur Scargill, president of the union, told a rally in Warrington, that "My advice to the TUC is, 'for goodness sake stop talking and start fighting.'"

Left Labor Party spokesmen, such as Tony Benn and Eric Heffer, urged support for the NGA. But newly elected Labor Party leader Neil Kinnock refused to unequivocally support the NGA and publicly expressed his opposition to "law-breaking" by unions.

Len Murray, TUC general secretary, publicly opposed EPOC's decision. He declared that "if the TUC were to give support for the NGA's proposed action, it could well put the TUC itself in jeopardy." To seek support for this betrayal, he called an emergency meeting of the TUC's 51-member general council for December 14.

The big-business press, which had day after day been attacking the NGA as "frenzied," "irresponsible," and "violent," hailed Murray's decision to knuckle under.

The NGA leaders held off the strike pending a decision of the general council.

In a major blow to the NGA, the general council upheld, 29 to 21, Murray's unprecedented repudiation of a decision by EPOC.

Among those voting against Murray were representatives of the powerful Transport and General Workers and the National Union of Public Employees.

Joe Wade, NGA general secretary, strongly denounced the decision. "What happened today," he said, "is not only that the NGA has been sold down the river but every trade union has been sold down the river." He pointed out that this decision went against a commitment made by the TUC in early 1982 to support unions under attack by the Employment Acts.

The NGA called off the mass picketing for the time being but plans to continue the campaign for a closed shop and reinstatement of the Stockport Six. It has announced that it will consult with officials of supporting unions to discuss plans for waging an ongoing campaign against the union-busting laws.



# Grenada: confusion reigns as workers organize

BY MOHAMMED OLIVER

ST. GEORGE'S, Grenada, Dec. 16 — For several days now C-141 transport planes have been taking off from Point Salines. They're returning the U.S. combat troops to their bases in the United States. Today the last planeload of these troops left, accompanied by Maj. Gen. Jack Farris, who commanded the October 25 U.S. invasion of this country.

Left behind are 300 U.S. military police and support personnel and the Caribbean Peacekeeping Force (CPF) that participated in the invasion. The CPF is composed of 300 troops and police from seven Caribbean governments. It's announced on the radio news today that the Jamaican regime is planning to send another 1,000 troops to supplement the CPF.

That the U.S. government is confident enough to remove the overwhelming bulk of its occupation force, which reached 7,355 troops at its peak, shows Washington feels it has successfully crushed all resistance to renewed imperialist domination of Grenada. Moreover, the Reagan administration doesn't fear there will be any resurgence of revolutionary mass mobilizations of Grenadian workers and farmers in the near future.

This isn't wishful thinking by U.S. imperialism.

In 1979 the Grenadian people overthrown the U.S.-backed dictator Eric Gairy. They installed in his place a revolutionary government led by Prime Minister Maurice Bishop. Under the leadership of his party, the New Jewel Movement (NJM), jobs were created, schools built, and free medical care made available.

But this process was dealt a devastating blow this past October. Bishop's government was overthrown by a clique of state functionaries and military officers — members of the NJM — led by Deputy Prime Minister Bernard Coard. In addition, Coard organized the October 19 murder of Bishop and his supporters, which opened the door to the U.S. invasion. These events demoralized, demobilized, and disorganized the Grenadian people.

## Socialist cause damaged

"Coard destroyed four and a half years of hard, hard work," a sister told me in a restaurant off Market Square. She works at the National Commercial Bank and is a member of the Bank and General Workers Union (BGWU).

"But, even worse," the young worker continued, "he hurt socialism. Now people say they don't want anything to do with it. Not just here, but all over the Caribbean."

In my discussions with people here I found this assessment to be true. Anticomunism sentiments — particularly directed at Coard and his supporters and the Cuban government and people — are widely expressed. The wildest tales are being circulated: from "communist" plans to enslave Grenadians to disgusting reports of Cuban bestiality.

Discussions with Grenadian youth show they aren't as susceptible to the anticomunism hysteria. I've seen several sporting buttons with Bishop's picture and the in-

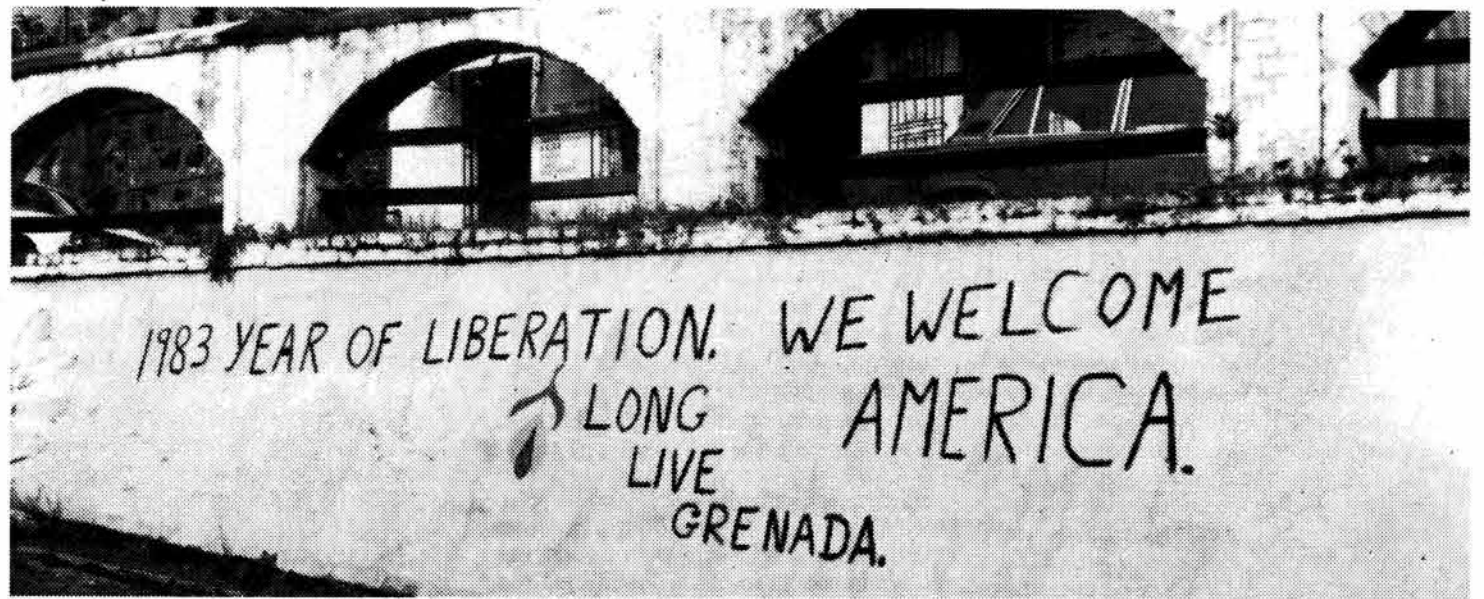
## Blacks sue Reagan for Grenada invasion

Many Blacks who have visited Grenada since the U.S. invasion have criticized the U.S. aggression.

The National Conference of Black Lawyers (NCBL), for example, is suing Reagan — *Conyers v. Reagan* — on the basis of the invasion's illegality under the War Powers Act. It demands withdrawal of U.S. troops.

In the suit, the NCBL is representing 11 members of Congress, including nine members of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC). On returning from Grenada NCBL cochairperson W. Haywood Burns wrote that the Grenada invasion increased the dangers posed by Washington to the Nicaraguan government.

The NCBL had close ties to the Bishop government, as did many CBC members. Rep. John Conyers of Michigan, for instance, on November 3 placed a speech by Bishop in the *Congressional Record* in which the prime minister sought dialogue with the U.S.



Militant/Mohammed Oliver  
**Demoralized and disoriented by overthrow of revolutionary government, many Grenadians mistakenly view U.S. intervention as act of liberation. Washington hopes to parlay this into permanent rejection of anticapitalist struggle — an impossible dream.**

scription "The Spirit of Bishop Lives — Forward Ever, Backward Never!" I've run into a couple of young Grenadians wearing Lenin buttons.

The National Youth Organization (NYO), however, no longer functions. Neither does the National Women's Organization (NWO). The NYO and NWO were mass organizations involving thousands of Grenadians in the country's revolutionary process.

## Bosses emboldened

Still functioning, though, are the trade unions. Here one finds the most conscious and organized Grenadians, such as the BGWU sister I spoke with. It's here that anticommunist ideas give way to pro-socialist ones.

In the last few days I've spoken with several trade union leaders. All had been jailed at some point since the invasion. Because they fear victimization, these working-class fighters asked that their names not be used.

When employees at Hadeed's garment factory returned to work the Monday following the U.S. invasion, they got some bad news. The owner said he was firing 11 of them — about half the shop. The workers weren't sure where to go for help in this fight with their boss. Rumor had it that their union, the Technical and Allied Workers Union (TAWU), wasn't operating. The union's president, Jim Wardally, has sought refuge from the U.S. repression in eastern Europe. The vice-president, Chester Humphries, is being held in the island's prison by U.S. authorities, and nearly all the other executive officers of the TAWU have resigned.

But the TAWU is functioning. I spoke with one of its current leaders, who described the union's work.

"Basically," she said, "we're trying to keep the union together. We've been having discussions with workers at the workplaces, explaining the importance of the union. We've used the example of Hadeed's to show what bosses would do without the union. How they would try to victimize the workers."

"The TAWU negotiated with Hadeed and won severance pay for the fired workers," said the union leader. "This shows workers that the union is here and that it will fight for them."

I asked her what workers are saying about the overthrow of the Bishop government and the subsequent U.S. invasion. "The majority of workers welcomed the Americans," she told me.

"But," she added, "the majority of Grenadian people were in agreement with the PRG [Peoples' Revolutionary Government]. They supported the maternity leave law, free education, jobs, and other benefits brought by the PRG. But workers didn't see this process as one of building socialism." The TAWU leader doesn't consider herself a socialist, although she, too, supported the Bishop government, which expressed avowedly socialist aims.

What does she think about the Cuban role in the revolution? Did she believe the stories circulating around the country about the aim of Cuban support to the PRG? If these stories were true, why didn't anyone

know anything about this before the U.S. invasion?

"People feel Bishop didn't know, or was brainwashed," she told me. "When Bishop found out, he tried to stop them and they killed him."

Who's they?

"The communists."

## 'Rumors, lies, propaganda'

A leader of the BGWU felt differently. "The widespread anticommunist hysteria," he said, "is a result of a campaign of rumors, lies, and propaganda as to what happened in October."

"For example," he went on, "have you heard the rumor about the warehouse the U.S. troops found that was filled with ration cards, tools, and uniforms for enslavement? Why tell such a boldface lie? To turn the masses away from the revolutionary process. They tell the masses, 'You see? The revolution was going to enslave you.'"

The BGWU leader said, "Before, rumors couldn't stand for long because the machinery existed to counter them. Now that isn't true. So, even the most vicious rumors are accepted as being true."

What was his opinion of the level of workers consciousness before October?

"Working-class consciousness," he said, "had reached a reasonable height. Workers had started to see the role they had to play. They were aware of their exploitation, sexploitation, and victimization, and they were aware of the laws implemented to counter this — the maternity leave law, the freedom to join a trade union of their choice, repeal of the Essential Services Act (which banned strikes in some industries), and so on. They saw their role in production and, to some extent, in management and accountability. That is, the workers began to see — just in small pockets, mainly smaller shops — that they should run things."

Were the workers socialist?

"No," the BGWU leader answered. "The socialist aims of the revolution were a long way off. In the short term, the PRG was bringing immediate benefits for the workers, especially the right to organize. That's why they supported the revolution."

"And right up to October the revolution was winning more people. But the ones who had opposed it from the beginning were becoming more vocal and aggressive. They were speaking out against socialism, criticizing the government for becoming communist, talking about what was supposed to be going on in the socialist bloc countries. They even raised these questions at the workers political education classes."

"Socialism was being discussed by a broad cross section of the working class, but they weren't convinced yet. We needed more time, a lot more time."

"Now," the BGWU leader said, "workers are worried about what's going to happen to them next. What's going to happen to the trade union movement."

"So far, nothing has been done to hinder our work. Even though most of us were picked up and held for a couple of days, then released."

"But we're preparing for some struggles. Already there have been instances where management has actually told workers that there isn't any union now. When

workers question this, they are told to 'Go get Noel.'" [Vincent Noel, who was general secretary of the BGWU, was murdered by the Coard faction on October 19.]

The BGWU leader is especially concerned about the rising unemployment since the U.S. invasion. "Agro-Industries has been closed," he told me. "The coffee plant also. Both of these plants were operated under the Ministry of Industrial Development. The workers haven't been paid. No letter or other communication has come from the ministry regarding its plans for these industries."

"The same thing has happened to the airport construction workers. The BGWU organized most of the 355 workers there. If you add to these workers the hundreds of PRA [Peoples' Revolutionary Army] members, workers in Bishop's ministry, and workers like those at Hadeed's, you'll find that of the approximately 6,000 jobs created by the revolution, only a little more than 1,000 still exist since the U.S. intervention."

So, what's in store for workers?

"I don't know for sure," the union leader says. "There's no leading force. No NJM."

"I believe," he continued, "that the new regime will try to bring back the old anti-labor laws. The workers, however, have been confronted with the revolution. So, they've seen the opposite of this repression and harassment from government. Anything contrary to that can cause a disruption, regenerate a workers political movement. That's been true with all the political parties here. Even Gairy started out as a trade union leader."

## Agricultural workers

One of the primary targets of the anti-communist propaganda has been agricultural workers. I talked with one of the leaders of the Agricultural and General Workers Union (AGWU). This union was formed after the 1979 revolution that brought the Bishop revolutionary government to power.

When I told the AGWU leader about what I had heard regarding Cuban plans to enslave rural workers, he had quite a laugh. "You see all those tools over there?" he asked, pointing to another section of the Productive Farmers' Union store where I interviewed him in Grenville. "Those are part of the 'slave' tools."

"The fact is," he said, "that the AGWU had asked for years for tools and uniforms for agricultural workers. Some time ago, Hungary and several other eastern European governments donated shovels, boots, pitchforks, and uniforms to the PRG. The uniforms are for rural workers who use pesticides — for their protection."

"The PRG sold these items at very low cost to agricultural workers and small farmers. We were in the process of working out plans to provide some workers this material as prizes in emulation campaigns. It has nothing to do with enslavement. That's a lie being spread to turn rural workers against the revolution."

The AGWU leader said that conscious steps were being taken to undermine the rural workers union. "First of all," he said, "the AGWU leadership was detained for awhile — as with other union leaders."

"While we were in prison, management

Continued on Page 23



# Mason: 'I've been an elected representative of working people'

The following is an edited version of the speech to the Seaside City Council December 15 by Councilman Mel Mason. In the speech, Mason explained his decision to resign his city council seat in order to run for president in 1984 on the Socialist Workers Party ticket.

I think it's obvious to everybody from what's been going on this week, especially in the media, that I will be resigning from the city council to run for president.

This was not an easy decision to make, and I want people to understand that. What I want to do here tonight is to take a few moments to make clear to the citizens of Seaside — especially those who have supported me for the last 3 years and 8 months, (which has sometimes seemed like 20 years and 8 months) — why I decided to do this.

What I feel is important is, first, to offer a basic assessment of what I have attempted to do since I've been on the council, and; second, I'll put forward a recommendation to the council on how to go about replacing me in such a way as to be most beneficial to the citizens of this community.

## New Vietnam in Central America

Much has been made about the way I've utilized the city council, especially in speaking out on matters of foreign policy and military policy. I think the press this past week has been correct in calling attention to my position on the invasion of Grenada — that is, my total opposition to the U.S. invasion and occupation.

It's my view that what is in order in the aftermath of this invasion on all our parts is a tremendous concern about the imminence of war in which U.S. ground troops are committed. We see things heating up in Lebanon and Central America.

In Nicaragua an invasion by counter-revolutionaries appears imminent, which would certainly be a first step toward involving the United States in a new Vietnam in Central America.

When I take this situation into account, along with the positions I have consistently taken as a city councilman in opposition to the involvement of the United States in Central America and to the reintroduction of the draft, I feel I really have no choice but to run a campaign in which I could take my message to people all across this country. A message on how to stop these wars and how to guarantee our young people a future, free from the threat of being dragged into wars, or of nuclear annihilation.

## Defend young people

I've used this city council seat to defend young people, to stand up for young workers, students, and GIs, and I think the most important defense I can provide for young people today is to run a campaign in which

## Socialist councilman Mel Mason says he'll run for U.S. president

Continued from front page with farm workers and undocumented workers.

The day after the announcement, Mason attended a talk on the U.S. war in El Salvador sponsored by the Salinas Latin America Solidarity Committee. He was introduced as a distinguished guest and candidate for president of the United States.

After the meeting, people surrounded Mason to congratulate him. Several farm workers, through a translator, eagerly discussed with him the possibility of building solidarity in the labor movement to stop U.S. intervention in Central America and elsewhere.

The response in the community of Seaside has been overwhelmingly favorable. People have phoned, stopped Mason in the street, or come by his home or office to congratulate him on his decision and to say they're looking forward to his presidential campaign.

we stress opposition to the draft and the entire war policy of the U.S. government.

To be able to run this kind of campaign in an effective manner requires that I give up my job [as Student Activities Director at Monterey Peninsula College]. So, this decision is not being taken without sacrifice. I'm giving up my livelihood.

I'm giving up a "good job" and, contrary to some of the implicit statements in the press, I'm not going on to bigger and better things financially. I'm going on to lower and lower things financially. I'm going to be working full-time after this campaign for the Black and labor struggles in this country and you don't get rich doing that. Unlike the politicians from the other two parties, who, when they retire, always retire to \$100,000-a-year jobs at the Chase Manhattan Bank, I'm not going to be retiring to that kind of position.

So, obviously, I'm not running this campaign to get rich.

I'm also giving up this city council seat that I've greatly enjoyed, even though there have been moments when I've been under so-called fire. Sometimes I think this has been most of the time. But I still have enjoyed this council seat. This has been one of the greatest experiences I've had as an individual and it will be an experience I will be making reference to for years to come.

## What makes my campaign different

I want to touch briefly here on what I think makes my presidential campaign so different politically from what other people are doing in the presidential elections and why I take this decision so seriously.

What I'm going to be talking about across this country is the same thing I've been talking about here in the city council.

That is, that Blacks, Latinos, women, and labor should make a break from the two parties of this system and form their own political party. A party formed by these forces, a labor party, based on the trade unions — or an independent Black political party — would be the kind of party that would not only run its own candidates for office, but would fight on a day-to-day basis for the rights of working people and all the oppressed.

This party would fight for prolabor legislation. It would fight against union-busting. It would fight for better wages, better benefits for the working people of this country — and ultimately it would fight to establish a government of, by, and for workers and farmers, one that would function in our interests.

One example of what I'm talking about is illustrated by what is happening over here at Sun Harvest in Salinas, where an entire corporation shut down its land and everything because it couldn't make a profit. The land is still there. The people still need food. But the land is just sitting there, idle.

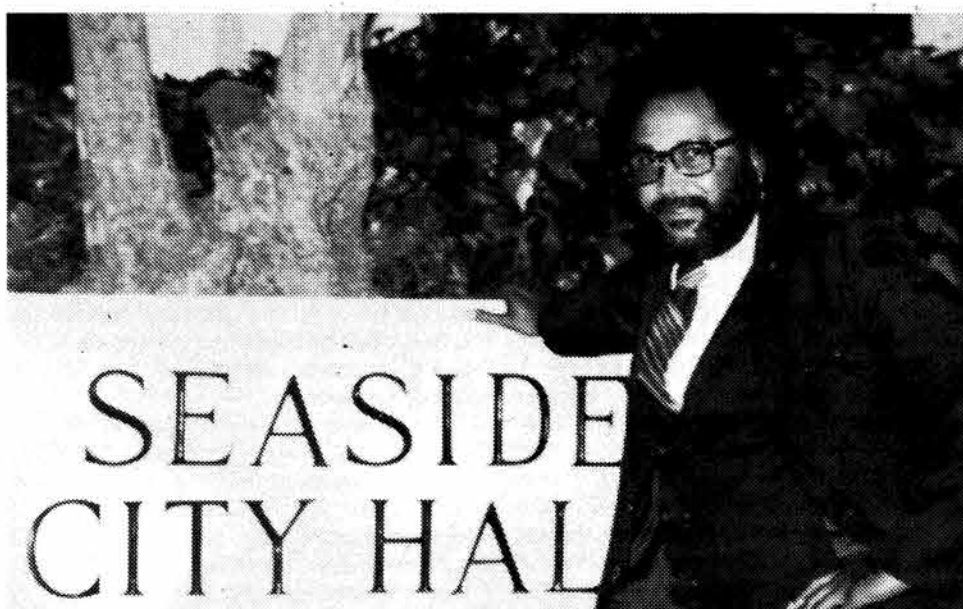
A workers and farmers government, the kind I want to see in this country, the kind I talked about in the city council and that I will be talking about throughout the presidential campaign, would make use of these resources. A workers and farmers government that works in the interest of working people would take that land and put people to work and farm that land, producing food.

## No quarrel with workers abroad

If we had a workers and farmers government, we would have a government of peace. This government would take the money that is normally expended for war and for making war in places like Central America and use that money to put all of the people in this country who wanted jobs to work, beginning with a massive public works program. We could end the unemployment problem we have here.

We can do this because we have no quarrel with working people abroad who are struggling for the same thing we are — a decent life.

One other small item. The media has im-



Militant/Lynda Joyce

Mel Mason, Seaside city councilman and Socialist Workers Party candidate for president of the United States, outside Seaside City Hall on day he announced resignation from city council seat.

plied that somehow I'm running a campaign I don't think I can win. What the media is obviously indulging in here is, I think, self-fulfilling prophecies. Part of the reason third party candidates and people who run as independents (which is something you might want to do someday) have so much trouble winning is because they don't give us the same coverage as they do the major candidates.

If we got the same coverage — I'd be willing to bet that, given the program I'll be running on, if working people could get a chance to compare that with the program of the other candidates who are running — I think working people, by and large, would say the program I'm running on is the one that speaks most clearly to their interests.

## Kind of elected official I've been

Lastly, I want to assess what I've done on the city council. People can disagree with my assessment, of course. I've had people disagree with me for the last three and a half years so that won't be anything new.

What kind of elected official have I been?

Unlike the Democrats and Republicans, I ran on a program back in 1980. I also made a whole lot of promises when I ran for office. I think I kept every single one of them. I don't think there is anybody, here or anywhere else, who can say I have not attempted to do everything I promised the people I was going to try to do. I have not always been successful but I tried to do everything I promised to do. I have been an elected representative of working people.

I spoke out against the war policy of this country, I've fought for women's rights. I've fought for affirmative action. I've walked picket lines with striking social workers in Monterey county and striking carpenters; with striking meatcutters and hotel and restaurant workers; with telephone workers when they were on strike, and I am now supporting the striking Greyhound workers.

I'm currently supporting striking copper miners in Arizona who are under attack by the state government and National Guard because they want a better standard of living.

I'm also doing the same with the fruit

and vegetable pickers who are on strike here in California.

I've been the only councilman who's really been pushing for union hiring in the construction phase of the redevelopment projects like the \$151 million worth of future redevelopment projects we have on the boards in this city.

I've solidarized with Eddie Carthan, the former mayor of Tchula, Mississippi. He was the first Black mayor they had and he was railroaded to jail by racist officials. He is free now because he was so blatantly framed up.

So, if you want to know what a labor party elected official would be like, then I think I've given you a three-and-a-half-year example.

## Which class I've represented

Obviously, I have not been a councilman for everybody. I think it is obvious I have not represented the banks, I have not represented the rich. It's obvious I have not represented the American Legion. It's obvious I have not represented the Veterans of Foreign Wars. I've not represented the landlords, and I damn sure haven't represented the racists.

But I think it's obvious I have represented the poor; I have represented the youth; I have represented the elderly; I have represented oppressed national minorities; I have represented women; I have represented tenants; and I have represented workers — because I chose to represent the people and not the enemies of the people.

On a final note, I want to make a recommendation to the council. I know the common assertion is that the communists are not democratic. I think I've been able to prove that communists practice the highest form of democracy and I think I've done that ever since I've been on the council. What I want to do is to demonstrate that again, by calling on this council to provide the people of this community the democratic opportunity to elect another person to this body instead of appointing a replacement.

Now, as Councilman Harvey said, my resignation will be effective beginning February 3. Thank you very much.

## Come to Kick-off Rally for 1984 SWP Presidential Campaign

Hear: presidential candidate Mel Mason  
vice-presidential candidate Andrea González  
At Young Socialist Alliance convention  
Dec. 30, 8 p.m., Sheraton-St. Louis Hotel, St. Louis, Mo.

clip and mail

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# Sandinista leaders hold mtgs. to discuss amnesty measures

BY JANE HARRIS

SIUNA, Nicaragua — Here in northern Zelaya Province, part of Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast region, many former gold miners have turned to cooperative farming.

Because the mines' riches had been so thoroughly exploited by the former U.S. owners, many miners have been forced out of work. But thanks to the July 1979 revolution which overthrew ex-dictator Anastasio Somoza, some 1 million acres of land have been turned over to cooperative and individual farmers throughout the country.

Interior Minister Tomás Borge visited here December 17 to turn over 16,000 acres in this area. He also explained some important political measures the government has recently taken to help hold off Washington's military attacks.

The first measure he addressed was the amnesty, decreed December 1, for all Miskito Indians except counterrevolutionary leaders. Included in the amnesty are participants in a December 1981 massacre in which Sandinista militia men were hacked to death with machetes.

Another decree, issued December 4, allows Nicaraguan nationals who fled the country following the revolution to return with safe-conduct. They may participate in the scheduled 1985 elections and in the fruits of land reform. The decree applies to those who have joined counterrevolutionary forces — if they lay down their arms — but excludes officers in Somoza's National Guard and leaders of counterrevolutionary groups. (For text of both decrees, see facing page.)

To the extent that the scope of these

measures is understood, they are far from having overwhelming support. Extensive explanations of the political and social reasons behind them are necessary. This was an important objective of Borge's visit to this region.

"We owe a big explanation to the mothers of the martyrs who were killed, so that they can understand the causes and the reasons for which we make these decisions," began Borge, addressing some 20 such mothers seated next to him at the land-reform ceremony.

"Imperialism tried to invade. All our in-

telligence reports indicated that imperialism had planned an aggression in the short run against Nicaragua. But," Borge continued, "it was necessary for them to try to justify it."

He explained that the amnesty was granted with the idea in mind of exposing the U.S. lies and slanders regarding the revolution's treatment of the Miskito Indians — as well as unifying the majority of Nicaragua's population.

Explaining that the Miskitos had been led to the counterrevolution through deceit,

Continued on next page



Nicaraguan leader Tomás Borge

## SCLC delegation visits Nicaragua

BY JANE HARRIS

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — "While we've only been here a short time, we feel it's been weeks," said Rev. Joseph Lowery, president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), "because



Militant/Steven Fuchs  
SCLC head Joseph Lowery

so much has been crowded into such a short period of time."

In its first two days in the country, the SCLC delegation had met with Vice-Foreign Minister Víctor Tinoco, agrarian reform officials, labor leaders, pro- and anti-government press, military personnel, students, and religious committees. Yet to come was a meeting with Managua's Archbishop Obando y Bravo and a visit with Miskito Indians and Afro-Nicaraguans on Nicaragua's Atlantic coast.

At a press conference held here December 14, the U.S. civil rights leader explained to some 35 journalists, "the history of our movement reveals an inextricable relationship between human rights at home and human rights around the world."

"World peace is threatened by explosive conflicts in the Middle East and Central America. We cannot afford to ignore or to refuse to participate in the development of friendly relations with our neighbors in Central America in peace with justice."

Regarding the recent denial of a visa for

Nicaraguan Interior Minister Tomás Borge, Lowery said, "Obviously the Reagan administration is consistent in that it did not permit the press to accompany and to know about the invasion of Grenada . . . [it] is afraid for the American people to hear the Nicaraguan leadership."

"I think that it was an especially reprehensible act in view of the fact that we have welcomed the foreign minister of South Africa while at the same time refusing to admit a distinguished leader of the Nicaraguan revolution."

When asked by the *Militant* about his initial impressions of the revolution, Lowery responded, "We do not claim to have found perfection in the policies just as we have not found them in the policies of our own government, but we believe that they're moving in the right direction."

"And most of all," he continued, "we support the right of the Nicaraguan people to resolve their own differences without intervention by the United States or any outside government."

## Argentina's president says he'll prosecute former junta leaders

Argentina's new civilian president, Raúl Alfonsín, announced December 13, three days after his inauguration, that his government would prosecute nine former leaders of the military junta that ruled Argentina from 1976 until late this year.

The generals and admirals, Alfonsín said, would be charged with murder, kidnapping, and torture. More than 10,000 trade unionists and political activists were killed during the junta's rule; more than 22,000 were kidnapped and "disappeared" by security forces.

On December 16 the Argentine Chamber of Deputies voted to annul an amnesty decreed by the junta prior to its holding of elections for a civilian government to take its place.

Many military officers are reportedly leaving the country to avoid possible prosecution for their role in the crimes or possible charges of incompetence during Britain's bloody reimposition of colonial rule over the Malvinas Islands, which Argentina had reclaimed.

Alfonsín, leader of the Radical Party, has allowed the widow of Juan Perón to return from exile. She is nominal leader of the Peronist party, which was defeated by the Radicals in the October elections. Both parties are procapitalist.

The new government has also moved to prosecute seven leaders of the Montoneros, a guerrilla splittoff from the Peronists that fought the junta militarily and was subjected to fierce repression. The Montoneros have hailed the ending of military rule and have announced the dissolution of their armed apparatus. Still, one of their leaders was immediately arrested upon returning to Argentina from exile on December 20.

The end of military rule in Argentina is also encouraging the labor movement, which has condemned a government-decreed wage increase of \$48 a month as too small to meet inflation, currently 600 percent annually.

Alfonsín, aiming to weaken the Peronists' base in the union officialdom, has also proposed a bill that would ostensibly open up the unions' leadership to non-Peronists, but would at the same time impose strict governmental control over length of terms of office.

## Salvador regime in crisis; danger of U.S. troops

Continued from front page

and, for all practical purposes, another third are in the same condition.

A second phase of the program permitted peasants, theoretically, to purchase up to 17 acres of land they previously rented. Most peasants have been reluctant to apply for such purchase rights because they have been "discouraged" by gun-toting landlords. An estimated 10 percent of those who did apply have been thrown off their land.

The land-purchase phase of the program is slated to expire December 31. Those involved in administering the land program are fearful that the Constituent Assembly will permit this proviso to expire at that time, bringing the entire land-redistribution program to a virtual halt.

This prospect evoked a strong response from Jorge Comacho, director of the Popular Democratic Union, which reportedly represents more than 200,000 peasants.

Comacho threatened that if this phase of the land program was not extended, his organization would refuse to participate in the regime's elections slated for next March.

A Washington official of the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD), blustered that if the program was not extended, his organization would pressure Congress to end economic aid to the Salvadoran regime. AIFLD is backed by the AFL-CIO but is actually beholden to the CIA.

Meanwhile, the rebel forces have been registering gains.

A striking confirmation of this was offered in a special report featured in the December 5 issue of *Newsweek*, surely no friend of Salvadoran liberation.

*Newsweek* correspondent Robert Rivard based the report on a 10-day journey through rebel territory. He wrote:

"Aided and abetted by the incompetence and habitual cruelty of the Salvadoran armed forces, the guerrillas are gaining ground in El Salvador and standing American policy on its head."

"Rebel ranks have been fattened with dozens of turncoat military prisoners, some

Army conscripts fleeing abusive officers, and large numbers of civilians terrorized by military and paramilitary repression.

"Since launching their latest offensive in September, the rebels have seized new areas across the eastern third of the nation. . . .

"The insurgents have also consolidated previous gains, inflicted hundreds of casualties on the armed forces and captured significant caches of arms, ammunition and uniforms paid for by the United States."

Meanwhile, he added, "the Salvadoran forces remain incapable of mounting effective search-and-destroy missions against the rebels."

The incapacity of the government army is certainly not due to a lack of firepower. Rather, as one high-ranking military official put it, "These troops have nothing to fight for and subsequently do not fight."

Efforts at a Vietnam-style "pacification" program have been a failure. A key pacification target was San Vicente province, long a guerrilla stronghold. A mass of specially trained government troops were sent in to drive out the guerrillas, followed by various social programs which would, hopefully, win the peasants to the government.

According to one news account from Santa Clara, in San Vicente, the rebels are back and are actively involved in the U.S. aid program.

One guerrilla leader told a reporter, "We make sure each project operates the way we want it to."

"For this reason," he added ironically, "we support the U.S. pacification program in El Salvador. The program helps children learn, gives people work, and provides us with weapons."

"My M-16, my fatigues, my pack, all come from President Reagan. We hope he sends more aid soon. And we thank him for what he has sent us already."

The mayor of Santa Clara said, "we asked the guerrillas if we could run the schools. The agreed — as long as we reserve one hour a day for them to come in and teach revolutionary propaganda."

Meanwhile, some 70 miles east of San Salvador, 1,000 government troops battled to drive out guerrilla forces from a coffee plantation area during the harvest.

Despite bombings from government planes and helicopters, the guerrillas doggedly held their positions.

In the midst of the fighting, rebel forces fanned out to the coffee plantations where they assembled the workers and farm owners. Increases were demanded in the daily wage, which is about \$5.

An officer commanding the U.S.-trained battalion in the area observed, "They gain a lot of sympathy."

Meanwhile, in early December, U.S. Ambassador Thomas Pickering spoke before a meeting of Salvadoran businessmen. He criticized the Salvadoran regime for failing to halt the activities of the death squads.

*Newsweek* reported that his warning "provoked little response" from most of the assembled capitalists. Most "seemed far more interested in whether Washington might launch a Grenada-style invasion to rid El Salvador of Marxist guerrillas."

That was not just wishful thinking on their part. The entire record of Washington's intransigent support to a bankrupt regime makes clear it has no intention of simply standing by while the liberation forces advance toward victory. The realistic prospect is that those advancing forces will yet have to face an invading army.

### Marxism and the Working Farmer

An *Education for Socialists* bulletin. Includes "American Agriculture and the Working Farmer," by Doug Jenness; documents and speeches by Frederick Engels, V.I. Lenin, and Fidel Castro. 62 pp., \$2.50.

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# Nicaraguan government's amnesty decrees

The following are the Nicaraguan government decrees on amnesty for nationals who have fled the country and for Miskito Indians involved in counter-revolutionary activities. The decrees appeared in a full-page message to the people of the United States run as an ad in the Sunday, December 11 *New York Times*. The ad was placed by the Nicaraguan embassy in Washington, D.C.

## The Decree of Amnesty offered by the Government of Nicaragua for crimes committed against it.

The Governing Junta of National Reconstruction Considering:

1) That it is the will of the revolutionary government to guarantee the normal development of the electoral process that will culminate in the elections of 1985, and that will commence on January 31, 1984, in accordance with the provisions of Decree No. 513 of September 10, 1980;

2) That the present North American administration is promoting a cunning campaign of armed actions carried out principally by the genocidal former Somoza Guards, directed against the Sandinista popular revolution and its will to assure internal democracy and pluralism;

3) That, despite these actions, the revolutionary government wishes to create the necessary conditions that will permit the participation of the greatest possible number of Nicaraguans in the electoral process;

Therefore, in use of its faculties, decrees:

**Art. 1** — The citizens who may have left the country on any date subsequent to July 19, 1979, and who may have been involved in illegal activities contrary to public order, even those of an armed nature, shall have all the guarantees that this decree confers in order to return to the country and incorporate themselves into civic life and the electoral process, with full right to elect and to be elected.

**Art. 2** — The Consulates of Nicaragua in North America, Honduras and Costa Rica shall issue respective safe conducts to the nationals who decide to accept the benefits of this decree.

**Art. 3** — The citizens who may have been involved in the activities of counter-revolutionary bands organized from abroad, upon laying down their arms, shall have, in addition to their respective safe conducts, the option of being incorporated into land distribution programs of agrarian reform.

In the case of agricultural proprietors who may have abandoned their lands, and which later may have been occupied, their lands shall be restored to them or adequate compensation made.

In the cases foreseen in this article, the safe conduct may also be issued by delegates of the Ministry of Interior in the respective zone.

**Art. 4** — The following shall be excepted from the benefits and guarantees referred to in Articles 1 and 3 of this decree:

A) Officers of the extinct National Guard and members of the Somoza security force involved in repressive acts who have not surrendered to the tribunals of justice;

B) Those who have been condemned by judicial processes for acts against public security and order without having been pardoned by a resolution approved by the Council of State;

C) Those who, acting as counter-revolutionary chiefs or ringleaders, have publicly or privately requested the intervention of a foreign power in Nicaragua and the provision of funds by this same foreign power to finance counterrevolutionary actions in Nicaragua, or those who have accepted such funds;

D) Those who, in the same situation described in the previous clause, have directed or planned terrorist attacks to cause damage to the Nicaraguan population or the economic resources of the country.

**Art. 5** — The persons who decide to receive the benefits and guarantees of this decree may do so within a term commencing with publication of the same and expiring on February 21, 1984.

**Art. 6** — The dispositions of this decree shall not affect those contained in the law of agrarian reform (Decree No. 782) and

those of Decree No. 1352.

**Art. 7** — The present decree shall be effective upon its publication in "THE GAZETTE," the official journal.

Given in the city of Managua on December 4, 1983, "The year of struggle for peace and sovereignty."

## The Decree of Amnesty for Nicaraguans of Miskito origin and others involved in certain aggressions in the Province of Northern Zelaya.

From the Governing Junta of National Reconstruction:

1) Whereas: The Junta of the National Reconstruction Government gathers from the historic program of the Sandinista National Liberation Front the commitment to struggle for the true recovery of ethnic minority rights and incorporates them into the statute on the rights and guarantees of Nicaraguans.

2) In the statement of principles regarding indigenous communities of the Atlantic Coast, both the Junta of the National Reconstruction Government and the National Directorate of the F.S.L.N. recognize that this people has traditionally been exploited, oppressed, and submitted to savage colonialism.

3) The Government of the United States has fomented counterrevolutionary activity developing a campaign of confusion intended to impede the Government of Nicaragua, together with authentic indigenous representatives, from advancing the solution to the difficult and complex problem inherited from the past.

4) Zelaya, the traditional site of settlements of indigenous communities, has been a zone of special interest for the development of counterrevolutionary plans.

5) The level of counterrevolutionary aggressions to which the zone has been submitted, together with the secular underdevelopment and exploitation and lack of progress of the communities, has made them open victims to the manipulation, deception and terror of the counterrevolutionary bands.

6) Taking into account the special circumstances under which the Miskitos have lived and considering that it has been deception and coercion that has led them to commit crimes, the National Commission for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights has recommended revolutionary generosity to the Junta of National Reconstruction Government.

7) The Sandinista People's Revolution is the product of the uninterrupted struggle of our people to recover the interests of the oppressed and exploited. Since July 19, 1979, for the first time, the people of Nicaragua, from diverse exploited sectors and ethnic groups, have had the possibility to participate in the construction of the new society.

Therefore, in use of the Junta of the National Reconstruction Government powers and in exercise of the right of pardon, decrees the following:

**Art. 1:** Amnesty is granted to Nicaraguan citizens of Miskito origin who have committed crimes against public safety and order and any other related crimes between December 1, 1981, and December 1, 1983, and who currently are in any of the following situations:

A) Under detention, whether already sentenced, pending sentence, pending trial, by order of the Attorney General's office or detained for investigation.

B) At large, either inside or outside national territory.

**Art. 2:** Amnesty is also granted to all Nicaraguan citizens who, because of the events that occurred along the Coco River or whatever other event that has occurred as a consequence of the aggression that has been imposed upon Northern Zelaya between December 1, 1981, and December 1, 1983, have become involved in the criminal activities referred to in Article 1.

**Art. 3:** In order to partake in the benefits of this law, Nicaraguan citizens who are outside national territory may freely return and join in the tasks required by the revolution.

**Art. 4:** The delegation of the Government Junta in the Northern Zelaya region is empowered to adopt the appropriate procedures to facilitate and expedite the reunification and reincorporation in daily ac-

tivities of all those beneficiaries of the amnesty.

**Art. 5:** Upon publication of this decree, the police and authorities of the judicial, penitentiary, and security systems must immediately release the persons who benefit from the amnesty.

**Art. 6:** This decree, published in Spanish and Miskito, will enter into effect from the moment of its publication in any

collective mass media organ, without prejudicing subsequent publication in the official register "THE GAZETTE."

Decreed in the city of Managua, on December 1, 1983, "Year of struggle for peace and sovereignty."

Governing Junta of National Reconstruction  
Daniel Ortega Saavedra  
Sergio Ramírez Mercado  
Rafael Córdova Rivas



Klassekampen/Björn Rönblad

Three hundred seven Miskito Indians who benefited from recent amnesty. Law is designed to unify country in face of U.S. aggression and to rob Washington of a prime slander against the Nicaraguan revolution — alleged mistreatment of the Miskito people.

## Sandinistas discuss amnesty

Continued from preceding page

false promises, and force, Borge said the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) considered the amnesty a historic responsibility of the revolution as well as part of its generosity.

Borge had just finished touring the northwestern part of the country with the same message. There he explained amnesty was granted "to weaken the enemy lines and give an opportunity to many peasants who had been brought by trickery and force to the enemy ranks."

Perhaps even a bolder move was the December 4 decree that granted safe-conduct back to all Nicaraguan nationals who fled the country.

This measure includes rank-and-file members of Somoza's National Guard, many of whom are currently part of the so-called Nicaraguan Democratic Force bankrolled by Washington. In a briefing to international journalists just before the decree was officially announced, this point was specifically confirmed by the FSLN press representative.

Inside Nicaragua, hatred of the National Guard is very intense because of its murderous role during the insurrection against Somoza.

Commander Jaime Wheelock, minister of agrarian reform, explained the thinking behind the measure to a group of resident foreign technicians and journalists December 9.

"Part of Somoza's army were peasants. That's why we didn't take very severe measures against them, even though they had committed crimes," he began. "A peasant member of the National Guard bears much less responsibility than an officer."

"It's necessary to call for reconciliation — not with the Somozaists, not with the National Guard officers, not with those really responsible, not with those allied with imperialism, with foreign powers — but with the humble and deceived people."

"And that's why, if their property hasn't been occupied — because most of these were peasants from the mountains and no one occupied their property — they can simply return and take back their land. If their land has been occupied, we will give them land somewhere else."

Although the death penalty was abolished in the early days of the revolution, it is more common than not to hear Nicaraguans demanding this measure for captured ex-National Guardsmen still fighting against the revolution. On the

other hand, Nicaraguans make a distinction between the different elements fighting against the revolution. Near unanimous hatred is expressed for the National Guard, but a large degree of generosity and understanding is shown for the plight of the Indians and peasants tricked into the ranks of the counterrevolutionaries.

The *Militant* found, in interviews with a dozen or so construction workers and others, that most people were not yet aware that the December 4 decree included ex-soldiers of the Guard.

One local CDS coordinator in Managua told the *Militant* "I do not accept their coming back." However, she thought few would return. "How can they come back after the crimes they committed?" she asked.

The Sandinista Youth's National Executive Committee, in an open letter to the "mothers of our heroes and all Nicaraguans," explained that they supported the decree, despite the loss of 158 of their militants this year alone, because it helped to disarm imperialism.

Nicaragua's internal right wing — big business, the opposition political parties, *La Prensa*, the Catholic Church hierarchy, and right-wing unions — were slow to respond. When they did they were indignant.

The decree did not go far enough for them.

They demanded the same treatment for the Somozaist *contra* (counterrevolutionary) leaders responsible for the 50,000 Nicaraguans killed in the 1979 revolution and for those who openly collaborate with the CIA against Nicaragua.

U.S. Ambassador Anthony Quainton, whose office is trying to unite these right-wing forces, said on a Managua call-in radio show that the 1985 elections would only be "free" if "all members of the Nicaraguan family" — referring to the Guard and *contra* leaders — could participate.

Responding to this view, quite openly stated by the internal right wing as well, Borge demanded to know here in Siuna, "how do they think that these torturers could sit at the same table with the mothers of these martyrs — those who have had to part with the fruit of their wombs? They must be crazy!"

Borge declared that "the National Directorate of the FSLN guarantees it is never going to eat from the same plate as the leadership of the counterrevolution!"



# Rise in support for Palestinians among U.S. workers

Article from Palestinian magazine

The following article appeared in a recent issue of *Falestine Althawra* (Palestine Revolution), published by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). The article, entitled "American People and the Palestinian Situation: Increased Support to the PLO among American Trade Unionists," was written by Dr. Hatem Hussaini, a member of the Palestine National Council. Hussaini spoke at the solidarity rally in Oberlin, Ohio, mentioned in the article. Translation from Arabic is by the *Militant*.

BY HATEM HUSSAINI

At a time when the Palestinian revolution is being besieged by other Arabs and some Arab regimes are attempting to deal blows to Palestinian forces in the Bekaa Valley, Black and progressive forces in the United States are defending the Palestine Liberation Organization and its combatant leadership.

These forces in the United States understand that the political aim of President Reagan's militarism is to try to compensate for his inability to solve his domestic economic problems and unemployment by attacking the national liberation movements in El Salvador, Nicaragua, South Africa, and the Arab world.

That is why Reagan has sent the U.S. Navy and Marines to those areas and is using the U.S. arsenal of modern weapons and bombs to destroy these liberation movements.

In the Arab world, the Reagan administration views the PLO and its forces as the major threat. It even accuses the PLO of fomenting revolutions in Africa and Central America, and Washington levels brutal military, political, and media attacks against the PLO and its leadership.

But the American people — particularly the forces that oppose Washington's wars and military interventions, the working class, which pays the price for these wars through unemployment, as well as the forces of the oppressed such as Blacks, Chicanos, and others — understand that the PLO is fighting for freedom and for a just peace against the Zionist forces and agents, supported by the Reagan administration.

These layers in the United States have been affected by the war in Lebanon, by the U.S.-armed Zionist savagery, and by the steadfastness of the Palestinians. They are putting defense of the PLO and the Palestinian people on the political agenda for this stage.

The U.S. Socialist Workers Party conference in Ohio in August was a big demonstration of support for the PLO and its armed struggle against imperialism and Zionism. The SWP is a longtime supporter of the PLO's struggle, but recently put the need to defend the PLO and resist American military intervention in the Arab world high on its agenda.

[One thousand] Americans attended the closing rally of this conference. Many of them were from labor unions and organizations of women, students, and writers. In political workshops at the conference, a number of party leaders pointed out that America's goal is to wipe out the PLO's military presence through certain Arab regimes that are besieging the PLO in the Bekaa Valley, in order to impose an American solution on the region.

An important indication of the changing position of the progressive American forces was the August 27 mass demonstration in memory of the Black leader Martin Luther King, Jr. In the past, the Black movement, and particularly the wing led by the late Dr. King, supported Israel and its policies due to the Jewish-Zionist influence.

But the PLO was able to open up a dialogue with Black leaders. The PLO also set up tours in which a large number of Black leaders like Jesse Jackson, Walter Fauntroy, and Joseph Lowery were able

to meet with Brother Abu Ammar [Yassir Arafat] and see that the Palestinian struggle is for liberty and justice.

All this bore fruit and the Black movement, through a number of marchers on August 27, raised the slogan "No U.S. Military Aid to Israel."

Although Jewish organizations tried to pressure the march organizers to ban this slogan, and threatened to pull out of the march, Black leaders announced that they stood with the liberation movements and were against military intervention in El Salvador, Nicaragua, and the Arab world.

Washington, D.C., witnessed the most massive march of humanity on August 27, with over a half million Americans participating. They came from Black organizations, labor unions, women's organizations, peace groups, and so forth.

In front of the Lincoln Memorial, Black leaders addressed the vast assembly and stated their opposition to Reagan's domestic and foreign policies and their determination to organize political action to get him out of the White House. Many speakers announced their support of the Palestinian people's struggle. A message from Brother Abu Ammar was read to the demonstration, in which he saluted the struggle of Black Americans and particularly leaders like Jackson, Fauntroy, and Lowery.

But participation by Arabs and Palestinians in the march was not as large as it should have been. Because of their small numbers, their slogans and views were not very visible at the rally. Perhaps this reflects the fact that certain Palestinian organizations were preoccupied with the

## Takebacks forced on Eastern Airlines unions

BY GEORGE JOHNSON

Unions representing workers at Eastern Airlines agreed December 8 to extensive one-year wage cuts and work-rule changes under pressure from Eastern and its creditors, primarily U.S. and European bankers.

The dollar worth to Eastern of the concessions is estimated at \$360 million. In exchange, Eastern agreed to a profit-sharing plan and to seats on its board of directors for two union representatives.

Eastern's 3,900 pilots, members of the Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA), are to give up 22 percent of their pay next year under the new agreement. The company's 12,500 workers who are members of the International Association of Machinists (IAM), 5,800 flight attendants represented by the Transport Workers Union (TWU), and 16,000 nonunion workers are to give up 18 percent of their pay.

This is in addition to earlier wage givebacks by Eastern workers.

Under the new proposal, which must be ratified by the membership of the unions involved, Eastern is to issue new common stock until the employees' share is 25 percent. In addition, three million shares of preferred stock are to be issued, under which the employees could receive a maximum of \$26.2 million a year.

The IAM and TWU are to be granted one member each on Eastern's 18-member board, which already includes representatives from the ALPA and Eastern's nonunion workers.

Charles Bryan, head of Eastern's IAM workers, announced that a "structure will be established to allow review, comments and suggestions on issues regarding business plans, major capital expenditures, subsidiaries and/or affiliates prior to submission to the board of directors."

This "structure" is to have a purely advisory role. And, as in other cases where union members sit on corporate boards, they will be in a minority.

Eastern reported in November that major



Arabs joined massive march on Washington, D.C., for jobs, peace, and freedom August 27. Member of Palestine National Council writes that trade unionist and progressive support for PLO, especially among Blacks, is shown in actions like this march. One sign carried by marchers said "No U.S. Military Aid to Israel."

issue of the split and the fighting in the Bekaa Valley and did not pay enough attention to work in the American arena in defense of the PLO and the Palestinian revolution.

Arab participation in this massive march was led by the Palestine Human Rights Campaign headed by former Sen. James Abourezk, who was a member of the march preparations committee. The November 29 Coalition also took part, as did a small number of members of the Palestine Congress of North America.

These events confirm that the priority in the American arena is to work with American progressive forces, particularly Blacks, the peace movement, the labor unions, and other sectors to gain support for the Palestinian people's struggle. We must call on them to act as quickly as pos-

sible to defend the Palestinian people, especially the children and women who are resisting liquidation and exile in occupied Palestine and occupied southern Lebanon.

The duty of the Palestinian movement is to join forces with these movements to further its cause. As a mass movement, we must oppose any move against the PLO, any attempt to trap its forces or to attack the Palestinian camps, whether carried out by the Zionists or by other Arabs.

Indeed there is a progressive American force that stands for a policy of defending the Palestinian people led by the PLO in the American political arena. We must help to build its strength. This is not a simple matter, but it is necessary to the Palestinian revolution and to the rights of the steadfast people in the heart of the occupied territories.

banks, to which it is heavily in debt, had agreed to relax payment conditions provided that "management and the major labor groups agree to implement corrective programs satisfactory to the lenders."

A spokesman for Eastern's biggest lender, Chase Manhattan Bank, said that if the proposal is ratified by the unions' memberships and "if other productivity increases and expense reductions that we understand are part of what is being put together" are implemented, Eastern will have "met the requirements which we agreed to in principle in terms of covenant relaxation and we would be prepared to go forward."

Translated to English, this means the bankers will continue to extend credit to Eastern, now that its workers are to make major concessions in addition to those they accepted earlier.

Most of Eastern's borrowings are for the purchase of new Boeing 757s and Airbus

Industrie A-300s. Its revenues have been hurt by low traffic and increased competition.

Thus Eastern's workers are being forced by the corporation and its creditors to pay for Eastern's expansion, a fact that rankles many of its employees.

Earlier this year, Eastern's chairman, Frank Borman, had threatened bankruptcy proceedings unless the unions agreed to further concessions. Continental Airlines had used bankruptcy proceedings as one of its union-busting tactics.

Another major concession by airlines unions has been made at American Airlines, which forced them to accept a lower starting wage for new hires — by as much as 30 percent for attendants and 50 percent for pilots.

United and Delta are reported by the big-business press to be "setting their sights on similar agreements."

## Fear of invasion of privacy up sharply

The number of U.S. citizens "very concerned" about threats to personal privacy from governmental and corporate sharing of confidential information about them has jumped sharply, according to a Louis Harris survey whose results were released December 7.

In 1978, 31 percent of the public felt "very concerned" about such threats to their privacy. This year the figure climbed to 48 percent.

Seventy percent of those interviewed said it is "likely" that "a government in Washington will use confidential information to intimidate individuals or groups it feels are its enemies; 86 percent thought this was "possible."

A third or more of the public, according to the poll, believes the Internal Revenue Service, FBI, and phone companies "probably share" information with others.

Half or more think such data are shared by public opinion research concerns, the

Census Bureau, banks, and government welfare agencies.

The figures rose to 57 percent for insurance companies, 65 percent for loan companies, and 75 percent for credit bureaus. These higher figures probably reflect personal knowledge of sharing of private information.

A separate poll asked the same questions of "leadership groups," and found them "far less alerted to the dangers than the people are," Harris said at a news conference.

Only 24 percent of members of Congress or their aides agreed that it was likely that the government would use confidential information against its perceived enemies, as opposed to 70 percent of the public.

Only 37 percent of business executives thought this was likely.

These leaders "just haven't given it much thought," Harris commented.



# International Socialist Review

Supplement to the Militant

December 1983

## Grenada's workers & farmers government Its achievements and its overthrow

This month's *International Socialist Review* features the dedication and introduction to a new book just published by Pathfinder Press, *Maurice Bishop Speaks: The Grenada Revolution 1979-83*. The 400-page book contains speeches and interviews with the murdered Grenadian revolutionary leader, as well as statements by the Cuban leadership on the events surrounding Bishop's overthrow and the U.S. invasion of Grenada.

The book was edited by Steve Clark, who wrote the introduction below. Clark visited Grenada in 1980 and 1983 and is the editor of the socialist news magazine *Intercontinental Press*. The introduction is copyright © 1983 and reprinted by permission of Pathfinder Press.

The book is available for \$6.95 by writing to Pathfinder Press, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Please include 75 cents for postage and handling.

*To the memory of Maurice Bishop, Unison Whiteman, Fitzroy Bain, Jacqueline Creft, Vincent Noel, and Norris Bain whose accomplishments and living political heritage form part of the imperishable revolutionary continuity of the world's working people in their struggle against imperialist oppression and exploitation and for the establishment of socialism.*

*To George Louison, Kenrick Radix, Don Rojas, and other leaders and cadres of the New Jewel Movement and Grenada revolution who maintain their commitment to the struggle for the revolutionary transformation of their own country, the entire Caribbean and Central America, and the world.*

*To the Grenadian and Cuban working people who gave their lives in Grenada in combat against U.S. imperialism's first direct use of U.S. troops in its effort to halt the advancing socialist revolution in the Americas.*

BY STEVE CLARK

On October 12, 1983, Maurice Bishop, prime minister of Grenada and founding leader of the New Jewel Movement, was placed under house arrest at the orders of a clique of army, government, and party officials organized by Deputy Prime Minister Bernard Coard.

On October 19, Bishop and five other central leaders of Grenada's revolutionary government and the New Jewel Movement were murdered in cold blood, again at the order of Coard's clique.

On October 25, thousands of U.S. Marines and Army Rangers landed in Grenada to establish a military occupation of the island and brutally reverse the far-reaching popular advances gained as a result of the March 13, 1979, revolution.

In less than two weeks, the Grenada revolution had been betrayed, its workers' and farmers' government overthrown by renegades, and the island nation invaded and occupied by U.S. imperialism.

Pathfinder Press is publishing this new collection entitled *Maurice Bishop Speaks* because Bishop's own words are the best available record of the accomplishments and inspiring perspectives of that revolution, which for four and a half years marched forward arm in arm with revolutionary Nicaragua and Cuba. Making this material accessible to the widest possible audience is an elementary responsibility of all those engaged in the struggle against world imperialism and for freedom and justice for the vast majority of humanity.

### Political weapons

Maurice Bishop's speeches and interviews provide political weapons not only for revolutionary-minded fighters in Central America and the Caribbean, nor even just for those in other oppressed nations of Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. They also form part of the revolutionary continuity and political arsenal of fighters for national liberation, democracy, peace, and socialism throughout the world, including working people in the United States, Britain, Canada, and other imperialist countries. Bishop himself stressed this international significance of the Grenada revolution during a July 1980 interview reprinted here from the socialist newsmagazine, *Intercontinental Press*. The interview was conducted by Andrew Pulley, Diane Wang, and myself.

Bishop told us that the New Jewel Movement under-



Grenada revolution of March 1979 represented first extension of American socialist revolution after Cuba.



Militant/Ernest Harsch  
Murdered Grenadian Prime Minister Maurice Bishop. His speeches are part of revolutionary continuity of Marxism.

stood "the importance of progressive forces worldwide joining together. We see that struggle as being *one* struggle, indivisible. And what happens in Grenada, we recognize its importance for all struggles around the world."

"We certainly place a great deal of importance on the activity, the potential, and the possibilities for the American working-class movement," Bishop said. Not only its potential for solidarity with national liberation struggles and opposition to Washington's war moves, but also "in terms of the potential of doing mortal damage to the international capitalist and imperialist system from within the belly of the main imperialist power on earth."

Both in this 1980 interview, and again very forcefully in his June 1983 speech to more than 2,500 people in New York City, Bishop emphasized the historic importance and potential impact of the Grenada revolution on the Black population of the United States. The island is 95 percent African in origin, he reminded the New York audience, and it is also English-speaking, thus facilitating direct communication with U.S. Blacks.

What Bishop wanted to communicate above all was the indissoluble connection between the battles for national liberation and socialism, and the worldwide interdependence of peoples engaged in those struggles. He understood that the March 1979 victory in Grenada, together with that in Nicaragua the following July, represented the extension of the American socialist revolution opened two decades earlier in Cuba. He told a May Day 1980 rally in Havana that "we recognize in Grenada just as the imperialists recognize, that without the Cuban revolution of 1959 there could have been no Grenadian revolution, nor Nicaraguan revolution in 1979."

Bishop also recognized what this meant for U.S. imperialism; the stakes were very high, involving the preservation of the capitalist system of exploitation and oppression right on its own doorstep. Washington has "certainly put Cuba, Nicaragua, and Grenada as being the key countries to get at," Bishop explained during the July 1980 interview.

"Cuba for obvious reasons. It is obviously the vanguard in this region. Nicaragua because of its *tremendous* importance for Central America. Everybody in Central America wants to be a Sandinista." And Grenada, in addition to the special reasons already cited, because it was part of this unfolding revolutionary process.

As Fidel Castro put it, Grenada, Nicaragua, and Cuba were "three giants rising up to defend their right to independence, sovereignty, and justice on the very threshold of imperialism."

### U.S. invasion of Grenada

The November 1983 U.S. invasion of Grenada marks the first direct use of Washington's own military forces in the new Vietnam-style war that the U.S. rulers have begun to carry out in Nicaragua and El Salvador, as well. Rolling back the socialist revolution in the region is top priority for the U.S. capitalist class, its government, and its two political parties. That is why virtually all Democratic and Republican politicians, both liberals and conservatives, fell in line behind the Reagan administration's militarily successful onslaught against Grenada, despite a few initial tactical misgivings.

The world relationship of class forces has shifted further to the detriment of the U.S. imperialists over the past decade. Since their military defeat at the hands of Vietnamese liberation forces in 1973-75, and the break in one of the longest capitalist economic booms, the U.S. rulers have sustained further blows — in Indochina, Iran, and in Central America and the Caribbean.

These blows have increased the political price Washington will pay at home and internationally when it directly uses U.S. troops and planes against revolutionary struggles. Opposition to military interventions abroad, which became widespread among U.S. working people during the Vietnam War, will come more quickly and go deeper as the deaths and setbacks of the next war unfold. Recognition that this will occur has put important obstacles in Washington's path. It has already been of decisive importance to the workers and peasants of Nicaragua, Grenada, El Salvador, and Cuba. It has bought them precious time to consolidate their revolutions and to prepare to defend their conquests against the inevitable escalation of Washington's aggression.

The U.S. rulers, however, do not intend to wait until

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they have achieved majority support at home before launching military action against the Central American and Caribbean revolutions. They cannot accept the extension of the socialist revolution to Nicaragua, then El Salvador, followed by other countries. For Washington, the events that opened wide the door to an invasion of Grenada created a golden opportunity to make a first decisive move. The prior beheading of the revolutionary forces and disarming of the people there meant that military victory would come relatively cheap in U.S. lives and dollars. The accomplished fact of the invasion was then used to whip up greater support for Washington's political and military objectives. The justifications for the invasion were presented after it had already taken place. The propaganda of the deed came first, then propaganda of the word.

## Reaction in the United States

The response in the United States to the invasion showed that such actions by the rulers can succeed, at least for a time, in spreading confusion and even winning an important measure of acceptance. At the same time, the polarized character of the response, the debates and discussions in thousands of workplaces, and the immediate nationwide protests against the invasion all testified to the profound changes in consciousness of the U.S. working class over the past decade. These changes are the result not only of the Vietnam War, but also of escalating attacks on jobs, living conditions, racial equality, and political rights in the United States.

Polls confirming majority opposition to U.S. military intervention in Central America will not stop Washington from aiding the counterrevolutionary war already under way against Nicaragua and the Salvadoran freedom fighters. Nor will antiwar opinion alone halt the steady buildup of U.S. military forces in Honduras and throughout the region, or the use of these U.S. troops, planes, and ships in what could escalate into a new Vietnam-style war.

But the changed political consciousness of the U.S. working class and labor movement will play a much more decisive role much more rapidly than even during the late stages of the Vietnam War in helping to ensure defeat of the U.S. invading forces and victory for the workers and peasants of those countries.

That is one reason why Nicaraguan leader Tomás Borge told visiting Canadian trade unionists last summer that while he was "not optimistic in regards to peace," he was "absolutely optimistic in terms of victory."

Behind Borge's confidence in victory is his conviction that the armed workers and peasants of Nicaragua are determined to defend their revolution, their social conquests, and their national sovereignty.

## Grenada before Bishop's overthrow

Prior to the events culminating in the arrest and subsequent murder of Bishop and other NJM leaders, this same conviction about the readiness of the Grenadian workers and farmers to defend their social gains gave reason for confidence that if imperialism ever invaded, it could only conquer after a mighty battle. As Bishop often warned, it would be far easier for U.S. invaders to come onto Grenada than to get off it alive.

"As we begin the fourth year of our revolution," Bishop told the third anniversary rally on March 13, 1982, "it is very clear that the great strength of the revolution, first and foremost, lies in the unbreakable link between the masses and the party; between the masses and the government; between the masses and the state. That is what gives our revolution invincible force, because the masses see the party, see the state and the government as theirs; not something foreign or strange, or apart or isolated from them, but living, throbbing entities that embody their aspirations, their interests, and their hopes."

When the U.S. invasion actually came October 25, however, Grenada's workers' and farmers' government had already been overthrown thirteen days earlier. On October 12, the Coard group placed Maurice Bishop under house arrest and organized to use whatever deadly force was necessary to establish its own total domination. One week later, the revolution suffered another devastating blow, when Bishop, five other NJM leaders, and other Grenadians were gunned down by Coard's supporters. The very first proclamation of the new, self-appointed "Revolutionary Military Council" was a four-day round-the-clock curfew, with the warning that violators would be "shot on sight." The entire population of Grenada was placed under house arrest.

"In our view, Coard's group objectively destroyed the revolution and opened the door to imperialist aggression," President Fidel Castro explained to more than 1 million people gathered in Havana November 14 to honor the Cuban volunteer construction workers killed during the U.S. invasion of Grenada.

"As soon as the internal dissensions, which came to light on October 12, became known," Castro explained, "the Yankee imperialists decided to invade."

As a result of these events, Castro said, the new Grenadian government had become "morally indefensible."



Grenada was originally colony of France, then Britain. French shipped Africans to island and forced them to perform slave labor on plantations.

And, since the party, the government, and the army had divorced themselves from the people, it was also impossible to defend the nation militarily, because a revolutionary war is only feasible and justifiable when united with the people."

The U.S. imperialists, Castro said, "wanted to kill the symbol of the Grenadian revolution, but the symbol was already dead. The Grenadian revolutionaries themselves destroyed it with their split and their colossal errors."

"We believe that, after the death of Bishop and his closest comrades, after the army fired on the people, and after the party and the government divorced themselves from the masses and isolated themselves from the world, the Grenadian revolutionary process could not survive."

"In its efforts to destroy a symbol," he said, "the United States killed a corpse and brought the symbol back to life at the same time."

Imperialism brought the Grenada revolution to the attention of millions of workers and farmers around the world. It had to try to destroy the example of that revolution, to obliterate the "symbol" it had become. But the lessons contained in this collection, *Maurice Bishop Speaks*, prove that this example has importance far beyond Grenada and the Caribbean. These are living lessons for those committed to learning from and continuing the worldwide fight that Maurice Bishop was part of.

## Grenada's colonial history

As Cuban journalist Arnaldo Hutchinson explains in the historical review of Grenada that follows this introduction, the island had been a colony — first of France, later Britain — for more than 300 years prior to obtaining formal political independence in 1974. The French colonialists exterminated the native Carib and Arawak Indian population, replacing it with slave labor shipped in chains from Africa. Britain maintained Grenada as a source of agricultural products processed and packaged by British companies, which walked off with virtually all the profits.

Little changed for the people following independence. The neocolonial government of dictator Eric Gairy, already ensconced under direct colonial administration, remained in power. In the early 1950s, Gairy had won wide popular support as a leader of the fight for independence and to unionize agricultural workers. He had subsequently misused his influence, however, to sell out Grenada's working people and build up his own holdings in real estate, tourism, and commerce. His government served the profit needs of a handful of wealthy Grenadians, above all his own. The island's economy remained subordinate to British, Canadian, and U.S. finance capital.

## Origin of New Jewel Movement

In 1973 the New Jewel Movement was formed, primarily through the merger of two organizations that had been established the previous year: the Movement for Assemblies of the People (MAP), whose best-known leader was Maurice Bishop, and the Joint Endeavour for Welfare, Education and Liberation (JEWEL), whose most prominent spokesperson was Unison Whiteman. The new organization quickly showed its capacity to mobilize mass support through two rallies of more than 10,000 people each that same year. Over the rest of the

decade, the NJM helped initiate and lead repeated struggles for democratic rights, against imperialist domination, and for improved conditions for workers and farmers. NJM members won leading positions in several island trade unions, as well as three seats in Grenada's parliament.

Maurice Bishop and Unison Whiteman explained the NJM's political evolution and perspectives in a 1977 interview with Cuba's main weekly magazine, *Bohemia*, retranslated into English for this collection. The initial political inspiration for the organization, Bishop said, came from "the ideas of 'Black Power' that developed in the United States and the freedom struggle of the African people in such places as Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau."

"But unquestionably," Bishop added, "through the Cuban experience we got to see scientific socialism close up." This, above all, he explained, "has been teaching us, on the practical level of day-to-day political struggle, the relevance of socialism as the only solution to our problems. Our party began to develop along Marxist lines in 1974, when we began to study the theory of scientific socialism."

In the weeks leading up to March 13, 1979, NJM leaders learned of a plot by Gairy to assassinate them while he was out of the country. The revolutionists thwarted the planned massacre by organizing a successful armed takeover of the True Blue army barracks and of the island's sole radio station. An appeal for mass support over the renamed Radio Free Grenada brought the people into the streets by the tens of thousands, occupying the police station and other strategic points and ensuring victory.

The revolutionary government born in this triumphant popular insurrection was politically independent of both the imperialists and local Grenadian capitalists and plantation owners, basing itself instead on the workers and farmers. The New Jewel Movement took the initiative in establishing a People's Revolutionary Government (PRG), composed primarily of NJM leaders but also of representatives from other sectors of the anti-Gairy opposition, including some professionals and businessmen. Maurice Bishop became prime minister.

The New Jewel Movement immediately carried out a measure proven by history to be indispensable to the survival and advance of every genuine workers' and farmers' revolution. As Bishop explained in a 1981 interview with Cuba's *Granma Weekly Review*, "It is our firm belief that no revolution has a right to call itself that if it does not have or does not develop a capacity to defend itself. This is why the Gairy army was disbanded and a new army, the People's Revolutionary Army, was created. This is also why we have been building the People's Revolutionary Militia so that the people of our country will themselves be involved in the defense of what they have fought for and what they are trying to build."

## Radical popular uprising

The March 1979 revolution was a radical popular uprising. In its direct impetus and immediate tasks, it was a democratic, anti-oligarchical, anti-imperialist revolution. Like the Cuban revolution twenty years earlier, and the Nicaraguan revolution a few months later, however, the Grenada revolution was at the same time profoundly anticapitalist from the outset. Deeply influenced by the Cuban revolution, the NJM leaders recognized that consistent efforts to carry out democratic tasks and throw off imperialist domination would inevitably bring the workers and farmers into conflict with the profit needs of both foreign and local capitalists.

Starting from the organization and mobilization of Grenada's working people to combat imperialist oppression and establish democratic liberties, the new government began laying the foundation for working people to carry out the transition from the domination of capitalist property relations to the establishment of a workers' state based on state-owned industry, economic planning, and a government monopoly of foreign trade. That was how the Cuban revolution had developed, making possible enormous gains for the Cuban workers and peasants in education, health, life expectancy, elimination of discrimination against Blacks and women, and growing democratic participation in administering their own affairs.

That is what the New Jewel Movement set out to achieve on March 13, 1979. "With the working people we made our popular, anti-imperialist, and democratic revolution," Bishop explained. "With them we will build and advance to socialism and final victory."

The new workers' and farmers' government was an indispensable instrument at the service of the Grenadian masses to deepen their mobilization, organization, education, and class consciousness. It put an end to the political dictatorship of the imperialist-backed capitalist minority in Grenada, replacing it with the opening stage of what Marxists call the dictatorship of the proletariat — that is, political rule by, and in the class interests of, the workers and poor farmers, the laboring majority.

The Grenadian capitalists, landowners, and some im-

Continued on ISR/6



# Revolutionary groups in El Salvador advance toward unification

BY CINDY JAQUITH

A new political organization has been formed in El Salvador called the Revolutionary Workers Movement-Salvador Cayetano Carpio. A split from the People's Liberation Forces-Farabundo Martí (FPL), the group publicly announced itself the first week of December in San Salvador.

The second week of December, a major document was released by the FPL, which is one of the five groups that make up the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN). The document condemns the split action of the Revolutionary Workers Movement and its decision to promote the factional policies of Carpio.

Salvador Cayetano is the best known longtime leader of the Salvadoran revolutionary movement.

## August FPL convention

The FPL statement reports that the Revolutionary Workers Movement originated in the splitters' rejection of the decisions made at a meeting of the Revolutionary Council — the highest body of the FPL — last August. Delegates at that meeting voted to:

- Condemn Carpio, their former commander-in-chief, for ordering the April 6, 1983, assassination of the FPL second-in-command, Mélida Anaya Montes (known as Commander Ana María).
- Condemn Carpio's decision to commit suicide April 12, 1983, after the arrest of the assassins, in an attempt to "evade his responsibility and save his reputation."
- Condemn the factional actions of Carpio within the FPL and FMLN as a whole that culminated in the murder of Ana María.

- Condemn Carpio's line of blocking unified action of the groups within the FMLN, which obstructed progress toward fusion of the groups into a united FMLN as the vanguard of the Salvadoran revolution.

Ana María was murdered in Managua, Nicaragua, by a group of FPL members directed by an FPL leader and close associate of Carpio's, Rogelio Bazaglia (known as Marcelo).

At the time it appeared that both Ana María and Carpio were victims of a secret faction in the FPL. Larry Seigle, writing in the June 10, 1983 *Militant*, commented on a report by Bob Armstrong in the *Guardian* on this question. "As Armstrong reports," Seigle wrote, "both leaders had become strongly committed to reversing the old approach of the FPL. The murder of Ana María was engineered by Rogelio Bazaglia who had been part of the FPL central leadership and who vehemently opposed the organization's new stance toward unity within the FMLN."

Now it is clear that Carpio himself headed the secret faction.

The FPL document states that an investigation established beyond any doubt that Carpio did indeed organize the assassination in an attempt to reverse the progress the FPL was making toward greater unity with the other four groups in the FMLN. Ana María was a proponent of these steps toward unity, as was the majority of the FPL leadership.

Carpio's guilt, the political conclusions the FPL has drawn from this experience, and the split that has occurred as a result, are of such importance internationally that both *Barricada*, the newspaper of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) of Nicaragua, and *Granma*, the newspaper of the Cuban Communist Party, immediately printed the entire text of the FPL statement. The Cuban press service Prensa Latina also distributed it internationally.

On the following two pages of *International Socialist Review*, we print a translation of the FPL document, along with a statement issued subsequently by the Nicaraguan Ministry of the Interior.

## History of Salvadoran movement

Salvador Cayetano Carpio (known as Commander Marcial) was a baker who became a leader of the Salvadoran labor movement in the 1940s. In 1947 he joined the Communist Party of El Salvador and rapidly became part of its leadership. He spent two years studying in the Soviet Union. In the late 1960s he became the general secretary of the CP, but broke with the organization in 1969 over a disagreement on the tactics of armed struggle.

He and his supporters formed a group which publicly announced itself as the FPL in 1972. It began armed struggle against the Salvadoran dictatorship.

Other political groups, including eventually the CP, also took up arms against the Salvadoran regime. But these different organizations remained divided. Functioning underground, in conditions of severe repression, all of them suffered politically to one degree or another

from ultraleft sectarianism in relation to the labor movement and popular organizations. Factional stances among them blocked joint action even when no overriding political differences existed.

## Victory in Nicaragua

The 1979 triumph of the revolution in Nicaragua opened a new stage in the struggle in El Salvador, inspiring the workers and peasants there with the potential to do what their Nicaraguan sisters and brothers had done. As mobilizations by the Salvadoran masses against the dictatorship grew, militants of the several revolutionary groups began to press for unification of the fighting forces.

The example set by the leadership of the FSLN was important in this process. The FSLN had been divided into three competing and public factions that sharply criticized each other until shortly before the insurrection that overthrew the Somoza dictatorship. Unification of these three tendencies into a single fused FSLN was key to the revolution's victory.

## Formation of FMLN

In 1980 four Salvadoran groups — the FPL, CP, People's Revolutionary Army, and Armed Forces of National Resistance — joined together to form the United Revolutionary Directorate (DRU), which was projected as a new unified command for the military and political organizations struggling to overthrow the dictatorship. Later joined by the Central American Revolutionary Workers Party, this became the FMLN.

Around the same time, the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) was formed, uniting mass organizations, unions, and broader political forces looking to the FMLN for political leadership.

But the five political groups in the FMLN still maintained their separate existences, and to a large degree, separate fighting forces. For its part, the FPL, under Carpio's leadership, took the approach that while all five FMLN member groups were equal in principle, the FPL was more equal than the others in practice. It should have veto power within the FMLN and the right to carry out actions that conflicted with the agreed-upon united course of the entire FMLN.

As one FMLN representative described it, the FPL's policy on many questions of joint strategy and action was one of "sí, pero no" — yes, but no. In other words, accepting the idea of consensus and compromise as necessary for unified action, but going a separate way in practice.

The deepening of the revolution in El Salvador swelled the ranks of the revolutionary movement with new fighters and posed more sharply the necessity of the unification of the leadership. This helped speed the process toward greater unification within the FMLN. The Cuban and Nicaraguan leaderships also worked to further this process.

At a 1982 conference of Latin American revolutionists held in Havana, Manuel Piñero, a Central Committee member of the Cuban CP, stressed the importance of consciously striving for unity of revolutionary leadership:

"Life shows that it is not enough to proclaim the need for unity in order to advance toward achieving it. It is precisely in this manner that the real maturity of a vanguard and its full commitment to the cause of its people is tested. Individual passions, sectarian deviations, and other limitations must bow before the collective interests of the masses."

The FPL statement explains that the majority of the FPL leaders voted at meetings last January and February to correct their previous factional approach and work to genuinely unify the activity of the five groups in the

FMLN. Two FPL leaders — Marcelo and Marcial — disagreed.

"Marcial clung tightly to dogmatic and sectarian schemes and plans," the document explains. "This together with his obstinacy about prevailing at whatever costs, became an obstacle to the progress of the People's Liberation Forces-Farabundo Martí and exercised a negative influence on the process of unification of the revolutionary forces as a whole. . . ."

According to the FPL statement, Marcial refused to argue for his point of view "frankly and honestly before the collective leadership." Recoiling from objectivity, he resorted to personal attacks against those who disagreed with him, particularly Ana María. He increasingly abused the powers correctly given him for military purposes as commander-in-chief to seek advantage on political matters within the party, obstructing leadership decisions on unity and other matters.

Carpio organized a secret faction against the FPL leadership and placed the interests of his grouping above the interests of the party, the FMLN, and the Salvadoran revolution itself. Ultimately this factional blindness led him to use his authority as military commander-in-chief to order the murder of Ana María.

## Coard and Carpio

There are parallels between this case and the events that led to the overthrow of the workers and farmers government in Grenada, which paved the way for the U.S. invasion and occupation of that island. That defeat for the world working class came about because of the actions of a secret faction led by Bernard Coard within the leadership of the New Jewel Movement (NJM).

Coard's secret faction was based on one of the tendencies that fused to form the NJM but never really dissolved in the process of fusion after unification. The Coard grouping organized a campaign against Grenadian Prime Minister Maurice Bishop, the central leader of the NJM. In October this grouping carried out a coup against the revolutionary government, placing Bishop under house arrest, and then ordered troops to murder Bishop and his supporters when they attempted to lead the island's workers and farmers in an armed uprising to reestablish their government.

The Coard supporters didn't explicitly raise fundamental political differences with Bishop. Rather, they spread gossip and slander about Bishop and his supporters being "petty bourgeois" and "less Marxist." They charged Bishop with "one-manism" and attempting to foster a cult around himself. As surviving NJM leader Kenrick Radix put it, Coard used "the worst of Stalinist tactics."

Similarly, in Cuba in the 1960s, a secret faction was organized by Aníbal Escalante against the leadership of the Integrated Revolutionary Organizations, which later became the Cuban Communist Party. Escalante's grouping raised the charge that Fidel Castro was building a cult. (Twenty years later, some of Coard's backers echoed this slander, saying Castro had made himself "a little god.")

In a 1962 speech, Castro explained what such charges are all about and why they must be taken head-on:

"If we have one leader, two, ten with prestige, we should have more leaders with prestige," Castro said. "We should not destroy those leaders who have prestige" — that only destroys the revolution itself.

Castro's point was that revolutions are strengthened by having leaders who by their actions earn respect in the eyes of the masses. Seeking to merit such respect and use it selflessly has nothing in common with cliquism, factionalism, or building a cult.

This point is also relevant to the developments inside the Salvadoran FPL. Carpio's fundamental flaw was not that he was a strong-willed leader, or that he had considerable national and international respect. He earned that through his leadership in the revolutionary movement. His fatal error was *factionalism*, the precise thing that betrayed the revolution in Grenada, and could have done the same thing in El Salvador had other leaders not eventually recognized the danger and begun to combat it.

The FPL statement explains the price at which the comrades have learned these lessons: "a living experience in struggle, attained at the cost of the lives of thousands of compañeros, and the assimilation of the revolutionary teachings of other peoples, led our organization as a whole — leadership and ranks — to advance alongside the struggle of our people." It is apparent from this passage that the conclusions the FPL is drawing have been influenced not only by the struggle within El Salvador, but by the lessons established by the Cubans, Nicaraguans, Grenadians, and others around the world.

The debate over these questions has not ended in El Salvador, however. The Revolutionary Workers Move-

Continued on ISR/5



# People's Liberation Forces statement on murder of Commander Ana Maria

The following is the full text of the statement released December 9 in El Salvador by the People's Liberation Forces (FPL). The *Militant* has translated a copy of the text obtained by our bureau in Managua. The statement has also been printed in *Barricada*, newspaper of the Sandinista National Liberation Front of Nicaragua, and in *Granma*, newspaper of the Communist Party of Cuba.

The Central Committee of the People's Liberation Forces-Farabundo Martí (FPL), member of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN), communicates to the working class, to the Salvadoran people, and to the other peoples of the world, to sister revolutionary organizations, to the world revolutionary movement, and to progressive governments, that in the course of the complex, difficult, self-sacrificing, and victorious struggle of the Salvadoran people for their liberation — in face of the oligarchy's rabid and genocidal military dictatorship, supported, equipped, and trained by Yankee imperialism — the People's Liberation Forces-Farabundo Martí, together with the other revolutionary organizations that make up the FMLN, have been applying, developing, and enriching their strategic line, assimilating the rich revolutionary experience of our people and of other peoples of the world.

## August Revolutionary Council meeting

In August of this year we held the Seventh Plenary Meeting of our Revolutionary Council, the highest leadership body of our FPL-Farabundo Martí party. In the framework of intense work, great seriousness, responsibility, and an increased level of political and ideological cohesion, the delegates discussed and deepened their understanding of the major problems facing the people's war, our organization, and the people of our country. This has made it possible to provide our party and people with:

A. A profound assessment of the assassination of our second-in-command, Commander Ana María, and of the suicide of our chief leader, Marcial, including a scientific assessment of the facts.

B. A strengthening of our party's highest leadership bodies, the Revolutionary Council and Central Committee, for which first and second secretaries were elected.

C. A profound scientific analysis of the national and international situation including the development of the war and the relationship of forces both domestically and abroad. On this basis, strategic guidelines were drawn up for the present period — guidelines that enrich our general strategic line.

## Investigation of assassination

Following investigation and assessment of the sorrowful and repudiated assassination of Compañera Mélida Anaya Montes (Commander Ana María) and the suicide of Salvador Cayetano Carpio (Marcial), the FPL Revolutionary Council has concluded the following:

That Salvador Cayetano Carpio, who was our chief leader and commander-in-chief of the People's Armed Forces for Liberation, embarked in recent years on a process of ideological and political decomposition. This led to grave distortions and deviations that eventually resulted in Compañera Ana María's assassination, which Carpio was the main organizer of and responsible for. Among these deviations were the following:

1. Marcial developed an exaggerated estimation of himself. He began to consider himself the most most consistent, pure, and flawless revolutionary of our country and of the entire region, as the sole genuine spokesman for the Salvadoran proletariat and people.

He developed a strong inclination toward receiving praise and adulation, toward placing himself and his opinions above those of the collective leadership and of party bodies, to protect and pay attention solely to those who applauded him blindly.

At the same time, toward others he expressed a lack of confidence. He looked on those who did not accept his views as a danger to the revolution, as unconscious instruments of the enemies of the revolution.

2. As a consequence of this exaggerated self-esteem, Marcial became the victim of serious political backwardness and became incapable of thinking and acting at the level required by the historic demands posed by the development of our revolution.

## Dogmatic and sectarian schemes

Marcial clung tightly to dogmatic and sectarian schemes and plans. This, together with his obstinacy about prevailing at whatever cost, became an obstacle to the progress of the People's Liberation Forces-Farabundo Martí and exercised a negative influence on the process of unification of the revolutionary forces as a whole, thus



NACLA  
Commander Ana María, assassinated last April, was second-in-command of People's Liberation Forces (FPL) of El Salvador. FPL has determined her murder was organized by Salvador Cayetano Carpio, former commander-in-chief of FPL.

harming the effort to liberate our people.

Meanwhile, a living experience in struggle, attained at the cost of the lives of thousands of compañeros, and the assimilation of the revolutionary teachings of other peoples, led our organization as a whole — leadership and ranks — to advance alongside the struggle of our people. Our thinking became enriched, our line and orientation developed. This, naturally, opened up a confrontation of ideas, within the framework of party norms and statutes.

3. Marcial's deviations deepened with the development of the people's war and with the development of the necessary internal ideological struggle to keep pace with these advances. Holding stubbornly to his opinions and demonstrating the negative characteristics of his personality, Carpio used his position as chief leader of the FPL-Farabundo Martí to make his point of view prevail.

With increasing frequency and on increasingly important points, he violated our party's revolutionary principles of functioning. He paid no attention to the leadership bodies, or to the decisions and accords they had already reached, and instead acted behind the back of our party.

The brunt of this conduct by Carpio was directed against the compañera Commander Ana María, Mélida Anaya Montes, second-in-command of the People's Liberation Forces, whom he saw as a rival. Acting out of deep-seated egocentrism, and finally out of hatred, he expressed the view that Ana María was undermining his own personal prestige.

Marcial increasingly distanced himself from the dynamic of collective thinking in our organization and

leadership bodies, which never supported him in his attitude against Ana María.

4. While the collective leadership of the FPL-Farabundo Martí was linking itself closely to the ranks of our party, to the masses and combatants, carrying out alongside them the daily struggle of our people, Marcial distanced himself from both the leadership and the ranks.

He surrounded himself with a group of people who saw their relationship with him as a source of prestige and authority within our party. These elements formed a genuine cult of personality around Marcial, adulating him, propagandizing his ideas, developing a genuine fanaticism toward him as an individual. This process, while it did not take hold within the overall membership of the FPL, did affect some compañeros.

5. In January and February 1983, the FPL-Farabundo Martí Political Committee and later, the Central Command, met to prepare for the Seventh Revolutionary Council, our party's highest body.

When the Central Command met, all of its members, with the exception of Marcial and Marcelo [Rogelio Bazaglia] approved agreements and measures that would enable application of our general strategic line to the new conditions that had arisen, thus assuring the advance of the people's war for liberation.

Salvador Cayetano Carpio, as a member and chief leader of these bodies, had the most ample opportunity to argue in favor of his point of view, but he did not do so frankly and honestly before the collective leadership. He never displayed the proletarian courage of presenting these views before the leadership bodies — the Political Committee and the Central Command.

To the contrary, he used methods that were incorrect and worthy of condemnation. At the meeting of the Central Command he tried to confuse its members. Against Ana María he launched denigrating accusations that were in contradiction with the most elementary norms of revolutionary ethics, accusations that only ended up in his degrading himself morally.

## Dealt political and moral defeat

In light of such foul procedures, his unhealthy methods and intentions were rejected. Marcial was thus dealt a political and moral defeat by the entire Central Command, with the exception of Marcelo.

However, the Political Committee and Central Command did not yet understand the depth and genuine gravity of Marcial's ideological deformations. Accordingly, the measures adopted by those bodies were aimed at constructive efforts intended to encourage a context favorable to correction of his views and to strengthening the unity and cohesion of our party — the Popular Liberation Forces-Farabundo Martí.

6. The collective leadership addressed and criticized Marcial in the most fraternal manner, seeking to encourage conditions in the party that would help him overcome the problem as a revolutionary.

The Central Command, in an expression of maturity and genuine party-building spirit, reiterated its confidence in Marcial as chief leader and founder of our organization. It expressed confidence in his capacity to overcome his weaknesses and correct his deviations.

But Marcial no longer shared the collective interests of the party, of the revolutionary forces, of the working class, or of the people. Marcial was no longer the leader of the people he had been known as in the past. Grave political, ideological, and moral deformations, in combination with his recalcitrance in regard to the politico-military reality of the process and our party, ended up affecting his conduct and personality.

## Lost all perspective

7. Salvador Cayetano Carpio lost all perspective and respect for the FPL-Farabundo Martí, an organization that has earned the confidence of our people. Blinded by political ambitions and fanatical self-aggrandizement, he ordered and planned, along with Marcelo, the assassination of Ana María, thus stripping himself of his qualities as a revolutionary and leader of our people. To carry out the crime, he used a group of combatants placed under military discipline, in complicity with the compañera's security personnel.

Discovered in his crime Marcial opted, in a final act of political cowardice, for suicide, attempting to evade his responsibility and save his reputation, already stained by the infamy he himself had cast over it. He preferred to die stubbornly maintaining his egocentrism and self-veneration.

Before committing suicide, Marcial added a new infamy to his already incorrigible political cowardice. He wrote several letters, one of them to the Central Command, in which he presented the events as a conspiracy by false revolutionaries against him and what he called



his unimpeachable course as a genuine revolutionary.

Marcial thus left behind poison to continue harming the revolution and our organization, in an action that was equally a desperate and blind attempt to preserve his own image above all.

#### Total and absolute proof

But his murder of Ana María is totally and absolutely proven.

The Seventh Revolutionary Council of the People's Liberation Forces-Farabundo Martí, held in August 1983 in Chalatenango, received conclusive proof of this. It studied the phenomenon in all its depth, in all its determining and conditioning factors, and adopted a unanimous resolution condemning Marcial for the crime.

Such events, deformations, and deviations have no precedent in the life of the FPL-Farabundo Martí. However, as a result of the confusion, resentment, opportunism, and the fanatic personality cult around Marcial, a few ex-compañeros were taken by surprise and have gone to the extreme of separating themselves from our party.

They are seeking to split and divide the internal unity of the FPL, using methods that are deviate and harmful to the revolution and to our people, and that benefit only the enemy.

This group holds the backward, sectarian, and anti-unity positions put forward by Marcial. They deny the FMLN's role as the vanguard of the revolution and proclaim themselves the sole representatives of the working class. They deny the role that all democratic and progressive forces, together with our working class, can play in our process. They are deeply impregnated with an anti-party way of thinking and acting.

Linked to this group of individuals is the recently emerged Revolutionary Workers Movement-Salvador Cayetano Carpio. With this group, they are seeking to elevate the figure of Carpio before our people, hiding and covering up what is now clear and proven: because of his ideological disintegration, Marcial ended up betraying the interests of the working class and our entire people, doing irreparable damage to the revolution.

#### An undeniable fact

In face of all the slanders spread by this group about supposed deviations of the FPL-Farabundo Martí and of the entire FMLN, there is an undeniable fact that the entire world can see: the powerful advance of the revolution; the striking political and military victories won by the people's forces; the critical political and military situation in which the dictatorship finds itself; and the unquestionable advances in the process of unification and consolidation of the FMLN.

Revolutionaries know well the practices and measures developed by imperialism and world reaction to destroy revolutionary movements. One of their primary objectives is to sow divisions among the vanguard organizations of the people. In our country Yankee imperialism and its domestic puppets have carried out innumerable efforts to divide the vanguard of our people, the FMLN, and each one of its member organizations.

#### Grenada events

No one is unaware that recently in Grenada a group of revolutionaries was used either directly or indirectly by imperialism to provoke division and confrontation within the New Jewel Movement. This created propitious conditions for Yankee imperialist aggressors to justify and carry out the invasion of Grenada, dealing a strategic blow to the revolution.

We call on this group [Revolutionary Workers Movement-Salvador Cayetano Carpio] to exercise good sense and reflection, to understand that their attitude is harmful to the interests of the proletariat and of the entire world, that it benefits only the enemy. In face of the treacherous plans of imperialism, the oligarchy, and its puppet dictatorship, the attitude of every revolutionary must be to strengthen internal unity among revolutionaries and to consolidate the FMLN.

#### Close ranks and unify

To conclude, the Central Committee of the People's Liberation Forces-Farabundo Martí states before the people of El Salvador and the world:

1. That we are making clear to all compañeros who have been confused or deceived that the ranks of our organization are open to all who wish to return and rejoin, to close ranks and unify around our efforts to defeat the enemies of the people.

2. That we condemn the brutal assassination of our compañera Ana María, second-in-command of our organization, and that we hold responsible for that crime Salvador Cayetano Carpio (Marcial), Rogelio Bazaglia (Marcelo), and the other participants. In like manner, we condemn Carpio's cowardly suicide.

3. That the irreparable loss of our unforgettable compañera Mérida Anaya Montes, champion and bulwark of the desire for unity of our people, has strengthened the combative morale of our organization, the decision to

strengthen the development of unity inside the FMLN, and the decision to struggle relentlessly.

It has deepened our love for the people and our determination to win. It has deepened our desire to be free and to bring the revolution against imperialism and exploitation to a victorious conclusion.

4. The FPL-Farabundo Martí is irrevocably committed to the working class and the people. Our strength, our conviction, and our determination rest on the unshakable confidence in the unlimited creative revolutionary capacity of the proletariat and people, and on absolute confidence in the people's victory.

#### Advancing firmly in forging unity

5. The FPL-Farabundo Martí, as a revolutionary organization forged in the course of the heroic struggle of the Salvadoran people, is capable of purging itself and advancing firmly in forging the unity of the entire people, and in the development of the revolutionary struggle.

6. That the plenary meeting of the Seventh Revolutionary Council ratified the strategic politico-military line of our organization and enriched it on the basis of the new experiences and requirements of the revolution.

The theme of the Seventh Revolutionary Council — "The entire people prepared to defeat the intervention of Yankee imperialism" — a gathering dedicated to our second-in-command and to the other heroes and martyrs of the revolution, captures the spirit and readiness of the FPL and of the entire people to fight and defeat Yankee troops or those of other puppet countries of imperialism that may try to attack our soil.

At the same time we drew up guidelines aimed at contributing, alongside the FMLN, to attaining definitive popular victory.

7. Finally, we call on the working class, on all working people, and on democratic and progressive sectors not to allow themselves to be confused by the campaign of slanders and lies propagated by the enemy and by all

those who, directly or indirectly, are playing the enemy's game.

#### Join massively in armed struggle

Join massively in the armed revolutionary struggle, help bring about the decisive and definitive battles against the enemies of the people!

Vigorously promote the struggle for immediate political, economic, and social demands!

Take all measures to prevent intervention by the Yankees or other forces in our country, and confront with determination any attempt at aggression against our country!

Strengthen the unity of the people around their vanguard, the FMLN, and close ranks against our class enemy!

Long live the political, ideological, and organic unity of the People's Liberation Forces-Farabundo Martí!

Long live the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front!

War on imperialism, the oligarchy, and its puppet dictatorship!

Revolution or death; the armed people will win!

Proletarians of all countries, unite!

United to fight until the final victory!

Revolution or death, we will win!

For the Central Committee of the People's Liberation Forces-Farabundo Martí, signed by the following members of the Political Committee: Leonel González, first secretary of the FPL and commander-in-chief of the People's Armed Forces of Liberation. Dimas Rodríguez, second secretary of the FPL and second-in-command of the People's Armed Forces of Liberation.

Compañeros Milton, Salvador Guerra, Esteban Cabrales, Mayo Sibrián, Ricardo Gutiérrez, Jesús Rojas, Valentin, Miguel Castellanos.

El Salvador, Central America, December 9, 1983

## Statement by Nicaraguan Ministry of Interior

The following statement was issued by Nicaragua's Ministry of the Interior December 14. It was published on the front page of the Sandinista daily *Barricada* December 15, under the headline "Clarifications by Ministry of Interior on murder of Ana María." The translation is by the *Militant*.

The Ministry of the Interior, upon learning of the communiqué published by the Political Committee of the People's Liberation Forces (FPL) of El Salvador, on December 11 of this year, on the assassination of Compañera Mérida Anaya Montes and the suicide of Salvador Cayetano Carpio, informs the Nicaraguan people of the following:

1. As stated in our communiqué of April 21, 1983, the following persons of Salvadoran nationality were arrested and are under the process of investigation:

a. Rogelio A. Bazaglia Recinos, arrested April 9, who confessed to planning and organizing the murder of Commander Ana María.

b. Walter Ernesto Elías, Andrés Vázquez Molina, and Julio A. Soza Orellana, arrested April 12, who confessed to carrying out the crime.

c. Alejandro Romero Romero and María Argueta Hernández, arrested the day of the crime, who confessed to being accomplices in it.

2. All of the above implicated were arrested between April 6, day of the crime, and April 12, and acknowledged during that period their responsibilities in it.

3. During the investigation, on April 11, the individual Bazaglia Recinos, in addition to acknowledging

his responsibility as planner and organizer of the crime, declared that his criminal action had been directed by Salvador Cayetano Carpio who, in addition to being his immediate superior, served as chief leader of the FPL Political Committee.

4. This incriminating statement was communicated April 12 to Carpio, who had arrived here from Libya April 9 and attended the funeral ceremony for Commander Ana María. Upon learning of Bazaglia's statement, Carpio declined to comment, neither accepting nor rejecting it, and maintained an absolute silence.

5. That same day, at 9:10 p.m., he took his own life, in the house he was living in, without having commented on the incriminating statement by his subordinate. Accordingly, the case was kept open to be clarified further.

6. All information about this event was communicated to the FPL Political Committee, at their request, through representatives who visited Nicaragua. The aim was to obtain from that body elements that would help clarify the facts.

7. The official communiqué of the FPL reports the assessment made of the facts by the leadership bodies of that organization, as well as their opinion on them. Accordingly, it will be made part of the files of the continuing investigative process of those who have been arrested.

8. The Ministry of the Interior, upon the conclusion of this complex investigative process, will proceed to submit before competent legal tribunals those who turn out to be implicated in the criminal actions being investigated.

## Revolutionary groups in El Salvador advance

#### Continued from ISR/3

ment-Salvador Cayetano Carpio split from the FPL precisely over these questions and is actively promoting Carpio's factional policies. The FPL document states: "This group holds the backward, sectarian, and anti-unity positions put forward by Marcial. They deny the FMLN's role as the vanguard of the revolution and proclaim themselves the sole representatives of the working class."

The document never defines more specifically what the "backward" and "sectarian" views of Carpio were that they now oppose. Nor do they clarify what they call Carpio's "deviations" and "ideological and political decomposition."

But the document in its totality clearly goes beyond support for unified action among the groups in the FMLN. It logically points toward a course of fusion of the five groups, including the FPL, into a single united political party, the FMLN. This seems indicated in the way the document attacks the Revolutionary Workers Movement for counterposing their own party to the FMLN; the clear statement that the FMLN, not the FPL,

is "the vanguard"; and the passage where the FPL comrades say, "the attitude of every revolutionary must be to strengthen internal unity among revolutionaries and consolidate the FMLN."

The political struggle within the Salvadoran revolutionary movement will enrich discussion and debate among sections of the U.S. labor movement and U.S. solidarity activists. The publication of the FPL document opens up the possibility of taking further steps to overcome disunity among solidarity forces in this country. This lack of unity has its roots here, but has also been influenced by the problems of unification and leadership within the Salvadoran revolutionary movement.

Activists in the U.S. solidarity movement should march forward along with the comrades in El Salvador to set aside differences on other political questions in order to unite in action around the decisive task we face: mobilizing the U.S. working class, the Black and Latino communities, and their allies to build a massive movement in this country against U.S. intervention in Central America and the Caribbean.



## Continued from ISR/2

perialist interests retained substantial property holdings in agriculture, real estate, commerce, tourism, and industry. But they no longer held *political* power. They could no longer dictate that the government and state in Grenada would act to defend profits over the needs of the workers and farmers.

Still ahead of the revolution was the task of breaking the economic power of the remaining big capitalists and landlords. Bishop and the NJM leadership correctly sought to lead this transition in a manner that would maximize development of productive jobs and social benefits, and minimize unnecessary hardship for working people.

## Was Bishop too 'moderate'?

Following the house arrest and subsequent murder of Maurice Bishop, the big-business press in the United States and elsewhere began peddling speculation that this course carried out under Bishop's leadership had been too "moderate" for "more Marxist" figures such as Coard, and had not been to the liking of Cuba either.

First, there is no indication that any explicit fundamental economic or social policy question was at the root of the betrayal by Coard and other NJM renegades. The factors behind their treachery will be discussed shortly.

Second, there is no evidence that Cuban leaders disagreed with the "mixed economy" course followed by Bishop and the NJM. More importantly, the Cubans would not have meddled in the internal affairs of the Grenadian government and party even if such differences had existed.

As Fidel Castro explained in his November 14 speech, reprinted as an appendix in this book, "Socioeconomically, Grenada was actually advancing satisfactorily. The people had received many benefits, in spite of the hostile policy of the United States, and Grenada's Gross National Product was growing at a good rate in the midst of the world crisis.

"Bishop was not an extremist," Castro said. "Rather he was a true revolutionary — conscientious and honest. Far from disagreeing with his intelligent and realistic policy, we fully sympathized with it, since it was rigorously adapted to his country's specific conditions and possibilities."

Those "specific conditions and possibilities" in Grenada involved advancing the socialist course charted by the New Jewel Movement in the face of enormous objective problems. Grenada's revenues were largely dependent on the export of three agricultural commodities — bananas, cocoa, and nutmeg — and on tourism and the wholesale and retail trade generated by it. The revolution met intense economic and military pressure from U.S. imperialism right from the outset. Moreover, Grenada is a very small island of some 110,000 people, with very little industry and a small working class.

All this created objective limits to the pace of economic development needed to undergird permanent advances in social conditions and to free the country from imperialist domination and the legacy of colonial oppression.

## NJM perspective

The NJM leaders understood that it would take organization, education, and discipline for the working class to prepare itself and its allies, the small farmers, to administer the entire society and all the industrial, agricultural, and commercial enterprises that made it up. It would take time for the new government to build up an infrastructure of roads, new plants and equipment, state farms and cooperatives, and administrative and scientific know-how to lay a solid basis to begin development along socialist lines. Even over the longer haul, there were no plans to expropriate small shops or tourist homes, let alone small farms.

The revolutionary leaders of the Nicaraguan workers' and farmers' government, too, have so far left many shops, factories, and agricultural holdings in private hands, while declaring socialist property relations to be their goal and taking important steps toward a workers' state as they consolidate their workers' and peasants' government.

Of course, for a revolutionary leadership to follow this path means facing the challenge and responsibility to organize working people to advance their own class interests in the ongoing struggle between exploiters and exploited. Capitalists and landlords can be expected to engage in speculation, black-market operations, and other profiteering — even sabotage and decapitalization. They will use their remaining economic clout to attempt to rebuild their lost political power.

The question for a revolutionary leadership of the working class in any such situation is not how quickly in the abstract to move toward expropriation. The tempo and methods necessary for carrying out a fundamental social transformation are determined by objective material realities and class relations. Acting on a preconceived schema could bring the economy to a screeching halt, send potential allies of the workers fleeing to the counter-

revolution, and decimate and demoralize the working class and poor farmers themselves.

A nationalized factory won't produce more than a privately owned one if the skills don't yet exist to run it or if sufficient resources have not yet been accumulated to invest in new equipment, raw materials, upkeep, and wages. An expropriated foreign bank won't marshal more funds for socialist construction if the banks' assets were largely kept outside the country and the impact of the expropriation is to cut off access to grants and loans from capitalist governments and financial institutions before alternative aid has been secured. An expropriated plantation will neither provide decent lives for the landless nor provide products needed for export income until the government can provide the credit, tools, fertilizer, and elementary farming skills to carry out a successful agrarian reform. And expropriating the whole thing will produce nothing but chaos until at least minimal methods of control, accounting, and planning can be instituted from the individual farm and enterprise up to the national level.

Even after the workers and farmers hold state power, in other words, wealth is still produced by applying human labor to land, machinery, and raw materials, not by applying signatures to decrees.

As Bishop explained in the July 1980 interview with *Intercontinental Press*, it is wrong to think that "a revolution is like instant coffee; you just throw it in a cup and it comes out presto."

## Challenge confronting leadership

The challenge confronting the revolutionary leadership in Grenada was how to prepare, educate, and organize the working population to run that society given the existing material conditions in that small country. The answers could only be determined by a concrete assessment of the level of Grenada's economic and social development; the political relationship of class forces at home and internationally; the prospects for economic assistance from the USSR, Cuba, and other workers' states and from other sources; the class consciousness and organization of the working class; and the firmness of its alliance with working farmers and other nonproletarian working people.

That required political leadership capacity and experience, not ultraleft haste and administrative methods.

Two years prior to the revolution, Maurice Bishop presented a sober but optimistic assessment of the prospects facing Grenadian socialists in the 1977 interview with the Cuban magazine *Bohemia*.

"Socialism is the future we would like to see in Grenada," Bishop explained in that interview. "At present the reality is that the most backward forms of capitalist exploitation exist in Grenada. We have to remember that Grenada — with its small territory, high unemployment, great poverty and misery, with the small size and low level of consciousness of its working class, with all its commercial ties to imperialism, and with a profoundly repressive government — must accomplish democratic advances in step with the march of the other countries of the region.

"However, despite all the difficulties," he concluded, "we feel that the perspectives for the cause of social revolution in Grenada are good."

Two years later, the New Jewel Movement would begin to put in practice the socialist course it had charted for Grenada.

Bishop, Whiteman, and other NJM leaders were quite aware of the snares and traps involved in leading a social revolution in tiny and poor Grenada. One conceivable response to this recognition could have been to conclude, as many "official" Communist parties have done in the colonial world, that the workers and farmers are simply not ready to take power there. That the only "realizable" goals must be limited to democratic reforms, and therefore the capitalist class or some sector of it must still play the leading role in any revolutionary government.

That was *not* the response of the New Jewel Movement, however. Bishop and the other NJM leaders correctly saw the Grenada revolution as part of the world struggle against imperialism, and for national liberation and socialism. They had the courage to take the power and chart a course toward the construction of socialism. But they also had the political sense to understand the real conditions and immediate tasks in Grenada, as well as the steps needed to prepare the working class and its allies to rebuild their society on the foundation of state property and democratic planning.

## The Russian experience

The Grenadian revolutionists, of course, were not the first to confront the difficult tasks of leading the working class and its allies through the transition from the decaying capitalist social system toward socialism. On a world scale, the workers' first historical experience in this regard was the Russian revolution.

In 1919 the new Soviet government took the initiative in launching the Communist International. During its first five years as a revolutionary leadership of the world

working class, the Comintern, as it was called for short, discussed the lessons of this first experience in conquering and wielding power; it drew important conclusions for revolutionary strategy and tactics. Extensive discussions of this question were held at the Comintern's fourth world congress in December 1922, and at a meeting of its international executive committee the following July.

At the July 1923 gathering, a resolution on workers' and farmers' governments was adopted. It stressed that following the conquest of power, the working class must remember "the necessity to harmonize its movements with the sentiments of the peasantry in their respective countries, to establish a correct coordination between the victorious proletariat and the peasantry, and to observe a rational policy in the gradual introduction of the economic measures of the proletariat, such as was arrived at by the victorious proletariat of Russia in that period of the Russian revolution which is called the New Economic Policy."

What was Russia's New Economic Policy? Why in his speech to the 1922 Comintern congress did Bolshevik leader V. I. Lenin say that the NEP was rich in "important practical conclusions for the Communist International" and "of first-rate importance to all the Communist parties"?

Lenin explained that following the October 1917 victory, the new Soviet government had "made an attempt to pass, as gradually as possible, breaking up as little of the old as possible, to the new social relations. . . ."

By mid-1918, however, the onslaught of imperialist invasion and full-scale civil war had forced the Russian revolutionary leaders to abandon this initial course toward as efficient and gradual as possible a transformation of property relations. Faced with escalating economic sabotage by the capitalists and the imperatives of producing food and industrial goods for the war, the Bolsheviks carried out sweeping nationalizations and centralized virtually all trade through the state.

By the end of 1920, however, both domestic counter-revolutionary forces and imperialist invaders had been largely defeated by the new Red Army. On the other hand, the capitalists elsewhere in Europe had succeeded in defeating revolutionary struggles in Hungary, Germany, and Italy, tightening the isolation of the world's first workers' state. Moreover, the civil war had taken a heavy toll inside Russia. Many of the most class-conscious workers and poor peasants, who were the vanguard of the Red Army soldiers, had fallen in battle or died from disease and starvation at the front. The economic and social dislocation from the war was exacerbated by drought and famine.

As Lenin explained at the Comintern's 1922 congress, "after we had passed through the most important stage of the Civil War — and passed through it victoriously — we felt the impact of a grave — I think it was the gravest — internal political crisis in Soviet Russia.

"This internal crisis," Lenin said, "brought to light discontent not only among a considerable section of the peasantry but also among the workers. This was the first and, I hope, the last time in the history of Soviet Russia that feeling ran against us among large masses of peasants, not consciously but instinctively."

## Too-rapid transformations

The source of this crisis, Lenin explained, was not just the war-caused destruction. It was also a consequence of the too-rapid economic and social transformations that had been imposed on the young workers' and farmers' republic by its struggle for survival. While the peasants had supported this fight against the reimposition of landlordism and tsarism, their alliance with the working class was now near the breaking point as a result of the policies of the previous few years. And this alliance, Lenin stressed, was key to the defense of the Soviet republic and its advance toward socialism.

"In this respect," Lenin said at the party's tenth congress in 1921, "we are very much to blame for having gone too far; we overdid the nationalization of industry and trade, clamping down on local exchange of commodities. Was that a mistake? It certainly was."

Lenin explained this again the following year at the fourth Comintern congress. "The reason for [the crisis]," he said, "was that in our economic offensive we had run too far ahead, that we had not provided ourselves with adequate resources, that the masses sensed what we ourselves were not then able to formulate consciously but what we admitted soon after, a few weeks later, namely, that the direct transition to purely socialist forms, to purely socialist distribution, was beyond our available strength, and that if we were unable to effect a retreat so as to confine ourselves to easier tasks, we would face disaster."

That was the origin of the New Economic Policy adopted by the Russian revolutionists in early 1921. The NEP made it possible for peasants to sell a portion of their produce on the open market inside Russia. Restrictions on private trade were relaxed to supplement state-organized exchanges. To help revive industrial produc-



tion, the Soviet republic sought to lease nationalized factories, mines, forests, and oil fields to foreign and domestic capitalists.

In introducing the NEP, a resolution adopted by the fourth congress explained, "the Soviet government is following an economic path which it would doubtless have pursued in 1918-19 had not the implacable demands of Civil War obliged it to expropriate the bourgeoisie at one blow. . . ." The resolution was drafted on behalf of the Russian delegation by Comintern leader Leon Trotsky.

Such measures, Lenin pointed out, were even more important for nations less economically advanced than Russia itself. In a 1921 letter to communists in Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, and several other nations oppressed under the old tsarist empire, Lenin advised: "You will need to practise more moderation and caution, and show more readiness to make concessions to the petty bourgeoisie, the intelligentsia, and particularly the peasantry. You must make the swiftest, most intense and all possible economic use of the capitalist West through a policy of concessions and trade."

In other words, Lenin explained, these allied soviet republics must "effect a slower, more cautious and more systematic transition to socialism."

#### 'Reformist action'

On the basis of the NEP experience, Lenin drew some general conclusions for Marxist revolutionists in an article written at the end of 1921. "True revolutionaries have mostly come a cropper," he said, "when they began to write 'revolution' with a capital R, to elevate 'revolution' to something almost divine, to lose their heads, to lose the ability to reflect, weigh and ascertain in the coolest and most dispassionate manner . . . at what moment, under what circumstances and in which sphere you must turn to reformist action."

The last two words of Lenin's statement may appear a bit jarring. What did he mean by recommending "reformist action"? Lenin explained himself as follows:

"Marxism alone has precisely and correctly defined the relations of reform to revolution, although Marx was able to see this relation from only one aspect — under the conditions preceding the first to any extent permanent and lasting victory of the proletariat, if only in one country. Under those conditions," Lenin stressed, "the basis of the proper relation was that reforms are a by-product of the revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat. Throughout the capitalist world this relation is the foundation of the revolutionary tactics of the proletariat — the ABC."

"After the victory of the proletariat," however, Lenin said, "if only in one country, something new enters into the relation between reforms and revolution. In principle, it is the same as before, but a change in form takes place." Under such conditions, he said, reforms can represent "a necessary and legitimate breathing space when, after the utmost exertion of effort, it becomes obvious that sufficient strength is lacking for the revolutionary accomplishment of some transition or another."

Based on the experience of the world's first proletarian revolution, the Comintern's fourth congress drew some conclusions about the tasks of a victorious workers' and farmers' government, which it defined as a government which "is born out of struggle of the masses, is supported by workers' bodies which are capable of fighting, bodies created by the most oppressed sections of the working masses."

"The overriding tasks" of such a government, the congress resolution on tactics explained, "must be to arm the proletariat, to disarm bourgeois, counterrevolutionary organizations, to introduce the control of production, to transfer the main burden of taxation to the rich, and to break the resistance of the counterrevolutionary bourgeoisie."

#### Accomplishments of the Grenada revolution

How had Grenada's workers' and farmers' government measured up to these kinds of challenges during its first four and a half years? The record shows that it had begun to do all this and more. The steps by the New Jewel Movement to dismantle the old state apparatus and army and replace it with a new government, army, and militia have already been explained. What about other political, social, and economic gains?

All of Gairy's repressive legislation was wiped off the books. New laws were adopted making it compulsory for employers to recognize unions and ensuring the right to strike. As a result, membership in the island's trade unions rose from about 30 percent of the labor force before the revolution to some 90 percent. Other organizations won thousands of members, as well. These included the National Women's Organisation, the National Youth Organisation, and the Productive Farmers' Union.

Along with these organizations, other bodies were formed at the initiative of the NJM leadership to begin the hard work of increasing the democratic involvement of working people in determining and administering the affairs of their country. Councils were set up in workplaces, parishes, villages, and neighborhoods. These



Maurice Bishop, flanked by members of People's Revolutionary Army, addresses rally on March 20, 1979, one week after overthrowing Eric Gairy. Rejecting idea that revolution in Grenada was unrealistic, New Jewel leaders demonstrated courage to take power and begin charting road toward construction of socialism.

councils discussed and debated proposed government policies, including the nation's 1982 and 1983 budget and plan. They had the power to summon government ministers and other officials to appear before them to be held accountable for their policies.

The New Jewel Movement leaders understood that these mass organizations and councils could not work miracles. Given the small size of Grenada's working class and the poverty and lack of education bequeathed by centuries of colonial oppression, it would take hard work and consistent attention to achieve effective participation by working people in running the affairs of their society.

In order to focus attention on this important challenge, the New Jewel Movement designated 1983 the Year of Academic and Political Education. In his January 1983 speech launching this, Prime Minister Bishop explained that "our people must develop in the new year a mental grasp on the true nature of the international capitalist crisis which is holding back the progress of our revolution and the development of all poor countries in the world. They must know the causes and origins of this crisis. They must see clearly the link between politics and economics, between imperialist exploitation and persistent poverty, between the mad buildup of arms by imperialism and the economic crisis."

"With their political consciousness raised and broadened," Bishop explained, "our people will better understand the necessity to join and to strengthen those mass organizations and trade unions that already exist. Political education will help to identify from the ranks of our working people the future leaders of the revolution and it will help to prepare the working class to assume its historic role of transforming Grenada from backwardness and dependency to genuine economic independence."

At his public meeting in New York City in June 1983, Bishop announced that preparation of a draft constitution had begun, laying the groundwork for future island-wide elections. These elections, he stressed, would not replace but instead "institutionalize and entrench the systems of popular democracy" already established. The goal was the "involvement of our people in a participatory way from day to day and week to week," not "just the right to put an 'X' next to Tweedledum or Tweedledee" every few years, as in elections in the United States, Canada, Britain, or many East Caribbean islands.

On the economic front, Grenada's workers' and farmers' government had also registered impressive achievements. In 1982 its Gross National Product grew by 5.5 percent, for a total increase of nearly 14 percent since the 1979 revolution. This was at a time when the world capitalist system was suffering its worst downturn since the 1930s and the economies of most countries in the Western Hemisphere, including other Eastern Caribbean islands, were stagnating or declining.

Moreover, in line with the revolution's socialist goals, the state sector was increasingly taking the lead in the island's economic development. The single most ambitious government project was the new international airport to promote tourism and expedite export and import trade. Another priority was upgrading development of the island's agriculture and related "agro-industries." This involved both crop rehabilitation and the construction of factories to process, package, and market these products. Other major projects included new roads, including vital feeder roads to transport farm produce; several dozen buses for the island's first public transportation system; upgrading water, telephone, and electrical services, now all state-owned; and hotel and tourism development.

As Bishop cautioned in the July 1980 interview with *Intercontinental Press*, however, the bottom line for the progress of a workers' and farmers' government has to be

measured, "Not in terms of how many industries you have or how many hotels you have when the profits are going to a very tiny elite, but in terms of what benefits are truly getting to the masses." The government, he said, must meet "the basic needs of the population — jobs, health, housing, food, clothing."

Here, too, the Grenada revolution had important accomplishments to its credit.

Real wages had risen by 10 percent over the 1981-82 period. Living standards actually improved more than suggested by this figure. For one thing, unemployment had fallen from about 50 percent to 12 percent during the first four years of the revolution, bringing higher family income. Most important, there had been a dramatic increase in the "social wage" — that is, the vital services and commodities available free or at low cost, as a right, to the population.

A land reform law empowered the government to take out a compulsory ten-year lease on any land above 100 acres that was underutilized to put it into production on a cooperative or state-owned basis. The government had expanded the supply of low-interest loans to small farmers and farm cooperatives and also initiated programs to help guarantee markets for their produce. A state-run tractor pool of forty-five machines was established, and the government sought to advance modern farming by establishing four new agricultural training schools, as well. These measures had begun not only to raise the income of farmers and agricultural workers, but also to provide jobs for the unemployed.

#### Health care, education

Medical and dental care became free. Medicine was provided without charge for hospital patients and at low cost for others. Clinics were built throughout Grenada, the central hospital modernized, and the number of doctors and dentists more than doubled.

Secondary school became a right for all Grenadians; under Gairy, tuition was required, making education a privilege for the rich. Free books, school uniforms, and hot lunches were provided to elementary school children from low-income families. In addition, hundreds of students received scholarships for university or advanced technical education, never before available to any but the wealthiest Grenadians. An adult education program had already made strides toward combating illiteracy, with the aim of wiping it out by 1985.

Free milk was distributed to thousands of families. Price controls were imposed on basic imported items such as sugar and cooking oil.

Some 75 percent of families had received interest-free loans and low-cost materials to repair their homes. The newly opened Sandino Housing Plant had gone into production with a potential output of 500 prefabricated housing units each year.

Some 30 percent of workers were exempted from taxation altogether, while new taxes and fees were imposed on local companies, import-export merchants, and profits of foreign-owned firms not reinvested in Grenada.

A social insurance plan was set up, Grenada's first on a national scale, covering workers employed in both private and public sectors. Benefits included retirement pensions, sickness and disability pay, maternity benefits, and payments to dependents of the deceased.

Special attention was placed on upgrading the rights and opportunities of Grenadian women. Legislation was adopted and implemented against sexual harassment of working women. Women workers were guaranteed equal pay for equal work. A maternity leave law compelled employers to give time off, most of it at full pay, to

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women both before and after childbirth.

Social programs such as these were a political choice that followed from the class interests the government defended. These programs were vital to the well-being of Grenadian workers and farmers. Since it is they who produce the island's wealth, their improved health, education, and welfare was an investment in Grenada's most important resource — its working people.

## Substantial foreign aid

The costs and skills required for these social benefits and development projects would have put them out of reach for many years if Grenada had been limited to its own means. But it received substantial foreign aid. The most generous contributors were the government and people of Cuba. As Fidel Castro explained November 14, "Even though Cuba is a small underdeveloped country, it was able to help Grenada considerably, because our efforts — which were modest in quantity though high in quality — meant a lot for a country less than 400 square kilometers in size, with a population of just over 100,000."

Castro reported that the total over four years amounted to some \$550 for every Grenadian. The biggest single Cuban contribution came in the form of materials, equipment, designs, and skilled volunteer construction workers for the Point Salines airport project. But Cuba also provided doctors, teachers, and technicians; financed and constructed the housing plant and other industrial projects; helped establish a fisheries school and fishing fleet; and assisted in training a professional army to safeguard the revolution's gains.

Other assistance came from Libya, Syria, the Soviet Union, several Eastern European workers' states, and North Korea. The U.S. government not only refused aid to Grenada, but also sought to prevent other capitalist governments and international financial institutions from providing any. Despite such sabotage, Grenada did get considerable help from the European Development Bank and from the Canadian and other governments.

Early on in the revolution, a U.S. diplomat offered Grenada a paltry \$5,000 — if the new government pledged not to develop economic or diplomatic relations with Cuba. The Grenadian revolutionists indignantly rejected this blackmail.

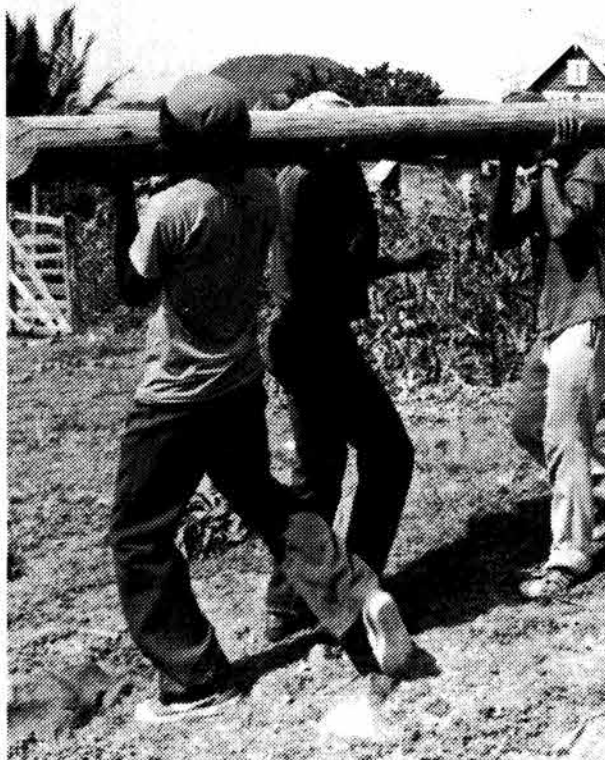
From the start, the revolutionary government pursued an internationalist course. It established the warmest fraternal bonds with the government, leadership, and people of revolutionary Cuba and Nicaragua. Despite its own pressing tasks and limited cadres, the PRG sent young volunteer Grenadians to help with the literacy crusade on Nicaragua's English-speaking Atlantic Coast. It mobilized and educated Grenadians in solidarity with liberation struggles in the Caribbean and Central America, South America, Africa, Asia, the Mideast, and throughout the world. It joined the Movement of Nonaligned Countries. It established diplomatic and trade relations with Vietnam, the Soviet Union, the Eastern European workers' states, and North Korea.

## Washington seeks 'to wipe out all vestiges'

These accomplishments set an example for the entire Caribbean and Central America, for Blacks and other working people in the United States, Britain, and Canada, and for the oppressed and exploited everywhere. They vindicated Fidel Castro's description of Grenada as "a big revolution in a small country." With each passing year, not only did Grenada's achievements grow, but also their power of attraction beyond its shores. Despite capitalist media efforts to blockade the truth, more and more people were learning about and being inspired by the Grenada revolution. Prime Minister Bishop's visit to the United States in June 1983 had a political impact on a small but important layer of U.S. working people, and a vanguard section of the Black population.

In order to stop the spread of this example, Washington was determined from day one to crush the Grenada revolution by armed might. The military and political groundwork for such aggression began to be laid by Carter's Democratic Party administration and continued under the Republican Reagan. U.S. military forces staged a trial run on a tiny island off Puerto Rico in 1981. This mock invasion was transparently named Operation Amber and the Amberdines, to echo the actual island chain of Grenada and the Grenadines. Even the pretexts for the practice invasion were the same as Reagan's phony justification in October 1983 — alleged danger to U.S. citizens, influence from a nearby "Country Red" (clearly Cuba), and a government that had destroyed democracy on "Amber" Island and was exporting subversion throughout the region.

Despite U.S. claims that it was "invited" into Grenada by the Organization of East Caribbean States, Prime Minister Tom Adams of Barbados admitted that the OECS governments were contacted about the operation by U.S. officials at the time Bishop's house arrest first became known. The invasion would have been carried out by the bipartisan cabal in Washington regardless of



Grenadian Government Information Service  
**Grenadian workers carry pole to install electric power on island of Petit Martinique, which had no electricity prior to revolution. Workers and farmers government measured progress in terms of increasing benefits for working masses.**

how many East Caribbean states agreed to "ask for it."

Having now carried out this invasion that has been in the works for four years, U.S. imperialism is setting about to use whatever force is necessary to dismantle every trace of the political, social, and economic accomplishments of the workers' and farmers' government.

Several days following the invasion, Don Rojas, an NJM leader who was Bishop's press secretary, told a British newspaper that Grenada would be "rapidly colonized" by the U.S. occupiers. "I think they will move very quickly to wipe out all vestiges of the revolution," Rojas said. "The local councils and other democratic structures that we put in place will be dismantled and kept that way by military force."

Washington intends to smash everything that remains from the revolution and to reimpose a puppet government directly subservient to U.S. imperialist interests. And that's exactly what it has been doing.

## NJM cadres targeted

The central targets have been the cadres of the New Jewel Movement and mass organizations, whose consciousness remains the most durable conquest of the revolution. The occupiers are carrying out a systematic effort to intimidate and break these cadres, who numbered in the tens of thousands, especially in the working class and among the youth.

Support for the 1979 revolution and its gains remains strong on the island, posing a big problem for the occupiers. Due to the widespread disorientation caused by the Coard group's treachery and murderous violence against NJM leaders and the Grenadian people, many Grenadians mistakenly welcomed the U.S. troops as liberators. Even the big majority of these Grenadians, however, consider themselves supporters of Maurice Bishop and the People's Revolutionary Government — a fact that has perplexed reporters for the capitalist press.

"Will there still be free education in the schools?" asked one young Grenadian woman quoted by a U.S. newspaper. "Will there still be aid to buy [school] uniforms and books?"

"Some people here are beginning to ask themselves who is going to rescue us from our rescuers," another Grenadian reported.

The process of repression and dismantling began with the October 25 invasion itself — so much so that the U.S. government slapped a ban on press coverage of these initial days of terror. That has been followed by the arrest, detention, and grilling of more than 2,000 Grenadians, who were held in small wooden crates that they had to crawl into on their knees. Those who were released were given cards warning them to "refrain from participating in any anti-government activities." An unknown number have been jailed indefinitely.

Kenrick Radix, a leader of the New Jewel Movement who survived Coard's murder machine, was picked up by U.S. authorities and held for twenty hours in one of these isolation boxes. The occupiers claimed that Radix had been acting as "an instigator in spreading bad will among the people in public places." In other words, he had exercised his right to denounce the U.S. invasion and to call for immediate withdrawal of the occupiers in order to remove "the heavy boot of U.S. imperialism" from the neck of the Grenadian people.

A purge and blacklist of government employees has begun, based on CIA computer printouts. The U.S.-imposed puppet regime of British Commonwealth Governor-General Paul Scoon has curtailed political rights. The new government, allegedly needed to restore "democracy" to Grenada, quickly announced that even its trumpeted phony elections might not be held for several years.

The occupiers' degrading treatment of Coard and Gen. Hudson Austin, who are understandably hated by the Grenadian people, is nonetheless also aimed at intimidating supporters of the revolution. Coard and Austin were paraded half naked, blindfolded, and manacled on the island. U.S. military propaganda teams plastered Grenada with posters, printed in the United States, showing Austin with just a towel around his waist; below it was an anticommunist message. Coard and Austin deserve to be brought to justice for their crimes, but by the working people of Grenada, not in a kangaroo court set up by a U.S.-imposed puppet regime.

Along with this repression, initial steps have already been taken to strip the Grenadian people of the social and economic gains of the revolution. Free and low-cost distribution of milk and other necessities has ended. Adult education centers are shut down. Schools and hospitals have been deprived of teachers and doctors by the expulsion of Cuban and other overseas staff people. Unemployment has already doubled. And any remnants of mass organizations and democratic workplace and community councils are being crushed.

This is what it takes to try to stamp out the vestiges of Grenada's workers' and farmers' government and the popular revolution on which it stood.

## Coard's treachery and betrayal

As already explained, Washington was able to carry off this counterrevolutionary onslaught with such apparent ease because the Grenadian workers' and farmers' government had been betrayed and overthrown. As surviving NJM leader George Louison put it, "the revolution was destroyed from within." Fidel Castro devoted a substantial portion of his November 14 speech to explaining the significance of this fact to the Cuban people and to revolutionists elsewhere in the Americas and throughout the world.

"Hyenas emerged from the revolutionary ranks," said Castro, referring to Coard's secret faction in the government, army, and New Jewel Movement.

"Were those who conspired against [Bishop] within the Grenadian party, army, and security forces by any chance a group of extremists drunk on political theory?" he asked. "Were they simply a group of ambitious, opportunistic individuals, or were they enemy agents who wanted to destroy the Grenadian revolution?"

"History alone will have the last word," Castro said, "but it would not be the first time that such things occurred in a revolutionary process."

Castro is correct. Many details of the secret plotting and motivations of those involved may never be known. But Castro is also correct to explain that the most important facts and lessons are already known, and do not depend on yet unanswered questions.

"The fact is that allegedly revolutionary arguments were used," Castro said, "invoking the purest principles of Marxism-Leninism and charging Bishop with practicing a cult of personality and with drawing away from the Leninist norms and methods of leadership."

Castro correctly condemned these charges as "absurd." He explained how the capitalist press had made use of them to present the events in Grenada "as the coming to power of a group of hard-line communists, loyal allies of Cuba. Were they really communists?" Castro asked. "Were they really hard-liners? Could they really be loyal allies of Cuba? Or were they rather conscious or unconscious tools of Yankee imperialism?"

"Look at the history of the revolutionary movement," Castro said, "and you will find more than one connection between imperialism and those who take positions that appear to be on the extreme left. Aren't Pol Pot and Ieng Sary — the ones responsible for the genocide in Kampuchea — the most loyal allies Yankee imperialism has in Southeast Asia at present?"

"In Cuba, ever since the Grenadian crisis began," he said, "we have called Coard's group — to give it a name — the 'Pol Pot group.'"

Much of what happened in Grenada has been clarified in press interviews with surviving NJM and PRG leaders such as Don Rojas, Kenrick Radix, and George Louison, who have also given assessments of these events.\*

## Semisecret faction

A semisecret factional grouping or clique around Bernard Coard had managed, especially since mid-1982, to

\* Substantial quotations from interviews with Louison and Radix appeared in articles by Edward Cody in the November 9, 1983, *Washington Post* and by Thomas E. Ricks in the November 8 *Wall Street Journal*. Radix was interviewed by Paul McIsaac for an article that appeared in the November 23



strengthen its influence and control inside the government apparatus, the officer corps of the army, and in the New Jewel Movement. It functioned more and more as a party within the party.

This grouping thrived on seeking to pin the blame for the revolution's very real difficulties on Bishop and other NJM leaders not in their faction, rather than trying to solve these problems and iron out differences in the course of loyal leadership collaboration and common practical work. Instead of functioning on the basis of political, objective, frank, honest, and selfless relations inside the leadership, the Coard group consolidated its position through favoritism, buddyism, privilege, and administrative control.

Coard's ability to carry out his catastrophic bid for power, if only for a few weeks, was not a matter of Lucifer somehow running amok amid the heavenly host. A materialist explanation for what happened in Grenada cannot rise or fall simply on an assessment of the actions of a single individual — even an individual whose role was unquestionably decisive. These events reflected the social consequences of objective difficulties from imperialist pressure, poverty, and small size already described. Coard exploited these real difficulties to gain a hearing from layers of politically inexperienced cadres in the NJM for his explanation that "the problem is Maurice."

In any revolution confronting such obstacles, the resulting pressures bear down with a different intensity and results on various social classes and layers within the working class itself. A small hotel owner is affected differently from a working person; a farmer differently from a wage worker; a highly paid worker differently from one who has more directly benefited from the revolution's social achievements; and a person who has settled into a comfortable niche in the government apparatus differently from someone more closely attuned to the masses of the population. While there is no mechanical correlation between such underlying social differentiations and the lineup that developed inside the party, state apparatus, and army in Grenada, the strongest base of support for Bishop and the revolutionary government clearly came from working people, especially among the youth. Coard and his followers had become divorced from the Grenadian people and reflected attitudes of bureaucratism, careerism, and individual ambition characteristic of the petty bourgeoisie, not the working class.

It is important to add that CIA agents were undoubtedly operating at every level of the Grenadian government, army, party, and mass organizations, as they always do in any revolution or revolutionary organization. Nonetheless, imperialism and its agents did not create the divisions inside the revolutionary leadership. Instead, they were able to take advantage of weaknesses already there to exacerbate tensions and turn divisions to their own advantage.

#### Petty-bourgeois modes of functioning

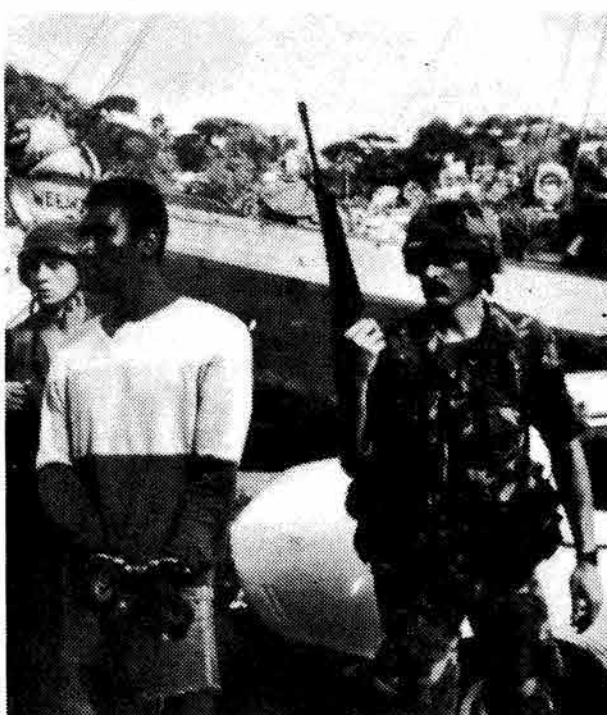
The petty-bourgeois and bureaucratic modes of functioning by the Coard faction in the government, army, and party — not any thought-out alternative political course for Grenada — were at the root of this group's trajectory. Nonetheless, Fidel Castro chose his words well November 14 when he spoke of this outfit as the "Pol Pot group."

The point is not to imply that Coard was hell-bent on a wholesale expropriation policy, let alone on the extraordinarily brutal anti-working-class, antipeasant, and anti-socialist measures imposed by Pol Pot.

As Don Rojas explained, however, "Bernard and his people . . . said they were dissatisfied with the pace at which the process was evolving. . . . Somehow the notion that this process was not going fast enough entered into the ideological discussion in the party and led to a kind of cleavage. Some people said we needed to push it forward more rapidly. Others argued for a more rational, scientific, and less idealistic assessment of this question."

Rojas said that this criticism had emerged rather suddenly, and that Coard himself had previously argued against such notions as the government's chief economic planning official.

Rather than recognizing *politically* that objective material conditions and class relations were above all responsible for the problems confronting the revolution in Grenada, Coard's followers acted as if it were somehow



U.S. troops with handcuffed Grenadian after invasion of October 1983. Washington has detained and interrogated thousands to crush vestiges of revolution.

possible, to leap over these factors in an *administrative* way.

The Coard and Pol Pot groups also shared, to however different an extent, a similar ultraleft, antidemocratic, and authoritarian brutality toward the workers and farmers. Unlike Bishop and other NJM leaders, Coard's relations with the Grenadian workers and farmers were not based on promoting their organization, mobilization, and class consciousness, but on administrative dictates and persuasion of the gun.

#### Campaign of gossip

To justify its maneuvers against Bishop, Whiteman, Radix, and other NJM leaders who did not share its penchant for dictates and commands, the Coard group began a campaign of gossip alleging that these individuals were "less Marxist" and "less proletarian." Suddenly, Rojas said, "we hear Maurice Bishop accused of being petty bourgeois. We hear Unison Whiteman accused of being social democratic, of representing the right wing within the party. This was the first time we heard that there was a right wing within the party."

Rojas explained that the Organization of Revolutionary Education and Liberation, the name of the organization forming the core of Coard's faction, went back to before the NJM was founded. In the early 1970s it had merged with Bishop's MAP and Whiteman's JEWEL to form the party, Rojas said, but "always maintained a kind of clique, an OREL clique, within the New Jewel Movement during the 1970s and even after the 1979 revolution."

In any genuine fusion of political organizations, it quickly becomes irrelevant who among the leadership and cadres of the new organization had his or her origins in one group or another. No one makes political judgments or assignments on the basis of whether or not someone in the party used to be "one of our people." While the MAP and JEWEL cadres had carried out such a successful fusion, it is now clear that Coard's OREL grouping had never adopted this attitude toward the New Jewel Movement.

Coard's campaign against Bishop and other NJM leaders took several concrete forms.

On one level, capable leaders of the revolution who were not Coard's "kind of guy" were pushed out of the leadership. Kenrick Radix, for example, was removed from the Central Committee. At the same time, Coard gradually managed to get more and more of his supporters onto the leadership bodies and into the apparatus of the party, the government, and the army. "He did this in a very systematic way," Rojas said, "so that when he decided to make his move for leadership of the party, he had already consolidated quite a power base."

In mid-1982, Coard and those around him began to complain about serious problems inside the party. In July 1982 Coard resigned from the Central Committee, attributing his decision to "slack and weak functioning" of the CC and the Political Bureau. He said that both leadership bodies were operating contrary to Marxist-Leninist principles of party building.

Charges began to be heard that Bishop's alleged political shallowness, lack of Leninist organizational skills and discipline, and insufficient grasp of party-building strategy and tactics were to blame for the "crisis" in the NJM. Coard himself, having stepped aside, never explicitly mentioned Bishop, leaving that to his collaborators. As Radix put it, "What he did was to hide behind his wife [Phyllis, who remained a CC member] and

some of the younger fellows to work his way. Coard used slander, rumor, and deceit to slander Maurice. The worst of Stalinist tactics."

#### September 1983 Central Committee

This campaign went on for more than a year. Then, in September 1983, an emergency meeting of the Central Committee was called together by Maj. Liam James, a follower of Coard in the army officer corps and a member of General Austin's shortlived "Revolutionary Military Council." Bernard Coard was not there, since he had resigned from the Central Committee.

Lt. Col. Ewart Layne, another Coard supporter in the army and later RMC member, opened the meeting. Layne explained that there was a big crisis in the country — lagging popular support, problems in the party, bad roads and electricity services, a deterioration of the revolution's international prestige, and so on. Phyllis Coard and Minister of Mobilization Selwyn Strachan, who also emerged as a Coard supporter, again spoke of the weakness in the Marxist-Leninist ideological development of the Central Committee.

According to George Louison, the initial portion of the meeting did not involve direct criticisms of Bishop, but discussion later shifted in that direction. James, Layne, and Maj. Leon Cornwall, also a Coard supporter and later RMC member, got the ball rolling. Phyllis Coard chimed in that many NJM members were scared to criticize Bishop, because he had been "hostile to criticism."

According to Louison, however, it was not until the last day of the two-and-a-half day meeting that "out of the blue a proposal came out: The main problem within the Central Committee is Maurice's weaknesses." No alternative political policies were put forward by Coard's supporters, Louison said.

Instead, Liam James placed a motion on the floor calling for Bishop to relinquish part of his leadership responsibilities to Coard. Bishop was to handle mass work and international relations; his strengths were allegedly limited to those arenas. Bernard Coard was to take over internal party work and overall strategy, since he was the "only" person who could "push the process forward."

Whiteman and Louison argued that the Central Committee should take collective responsibility for the problems facing the revolution, not attempt to place the blame on Bishop or any other single comrade in the leadership. Along with Bishop, they pointed to the material conditions in Grenada as the source of many difficulties, and stressed the need for more systematic efforts to strengthen relations between the party, the government, and the workers and farmers in Grenada.

When Louison asked how such an important change would be explained to the Grenadian people and to fraternal political parties, Coard's supporters answered that the decision would remain an internal secret of the NJM. Nothing would be said to the Grenadian people or other parties.

Of the thirteen members of the seventeen-person Central Committee in attendance, nine voted for this so-called joint leadership resolution; three abstained, including Bishop and Whiteman; and one — Louison — voted against.

#### Bishop's view on proposals

Several more Central Committee meetings took place during the latter half of September; Coard began to attend. It was agreed that Bishop would take some time to consider the joint leadership proposal, and he did not attend most of these late September CC meetings. According to Louison, from that time on, Coard was actually "calling the shots." At a September 25 CC meeting, Bishop agreed to the joint leadership motion, "subject to clarification," Louison said.

Rojas, who although not a Central Committee member nonetheless worked very closely with Bishop, expanded on Bishop's attitude toward the CC proposal. "His position to the Central Committee," Rojas said, "and to the party was that he did not have any problems with the proposal in principle — that if it was a majority decision of the party, he would abide by the principle of democratic centralism and majority vote on this issue."

"But he would have liked more discussion of the practical application of this joint leadership proposal. He had difficulty understanding exactly how it was going to work, as did many members of the party. . . . And he felt, quite frankly, that the way it had been proposed would have effectively removed him from influence in the top decision-making organs of the party."

Bishop's attitude to the Coard group's talk about "more Leninist" functioning of the party was similar. "Maurice and the rest of the comrades had absolutely no difficulty in accepting the concept," Rojas said, "if it meant a more disciplined and more organized approach to party work; to the norms of party life; to study; to the application of the fundamental principles on which the party was built; to an understanding of democratic centralism," and so on.

Continued on next page

issue of New York's *Village Voice*. Articles in the October 31 *Washington Post* and October 30 *Sunday Sun* of Barbados centered on interviews with Rojas, and a major interview with Rojas appeared in the December 26 issue of *Intercontinental Press*. Articles by Morris S. Thompson interviewing Louison appeared in the November 6 and 7 issues of *Long Island's Newsday*. Articles based on interviews with Louison, Radix, and Lyden Ramdhanny, another PRG member, appeared in the November 6 issue of the *Sunday Guardian* of Trinidad. In addition, Louison conducted an extensive but yet-unpublished interview with a group visiting Grenada in mid-November sponsored by CUSO.



Continued from preceding page

"But I think Lenin was being used as a cover," Rojas said. "It appears that the call for a more Leninist organization was misused to cover up what was in its essence a bid for power."

At the end of September, Bishop, Whiteman, Louison, and Rojas left for Hungary and Czechoslovakia to try to obtain some additional electrical power generators for the island. It was then, Louison explained, that the Coard group took advantage of Bishop being out of the country to begin systematically disarming the militias. Coard and his followers knew what was coming, and they also knew that their base was in the army officer corps and a few trusted units, not in the armed workers and farmers of Grenada.

Bishop and the three other NJM leaders stopped in Cuba for a few days on his return trip from Eastern Europe. Castro explained in his November 14 speech that during this stopover, "In spite of his very close and affectionate links with our party's leadership, Bishop never said anything about the internal dissensions that were developing. On the contrary, in his last conversation with us he was self-critical about his work regarding attention to the armed forces and the mass organizations. Nearly all of our party and state leaders spent many friendly, fraternal hours with him on the evening of October 7, before his return trip to Grenada."

Contrary to all previous practice, only one other leader of the NJM and PRG was on hand at the airport to meet Bishop when he landed in Grenada October 8. For the next two days, Bernard Coard, who had served as acting prime minister during the trip, made no effort to contact Bishop about developments in the country during his absence.

## 'One-manism' charge

When Coard learned of the meetings in Cuba with Castro and other top CP leaders, however, he charged that Bishop, Louison, Whiteman, and Rojas had taken internal NJM affairs outside the party and had sought to obtain Cuban backing for their position. The four NJM leaders denied this charge.

Coard and his backers "went so far as to say Fidel had made himself a little god in Cuba," Louison reported, implying that this was happening in Grenada as well. This marked the opening salvo of a new campaign against Bishop, this one centering on his alleged "one-manism" and the dangers of a personality cult.

"That was perhaps the weakest charge of all," Rojas commented. "The people who knew Maurice Bishop knew him to be perhaps the most modest and least arrogant of all the top leaders of the party. He was the most accommodating and probably the number one adherent to the principle of collective leadership."

As a result of these developments, according to Louison, Bishop informed other members of the Central Committee that he would like to schedule a review in the CC or the Political Bureau of the joint leadership proposal and its practical application and consequences.

## October 12 events

Then, on October 12, a chain of events was set into motion that would result, before the day was out, in a de facto coup and the overthrow of Grenada's workers' and farmers' government.

Those events began just after midnight, when Bishop's security detail was awakened and brought together for a meeting while Bishop was sleeping. According to Louison, they were told that Bishop was "becoming a dictator" and that "their responsibility is to defend the working people and not to defend any leader." This was the set-up for Bishop's house arrest, which was to come later in the day.

At 7 a.m., the members of the New Jewel Movement in the army met and passed a resolution claiming that Bishop and Louison were trying to reverse the earlier Central Committee decision and demanding that these "opportunists" be expelled from the party.

At 9 a.m., the New Jewel Movement Political Bureau met. The two main points on its agenda were discussion of the armed forces resolution, and a motion to expel Louison from the Political Bureau and Central Committee for alleged violations of democratic centralism.

Later in the day, the Central Committee met. It expelled George Louison, and members leveled yet another charge against Bishop. They claimed that Bishop was spreading a rumor that Bernard and Phyllis Coard were plotting to kill him. Louison stated that this "was a complete lie... made up by Bernard in order to try to justify his position." Rojas and Radix agree.

The Central Committee demanded that Bishop tape a radio statement that the alleged rumor was untrue, which Bishop did. At the end of the meeting, the CC voted to place Bishop under house arrest. His phones were cut off, and any security guards suspected of loyalty to him were disarmed and replaced. George Louison's brother, Einstein Louison — who as the army chief of staff was the highest officer not lined up with Coard's grouping — was also placed under house arrest.



Militant/Flax Hermes

Three of surviving New Jewel Movement leaders (left to right): Don Rojas, Kenrick Radix, George Louison.

As news of Bishop's detention began to leak out to the workers and farmers of Grenada, the walls began to be covered with the slogan, "No Bishop, No Revo." And that immediate and widespread sentiment among the masses reflected the reality. The workers' and farmers' government that they had established in March 1979 had been overthrown through a coup that day.

The next day, October 13, a meeting of 400 New Jewel Movement cadres was held. Bishop was brought before it, confronted with the false charges, especially the alleged rumor, and told to comment on them. Bishop strongly denied having spread the rumor.

Coard, who attended the meeting, did not speak. Once again, he let his supporters do the dirty work. One after another, they took the floor to denounce Bishop. "They called him a dangerous individual," Louison recalled. Rojas reported that proposals were made to expel Bishop from the party altogether, even to court-martial him.

"We all thought certainly the point of the meeting was to vote on the question and come up with some consensus within the party," Rojas said, "some line of march to explain to the masses why Maurice Bishop was being placed under house arrest."

But no vote was taken on the proposals. Coard's group on the Central Committee explained that the purpose of the meeting was to inform the members of actions already taken by the CC so they could begin taking these decisions to the population the following day.

The atmosphere at the meeting was "intimidating, really intimidating," Louison said. "Maurice's head has already rolled and so has mine. These would be good deterrents to further offenses."

Bishop was returned to house arrest following the meeting.

On the next day, October 14, Coard's supporters began meeting with various groups from the mass organizations, workplaces, and other sectors to justify their actions. Selwyn Strachan, for example, tried to hold a public meeting in downtown St. George's to announce that Bishop had been replaced as prime minister by Coard. A crowd gathered and chased Strachan off the street. A little later that day, Radio Free Grenada announced that Coard had resigned as deputy prime minister and finance minister in order to "clear the air" of the rumor that he was plotting to assassinate Bishop.

These events on October 14 were the first to be reported in the international press. From then on, Bernard and Phyllis Coard and Strachan evidently decided to lay low for a while, hoping to weather the storm of popular opposition — the depth of which they had misjudged — before making further public appearances. They were not heard about publicly again until the U.S. invasion and their subsequent arrest.

The following day, October 15, Kenrick Radix, together with union leader Fitzroy Bain, led the first street demonstration demanding the release of Bishop and his reinstatement as prime minister. And George Louison began a series of private meetings with Coard, hoping to find some way to resolve the worsening situation.

According to the Cuban government, Fidel Castro sent a message to the NJM Central Committee that day, as well. It was delivered directly to Coard. While Cuba had no intention of interfering in Grenada's internal affairs, the message said, Castro expressed his "deep concern that the division that had arisen could do considerable damage to the image of the revolutionary process in Grenada, both inside the country and abroad," including in Cuba. But Coard took no heed of the Cubans' concerns.

"This group of Coard's that seized power in Grenada expressed serious reservations toward Cuba from the very beginning," Castro explained in the November 14 speech, "because of our well-known and unquestionable friendship with Bishop."

On October 16, Gen. Hudson Austin gave a speech over Radio Free Grenada, attempting to diffuse and de-

mobilize the mounting protest evidenced by the reaction to Strachan and the street demonstration. He now sought to reassure Grenadians that Bishop was not being challenged as prime minister, and that Bishop was just "at home and quite safe."

Then Austin got down to the actual point of the radio address — to present the slanders against Bishop for the first time publicly. The NJM, Austin said, had voted to expel Bishop from the party in order "to stop the steady growth of one-man rule in our party and country." The lie about the rumor and the other false charges were also repeated. Bishop had "disgraced" Grenada by these actions, Austin said, and had been expelled from the New Jewel Movement. At the same time, Austin stressed that "there has been no dispute" over the "political and economic policies of the party."

On October 18, Radix led a second street protest, following which he was picked up and jailed by Coard's backers. Unison Whiteman, who was foreign minister, returned to Grenada from the United States, where he had spoken before the United Nations General Assembly the previous week; he immediately began working with Louison, still in hopes of reaching a settlement with Coard. But the uncontrolled as well as controlled forces set in motion October 12 had already shattered that possibility.

## 'Completely contemptuous of people'

Coard and his group "were completely contemptuous of the Grenadian people," Louison later said. "They believed that no matter what action they took, they could eventually explain it away." The Grenadian people "are bound to get tired and hungry," Coard told Louison, and then they would stop marching and go back to work. Things would return to normal. Gairy had let people demonstrate every day for almost two months straight in 1973-74, Coard reminded him.

Up until that point, Louison said, "I still believed a peaceful solution was possible." On October 18, however, he became convinced that the opposite was the case. "There was a distinct wing of the Central Committee that wanted a military solution," Louison explained. "That I'm clear of because I discussed it with them."

Whiteman called a Caribbean press agency later that day and announced that he, Louison, housing minister Norris Bain, and education minister Jacqueline Creft had all resigned from the government. Shortly afterwards, George Louison was jailed.

Then came October 19 — Coard's Bloody Wednesday. Unison Whiteman and Fitzroy Bain led another demonstration, this one of 5,000, while another 25,000-30,000 waited in the market place for Bishop to speak. That amounted to some 25-30 percent of Grenada's entire population, comparable to 60-75 million in the United States. The demonstrators went to Bishop's residence and managed to free him. Rojas spoke with Bishop, the last living NJM leader to have done so. He reports that Bishop told him that "those criminals up on the hill" were going to turn their guns on the people and that the people "must disarm them" first.

Bishop asked Rojas to lead a contingent to the central telephone exchange and to communicate several messages to the world. He asked Rojas to call on Grenadians overseas and on trade unions and progressive forces in the region to make known their support for the people's mass outpouring that day.

Rojas said that Bishop was concerned about efforts by a small handful of right-wingers in Grenada to use the protests against his house arrest as an opportunity to spread anti-Cuban and anticommunist propaganda. According to Rojas, Bishop "wanted the point made very clearly that President Fidel Castro and the Cuban people had absolutely no involvement in this crisis," and that nothing that might happen in Grenada should serve as a justification for U.S. intervention.



The mass demonstration marched to Fort Rupert, the army headquarters. Most of the soldiers in the garrison joined in the protest, turning over their weapons to members of the militia in the crowd. The plan was to arrange some kind of telephone hookup from inside the fort by which Bishop could address the Grenadian people over a public address system.

This was the last effort by Bishop, Whiteman, and other central New Jewel Movement leaders to salvage the revolution and restore a workers' and farmers' government to power. They sought to appeal to the army to refuse orders and, together with the people, to rise up and overthrow the illegitimate Coard regime that had strangled the revolutionary government. The response of the soldiers at Fort Rupert showed that this might well have happened if there had been sufficient time to get out Bishop's call for resistance and begin organizing on that basis. This attempt by Bishop was the only possible revolutionary course under the circumstances.

Shortly after the crowd arrived at Fort Rupert, however, Coard ordered three armored personnel carriers to the garrison. They fired automatic weapons into the crowd, killing an unknown number of participants and wounding many others. Bishop, Whiteman, Fitzroy Bain, Norris Bain, Jacqueline Creft, and union leader Vincent Noel surrendered themselves peacefully, in order to avoid a wholesale massacre. They were separated from the rest of the crowd and summarily murdered inside the fort.

"I am 100 percent sure [that Coard] ordered the killings," Louison later said. Radix agreed. Despite the fact that Coard dropped from public view hoping to deflect the Grenadian people's wrath, Radix said, "I want to make clear that the RMC [the Revolutionary Military Council officially headed by General Austin] was an extension of Bernard Coard. . . . He devised the thing."

#### 'Handed on platter' to U.S.

These are the events, to the extent they are known at this time, that surrounded the overthrow of the workers' and farmers' government in Grenada. Coard's secret faction had moved from ambition and cliquism, to open treachery and betrayal of the revolution, and then to the murder of the revolutionary people and their leadership.

In the process, as Rojas put it, Coard handed Grenada "on a platter to the U.S. with all the trimmings." That is why the resistance by Grenadians to the U.S. invasion was limited — although, as Castro explained November 14, "despite these adverse circumstances, a number of Grenadian soldiers died in heroic combat against the invaders." Coard's actions are responsible for the confusion among many Grenadians about the counterrevolutionary goals of the U.S. intervention, as well for the fact that some Grenadians who had supported the revolution have now fallen for the lie, peddled both by Coard and the imperialists, that the betrayers were the "real Marxists."

With the arrest of Bishop, the U.S. rulers immediately recognized that this was the opening they had been waiting for, the chance to crush everything that was left of the revolution and the mass organizations. They had to move quickly to prevent a civil war from developing and the emergence of a new leadership of the New Jewel Movement that could topple the Coard regime and reestablish a revolutionary government. Radix, Louison, and Rojas are all convinced that the revolutionary majority in Grenada had at least a fighting chance of doing just that had Washington not invaded.

Of course, the United States government could have moved to crush the revolution militarily even if these events had not occurred. Perhaps it even could have succeeded, although that was far from certain. But the strength of the revolution had stayed Washington's hands for more than four years, and an invasion was not inevitable in the foreseeable future. Moreover, the political and military price that U.S. imperialism would have paid for such an assault would have been very high. As anyone who had visited Grenada and witnessed the popular commitment to that revolution can testify, the workers and farmers would have put up a mighty battle to defend their government.

But that government had been overthrown, and the people disarmed and demobilized. Coard's factionalism and splitting operation threw a decisive and fatal weight into the balance, tipping it toward Washington.

#### Cuba's internationalist leadership and role

There is another important factor that would have weighed in favor of the Grenada revolution had not Coard toppled the revolutionary government. That is the help that Cuba could have rendered in the event of a U.S. invasion. The Cubans had long made clear their commitment to do whatever was necessary and possible to defend Grenada. Bishop told the May Day 1980 rally in Havana that, "Certainly we in Grenada will never forget that it was the military assistance of Cuba in the first weeks of the revolution that provided us with the basis to defend our own revolution."

At a press conference in Havana late at night October 25-26, just after the U.S. invasion, and again more briefly in his November 14 speech, Fidel Castro explained how the Cuban government had conducted itself in the days leading up to the aggression. Earlier, on October 20, the day after the murder of Bishop, the Cuban government had issued a public condemnation of the criminal actions by the so-called Revolutionary Military Council.

The Cuban revolutionists released these public statements not only to make clear their own position, but also because they recognized their responsibility to lead the working class and oppressed on a world scale, explaining these treacherous actions and laying out a perspective for supporters of the Grenada revolution.

While explaining that Coard's actions had made a U.S. invasion virtually inevitable, the Cubans conducted themselves in such a way as to make the U.S. imperialists pay the biggest possible price for such aggression. They sought to place the workers and farmers of Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Cuba in the best situation to defend their revolutions in the face of this escalation of U.S. military intervention in the region.

Despite the avalanche of bourgeois press smears throughout the Grenada events, the Cuban government and its leaders won international respect and recognition for their exemplary conduct. Many people today understand more clearly than before the revolutionary character and importance of the Cuban leadership in world politics. This has increased the authority of the Cuban revolution in sectors of the Black movement in the United States, for example.

#### Proletarian internationalist approach

Because of the significance of these October 20, October 25, and November 14 Cuban documents, all three have been reproduced here as appendices to this collection, *Maurice Bishop Speaks*. In these statements, the Cubans explained several fundamental principles of their proletarian internationalist approach to world politics.

First, the Cubans stressed that their international policy is based on the principle of noninterference in the internal affairs of other parties, governments, and countries. Whatever relations or agreements they enter into are only at the request of those parties and governments — with no political strings attached. The Cubans do not try to pick and choose among leaders, to pit them against each other, or to impose policies. They give advice with generosity, but only when it is asked for, and only as advice, never dictates.

"It is to our revolution's credit," Castro explained November 14, "that, in spite of our profound indignation over Bishop's removal from office and arrest, we fully refrained from interfering in Grenada's internal affairs. We refrained even though our construction workers and all our other cooperation personnel in Grenada — who did not hesitate to confront the Yankee soldiers with the weapons Bishop himself had given them for their defense in case of an attack from abroad — could have been a decisive factor in those internal events.

"Those weapons," Castro explained, "were never meant to be used in an internal conflict in Grenada and we would never have allowed them to be so used. We would never have been willing to use them to shed a single drop of Grenadian blood."

Second, the Cubans explained that despite their own limited resources, they do whatever they can to aid peoples throughout the world who are oppressed by imperialism or engaged in struggle against it. In his speech November 14, Fidel Castro stressed that despite Cuba's attitude toward Coard's government in Grenada, "We could not ac-

cept the idea of leaving the Grenadians without doctors or leaving the airport, which was vital to the nation's economy, unfinished."

Especially after Washington's dispatch of its naval armada to the seas off Grenada, Castro said, the Cubans "couldn't possibly leave the country. If the imperialists really intended to attack Grenada, it was our duty to stay there. To withdraw at that time would have been dishonorable and could have even triggered aggression in that country then and in Cuba later on."

Under the impossible circumstances created by Coard's group, however, the Cuban government made the correct and necessary decision that Cuban personnel would fight only if attacked by U.S. invading forces. On October 22, the Cuban government sent a message with these instructions to its mission in Grenada, to be communicated to the Cuban construction workers and other personnel on the island. "We would thus be defending ourselves," that message said, "not the [new Grenadian] government and its deeds."

That same day Cuba sent a message to the Revolutionary Military Council, rejecting an appeal by General Austin for additional military aid. In a message to its embassy in Grenada the following day, the Cuban government explained its decision to reject this request. It pointed out that the members of the Revolutionary Military Council "themselves are the only ones responsible for the creation of this disadvantageous and difficult situation for the revolutionary process politically and militarily." (Coard's group was spreading the slanderous charge that blame for the impending U.S. aggression lay with Cuba because of its October 20 statement condemning the murder of Bishop.)

In its reply to the RMC leaders themselves, the Cuban government stressed that while rejecting the military request, Cuba would conduct a vigorous international political campaign to counter the U.S. threats. If the invasion nonetheless took place, the Cubans said, it would be the duty of the RMC officials "to die fighting, no matter how difficult and disadvantageous the circumstances may be" — a duty they showed no inclination to carry out. "It is noteworthy," Don Rojas explained, "that the fifteen members of the RMC and Coard, Strachan, and Austin all either surrendered to the Yankee invaders or were captured without resistance. This was the same group who . . . called on the Grenadian people to fight 'to the last man, woman, and child.'"

When the U.S. attack began, Cuban relations with the Coard-Austin government were so strained that there was no coordination between the Grenadian army and the Cuban construction workers. The Cuban volunteers, as instructed, began fighting only when attacked by the U.S. forces, and then they fought heroically and well. They gave their lives to provide Washington a small example of what would happen if U.S. forces invade El Salvador, Nicaragua, or Cuba.

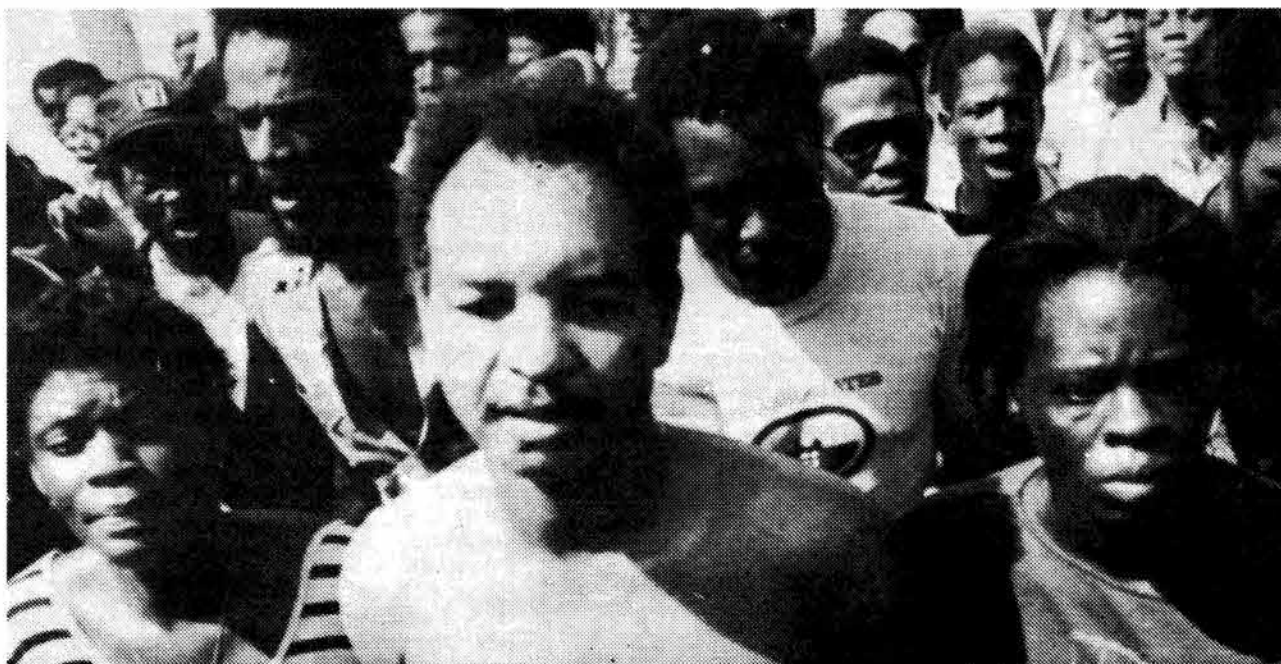
#### 'Not the first time'

As Fidel Castro explained in Havana November 14, what took place in Grenada at Coard's hands was not "the first time that such things occurred in a revolutionary process."

Cuban Marxists have had their own direct experience, in 1962 and again in 1966-68, with the types of methods employed by Coard, and the dangers posed by them.

At the end of 1961, the July 26 Movement — which had led the workers and peasants to victory and to the consolidation of the first workers' state in the Americas — fused with the Popular Socialist Party (PSP), the traditional prerevolution Communist Party in Cuba, and with

Continued on next page



New Jewel leader Unison Whiteman, who was foreign minister in Grenada's revolutionary government, leads demonstration to free Maurice Bishop from house arrest on October 19, 1983. Whiteman was among those murdered in cold blood by Coard faction that same day.



## Continued from preceding page

a third organization called the Revolutionary Directorate. The fused party took the name Integrated Revolutionary Organizations (ORI).

Aníbal Escalante, a longtime PSP leader, became organizational secretary of this new party. He abused his position by replacing cadres in the party and state apparatus almost exclusively with former associates from the PSP. Escalante then winked at the bureaucratic practices and the privileges and even corruption of these appointees.

Escalante also started a rumor-mill belittling the July 26 cadres and leaders. Fidel Castro, for example, was accused of not functioning as part of a collective leadership and of not being sufficiently Marxist. The popular support for Castro and other July 26 leaders was dismissed as signs of a developing personality cult. The PSP cadres, it was alleged, were the "real" party builders and Marxists.

To put a halt to these abuses, the ORI National Directorate held a series of discussions, removed Escalante from his positions, and instituted a number of other organizational changes. In March 1962, Castro presented a televised speech on behalf of the ORI leadership to explain to the people of the world what had happened, what had been done to correct it, and the lessons that could be learned from this experience. The speech became known in Cuba and around the world by the title, "Against Bureaucracy and Sectarianism."

Castro pointed out that under Escalante, the party was being converted from what it should be, "an apparatus of the workers' vanguard," into a "nest of privilege," "favoritism," "immunities," and "favors." The workers and party cadres, Castro said, were beginning to ask: "Was [the ORI] a nucleus of revolutionists?" Or was it a "mere shell of revolutionists, well versed in dispensing favors?"

If the party did not reverse this process, Castro said, it would no longer "enjoy the prestige which a revolutionary nucleus should enjoy, a prestige born solely from the authority which it has in the eyes of the masses, an authority imparted to it by the example which its members set as workers, as model revolutionists."

## Bourgeois disinformation campaign

In light of the bourgeois propaganda campaign around Grenada, it is interesting to note Castro's reference in the 1962 speech to similar disinformation efforts at that time. "It is logical to expect that the enemy will take advantage of these errors [by the Escalante grouping] to sow confusion, to go about saying that the Communists have taken over in Cuba; that Fidel has been replaced by Blas [Roca, another PSP leader] or Aníbal, or someone else, and Raúl [Castro] by another."

Concerning the charge of a developing cult of personality, Castro had this to say: "Those evils have not been a threat in our country. The only danger there was was the one that we did not see. How blind we were! What a difference between theory and practice! What a good lesson!"

"If we have one leader, two, ten with prestige, we should have more leaders with prestige," Castro said. "We should not destroy those leaders who have prestige," which has been gained because of what they have done for the revolution. That only ends up destroying the prestige of the revolution itself, Castro said. The task should be to develop more leaders known for their selfless activity and hard work.

Escalante's campaign of rumor had taken a toll on the revolution, Castro said. "Clearly this discouraged the

masses," he explained. "No, the masses did not turn against the revolution," he said, "they're always with the revolution. . . . But this cooled the enthusiasm of the masses; this cooled the fervor of the masses."

What's more, Castro said, Escalante's factional activity fueled anticommunism, which still had a foothold in Cuba in those early years of the revolution. The leaders of the revolution had worked hard to combat anticommunism through patient education and experience, Castro said. But, confronted with the bureaucratic practices of the Escalante grouping, "many people will ask: 'Is this communism? Is this socialism? This arbitrariness, this abuse, this privilege, all this, is this communism?'"

Castro also took up the charge that some ORI leaders were less "Marxist" than others because of their political origins. "The revolution is irrevocably defined as Marxist-Leninist," he said. "Let no one suffer from any fantasies or engage in any illusions on this score. Do not imagine that we are going to take a single step backwards. No, on the contrary, we are going to move forward!"

From "this moment on, comrades," Castro said, "all differences between the old and the new, between those who fought in the Sierra and those who were down in the lowlands, between those who took up arms and those who did not, between those who studied Marxism and those who did not study Marxism before, we feel that all these differences between them should cease. That from this moment on, we have to be one thing alone." That is, every party cadre was part of a common organization seeking to advance the revolution based on studying and applying the Marxist program and strategy in light of the living class struggle in Cuba and worldwide.

Following Castro's speech, Escalante was sent abroad to serve as a minor diplomatic official. Over the next few years, imperialist economic and military pressures against Cuba intensified, exacerbating shortages and other difficulties on the island. Attempts to extend the revolution in Latin America through support to several guerrilla war efforts failed, capped by the defeat of Che Guevara's forces in Bolivia, and some domestic measures aimed at accelerating economic development proved to be overambitious and ill-suited to the country's actual situation.

In 1964 Escalante returned to the island to be with an ailing relative. Later in the decade, amid the heightened social tensions, he began to carry out renewed secret factional activity, using the same methods of innuendo and slander.

Again reminiscent of Coard's charges against Maurice Bishop, the Escalante supporters began "passing themselves off as heroes of a battle against petty-bourgeois leadership," as Cuban leader Carlos Rafael Rodríguez explained at a 1968 meeting of the party's Central Committee called to discuss the matter. One of Escalante's people complained to several lower-level Soviet officials in Cuba that, "Fidel wants Cuba to be the hub of the whole world . . . so that he can achieve a stature greater than that of Marx, Engels, and Lenin," and that in Cuba "policy is made by no one but Fidel Castro."

## Stakes in combating Escalante

At the 1968 Central Committee meeting, Rodríguez — himself a former central leader of the PSP — explained what was at stake in combating Escalante's methods. The harm done by Escalante, Rodríguez said, "lies in the fact that he frustrated a process of unity that began by being, and could have been, a joyous, fraternal process in which comrades from various organizations, who had worked jointly or separately toward the same objective, were beginning to unite. He turned that into a bitter process, one that has since been painful."

The number of people involved in the second Escalante affair was small, but in one respect their activities were even more serious than in 1962. Escalante and his supporters tried to capitalize on strained relations that had developed between Cuba and the governments of the Soviet Union and several Eastern European countries over differences concerning aid to Vietnam and other international issues. The Escalante grouping urged personnel in the Soviet and Czech embassies to get their governments to bring pressure on the Cuban leadership to change its policies. They even went so far as to propose the withholding of economic aid and military aid from Cuba as a factional club against the revolution's leadership. Some officials from these two countries — who were later ordered to leave Cuba — cooperated with Escalante's maneuvers.

In 1968 Escalante and the core of his grouping were tried for violations of Cuban law committed in the course of their factional activity; they were convicted and sent to prison.

From both these rounds of the battle against the Escalante grouping, the Cuban leaders drew important lessons about leadership methods, bureaucracy, and the relationship between the party, the state apparatus, the army, the mass organizations, and the workers and farmers.

During his March 1962 speech, Castro proposed a new procedure for becoming a party member. From that time on, the majority of nominees were accepted into party

membership only after having been elected a model worker by an assembly of their co-workers. This included all the workers in a given workplace — party members and non-party members alike — who knew the individual, and knew whether or not he or she was actually playing a leadership role as part of the communist vanguard of the Cuban working class. At the party's 1980 congress, Castro reported that the number of workers in the party had tripled since 1975, and that the party and its leadership bodies also had more women, more veterans of internationalist missions, and more peasants and agricultural workers. As a result, Castro said, the party had become "more Marxist-Leninist and more revolutionary," as well.

The 1968 events, in particular, drove home once more the principle that the Cubans have enunciated time and again in all their statements on Grenada — no interference in the internal affairs of other governments and other parties.

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Combined with difficult objective circumstances, factional and administrative leadership methods such as those of the Coard grouping can split the vanguard party of the working class, separate it from the masses of working people, and lead to destruction of the revolution. In the process, the workers and farmers can be left wide open to direct imperialist intervention and repression.

As the example of Cuba proves, however, such a development is far from inevitable.

In his speech in Havana November 14, Fidel Castro warned the U.S. imperialists not to let their "victory in Grenada and their air of triumph . . . go to their heads, leading them to commit serious, irreversible errors. They will not find in El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Cuba the particular circumstances of revolutionaries divided among themselves and divorced from the people that they found in Grenada."

Pointing to the determined resistance by Cuban construction workers at Point Salines, Castro asked the crowd of more than one million workers and farmers: "If in Grenada, the imperialists had to bring in an elite division to fight against a handful of isolated men struggling in a small stronghold, lacking fortifications, a thousand miles from their homeland, how many divisions would they need against millions of combatants fighting on their own [Cuban] soil alongside their own people?"

Nicaraguan leader Humberto Ortega told a gathering of Sandinista Youth in Managua, "The Yankees won't find us with our arms locked in storerooms. We have already distributed weapons and millions of bullets throughout the country."

And Vietnamese President Truong Chinh, after condemning the U.S. invasion of Grenada, warned that if Washington "were reckless enough to invade Cuba and Nicaragua, then many other Vietnams would emerge in Central America and Latin America."

## 'Symbols cannot be destroyed'

Washington will certainly not find the job easy when it sends its troops and planes against the revolutionary peoples of Nicaragua and El Salvador, as it is right now preparing to do. As casualties mount and reverses accumulate, the U.S. capitalists will quickly find themselves fighting a second front at home, as well. U.S. workers don't want another Vietnam-style war. And they are growing increasingly angry over government and big-business attacks on their jobs, on their living and working conditions, on the rights of Blacks, Latinos, and women, and on democratic rights in general.

What's more, U.S. troops and firepower cannot erase the example and rich lessons of the Grenada revolution. Along with revolutionary Cuba and Nicaragua, the workers' and farmers' government brought to power in 1979 by the Grenadian people remains, as Fidel Castro once put it, one of the three giants of the Caribbean. Nor can the imperialists sweep away the contribution made by Maurice Bishop and the New Jewel Movement to the process of constructing a new revolutionary leadership of the working class and its allies in the Americas and internationally.

"Imperialism is bent on destroying symbols," Castro explained November 14, "because it knows the value of symbols, of examples, and of ideas. It wanted to destroy them in Grenada, and it wants to destroy them in El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Cuba."

"But symbols, examples, and ideas," he said, "cannot be destroyed. When their enemies think they have destroyed them, what they have done is made them multiply. . . . Grenada has already multiplied the patriotic conviction and fighting spirit of the Salvadoran, Nicaraguan, and Cuban revolutionaries."

Our aim in making available these speeches and interviews of Maurice Bishop is to help multiply the example and the lessons of the Grenada revolution as widely as possible among workers and the oppressed throughout the English-speaking world.

## For further reading

### Maurice Bishop Speaks: The Grenada Revolution 1979-83

400 pages, \$6.95

### "Behind the Tragedy in Grenada"

Interview with Don Rojas in *Intercontinental Press*, \$1.25

### Selected Speeches of Fidel Castro 1960-79

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# Miners prepare for '84 contract talks

Continued from front page

burden of leadership falls on the officers and members of the UMWA. We must set an example for all workers to follow."

## New organizing victories

This stance has strengthened UMWA organizing efforts. This is of key importance because of the large number of nonunion mining operations, and hardened employer opposition to UMWA organizing efforts. On the second day of the meeting the convention enthusiastically received remarks by Vice-pres. Cecil Roberts when he pointed to recent organizing victories at Decker Coal in Montana and Benjamin Coal in Pennsylvania, both large operations.

The active involvement of rank-and-file unionists was key in winning workers at these mines to the UMWA. Later in the convention the delegates voted to establish a standing organizing committee in each UMWA local.

The convention's "no concessions" stand also set the framework for the rest of the deliberations. It led to extensive, serious, and democratic discussion and debate about how to best arm the union and win the coming war with the operators.

## Democratic conquests

Such a discussion was possible because the democratic conquests that led to a significant degree of rank-and-file control in the UMWA are very much alive. One result is that the delegates were generally representative of the union ranks — much more so than at other national gatherings of the labor movement.

Most were working or laid-off miners. Many were young, although a valued component of the delegations was pensioners who remain active union builders. There were a larger number of women delegates, 20, than ever before and they found a growing acceptance at the gathering. (Women miners working with the Coal Employment Project held a well-attended open house that was announced on the floor by Vice-president Roberts.)

The convention furthered a process of discussion on union strategy. An important part of this process occurred a year ago when the ranks made use of the democracy they have won by electing a new leadership for the union.

Trumka, Roberts, and Secretary-Treasurer John Banovic were swept into office by an overwhelming vote as a result of the "no concessions" platform they ran on and miners' belief that this slate would fight to make it a reality.

The new leadership proposed a series of constitutional changes. Pointing to the last two rounds of national contract negotiations, the Constitution and Grievance Committee's report said, "Our membership suffered grievously through two long and bitter strikes." In order to "avoid repeating that history," the committee proposed that the UMWA "be prepared to selectively strike the coal industry."

## Selective strike package

The Trumka leadership tied a series of proposals to this as part of a "selective strike package." These included:

- Establishing a selective-strike fund by levying a five-percent assessment on gross wages, beginning in January;
- Eliminating the union's bargaining council (the body that approved a proposed contract before decisive vote by the membership) in order to allow the international president to take contract proposals directly to the membership;
- And granting the president the power to make all decisions concerning enforcement of union policy, unless overruled by a two-thirds vote of the union's International Executive Board (IEB). Previously such IEB decisions were by simple majority vote.

This package was put to the delegates to be voted up or down in its entirety.

For many delegates the convention was their first opportunity to hear this new strat-

egy for conducting the 1984 contract fight. After hours of discussion on December 13 the package was voted down by a roll-call vote of 1,307 to 660.

Many delegates did not agree with all or part of the proposal. But most saw the debate as one among miners committed to defending the union and fighting the operators. The debate revolved around how this could best be done.

Many were concerned about what they saw as steps that could infringe on democracy and rank-and-file control.

"The IEB was elected by the membership to represent the views of the membership," explained delegate David Miller from District 6. "If we vote for this, we are starting to strip the IEB of their power. One man's ideas should not override the ideas of the majority of our international elected board members."

Other delegates went further. William Lane, representing Local 1766 in West Virginia, explained, "... we fought for democracy ... and I don't agree to give it back."

Another District 6 delegate, Larry Bucelich, referred to Jock Yablonski, dissident candidate for UMWA president in 1969 who was murdered on orders from the then international president, Tony Boyle. Yablonski "had a dream," said Bucelich, "that one day in the UMWA majority would rule. ... I say we send this back to committee."

Michael Niggemyer, a delegate from Local 2095, echoed this. While stating that he supported the "goals" of the package, Niggemyer added, "I think myself that the president has enough power. I don't think that he needs two-thirds."

## Questions about selective strike

Few delegates spoke against the idea of a selective strike, although many miners have questions about how it will work. Many strongly doubt whether it can overcome the resistance of the operators more effectively than sticking to the union's tradition of "no contract, no work," which has led to industrywide strikes in the past.

Delegate William Deegan, from West Virginia Local 1570, said in floor debate, "I can't really speak in total opposition," because, he said, he had no other concrete proposal to offer. But, he continued, "what are we going to do with the companies that continue to work?" He predicted that these operators would violate the old contract while no new one had been signed. Right now, he observed, "the company continues to stack up grievances, continues to fight us on every issue. ... It just occurs to me, in this interim period, we would have some major problems."

Many delegates questioned the size of the selective strike assessment or opposed it altogether. The union has never had a strike fund. Many felt the proposed figure was too high and would be opposed by many miners, especially those who have spent long periods on layoff and have only recently returned to work. Others questioned what would constitute a selective strike, and who could draw from the fund.

There was little debate on the floor on the proposal to eliminate the bargaining council. The bargaining council was established at the 1974 convention as part of the contract-ratification reform, and has played a role in helping miners assess their contracts.

Those miners who spoke to this proposal generally expressed the view that the membership's rights to read, discuss, and vote on the contract was an adequate safeguard of rank-and-file control.

The Collective Bargaining Committee discussed some 3,000 resolutions from UMWA locals on contract goals and priorities. However, the convention voted not to discuss any of this on the floor. Trumka said this would play into the hands of the coal companies. But the need for further discussion on this subject remains. District conferences are slated to take this up.

## New proposal

Following the defeat of the original selective-strike package, it was sent back



Militant/Geoff Mirelowitz

Part of United Mine Workers of America convention. Central discussion was on how to fight coal operators' attempts to impose concessions and weaken union.

to committee for modification. Important changes were made and a new package was adopted, although the delegates voted on each proposal one at a time.

The new proposal included two key modifications. One dropped the strike assessment to 2 1/2 percent. The other granted Trumka authority to make decisions on the selective strike only, subject to reversal by a two-thirds IEB vote, narrowing the additional authority he was seeking.

Discussion over the two days also indicated why many delegates supported Trumka's strategy. Maurice Moorlegen from Local 2295 in southern Illinois stated he had questioned the selective strike because it would "break with tradition." However, he decided Trumka had been elected on a promise of using "new ideas and strategy to fight the coal operators."

"If your local voted to elect President Trumka," Moorlegen argued, "then I say to you as a representative of your local you should support the wishes of President Trumka and his officers, and you should have the courage to defend your actions," on returning to the mines.

## Discussion will continue

Trumka's strategy was adopted, with important modifications by the delegates. But the discussion is by no means over. Trumka himself indicated that the leadership will be carrying out "further education" on the selective-strike idea in UMWA locals over the next nine months.

Just as a wide range of views was expressed at the convention, so too will such a discussion deepen among the ranks.

Local 1070 delegate Eddie Bowlong raised an important idea that is part of the debate. He supported Trumka's plans as a way to avoid being "starved" into accepting a bad contract. Many miners believe this is what happened in the 1977-78 and 1981 strikes.

"The national contract has been like a brick wall to this union in recent years," argued Bowlong. "We continue to make a run at that wall and attempt to bust it down, and every time we hit it we become bruised and battered. ... The time has come for us to find an easier way around the wall ... and I believe that's the selective strike."

But many miners doubt the UMWA can "get around" this obstacle, which is created by the coal operators' relentless drive for profits. Supporters of the selective strike point out that individual coal companies are already moving to negotiate separately with the union. However the operators (and the powerful corporations which own many coal companies) remain united in their goal of imposing concessions and they will work together to do it.

Many miners are not convinced that a selective strike will defend the union more effectively in its showdown with the operators. Others believe this strategy may divide the UMWA rather than unify it.

Another question that will have to be evaluated is how Trumka uses the new authority he has obtained. Many delegates clearly respect him as a leader whom they believe will take on the coal companies. At the same time, the bedrock of the union's strength in the past 10 years has been rank-and-file control.

The convention made another important constitutional change, in the form of an amendment from the floor. Previously the union's bargaining council was mandated by the constitution to use their "best efforts" to win approval for any contract adopted by it. The new decision simply requires the union's leadership to "explain" the contract to the ranks before the vote.

This reflected many delegates' belief that "the contract should sell itself."

## Preparation and solidarity

Whatever the outcome of the discussion over the use of the selective strike and other convention decisions, the UMWA can continue to arm itself for the showdown that is coming. The discussion in the union itself is key. Also important is preparing for the fight in the entire labor movement. The union can begin today to explain the stakes in the coming battle to other workers and to allies such as farmers. Winning this solidarity will be of vital importance.

This was begun in a modest way at the convention itself. United Auto Workers Pres. Owen Bieber and Steelworkers Acting Pres. Lynn Williams, along with Kirkland, pledged union solidarity with the miners' fight — a positive step.

Unfortunately the main purpose of their remarks seemed to be helping to line up the UMWA to support Walter Mondale in his bid for the Democratic Party's presidential nomination. The convention decided to do this with no discussion or debate.

Another important weakness of the convention was the absence of any mention of the escalating U.S. war moves around the world. While the delegates were very aware of the scope of the war against workers at home, there was no reference to the other fronts in that same war against workers and peasants in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Grenada, or Lebanon.

As Washington moves closer to a full-scale Vietnam-type aggression, this will become a more pressing problem for the UMWA, as it will for other workers who will be called on to fight and die in it.

All the delegates had written copies of all convention reports but due to time considerations they were generally accepted without debate. These reports discussed many of the problems facing miners stemming from company and government attacks occurring today, such as those on safety, black lung legislation, etc.

Many miners who served on convention committees indicated that extensive discussions did take place there.

The UMWA is heading into a struggle vital to its entire future. As American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees International Pres. Gerald McEntee accurately observed when he spoke, "You'll be the target in the labor movement in the United States in 1984."

UAW President Bieber noted that the soft-coal contract expires in September, the same month that the UAW will be negotiating with General Motors and Ford. Clearly the showdown the miners are heading into will be part of important developments in the class struggle that will have implications for the entire labor movement.





Black farmers and farm workers in Mississippi face worsening plight

# Interview with Mississippi Black farmer

BY TONY DUTROW

MILESTON, Miss. — Shadrach Davis is a Black farmer active in fighting for the rights of farmers. He farms 120 acres, mostly cotton, in the Delta lands in Holmes County outside Mileston, located not far from Tchula.

"Somebody needs to do something about the problems we face as Black farmers," Davis told us. He said most Black farmers are full-time farmers, though they would like to be able to get off-the-farm work to bolster their declining incomes.

"Many small white farmers can get jobs, but very few Black farmers can get them," he explained, referring to the discriminatory hiring in industrial jobs available in the area.

Davis is old enough to remember farming with mules and wagons. The back-breaking methods of farming cotton with mules, he says, have been replaced with bank-breaking equipment and supplies.

His tractor, he told us, cost him \$21,000 seven years ago. Now he needs \$56,000 to replace it with a new one.

Diesel fuel has shot up from 40 cents to \$1.20 a gallon. Insecticide for cotton pests sells for a staggering \$130 a gallon. These are only part of the costs that are driving small farmers like Davis deeper into debt.

Davis described how the banks slam the vault door shut to all but the rich cotton planters in the area, thus forcing Black and poor farmers into a corner.

Turning to the Farm Home Administration (FmHA) in Lexington for help presents other obstacles. Davis says that this office, heavily influenced by the wealthy planters who run the county, doesn't make loans to Blacks and other small farmers in need.

"Most farmers here weren't fortunate enough to get a loan this year. I couldn't get one until March — too late to plant," he said.

## 50 to 100 acres

There are about 50 Black farmers in this area of Holmes County, according to Davis. Most have farms of 50 to 100 acres. Quite a few rent their land from other farmers, he said.

Davis gave an example of the cold-blooded way Black family farmers are driven off their land by the banks and FmHA.

"One man had 10 children and only 54 acres. His wife had been to the state hospital three times," he said.

"Do you know, they wouldn't give her any disability, social security, or anything?" He had just heard that the FmHA won't give them a loan, "so they're going to go under this year," he said.

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Davis then turned his fire on the Reagan administration and the effects of its Payments-In-Kind (PIK) program launched a year ago. PIK allows farmers to sign up to receive surplus commodities stored by the government in exchange for setting aside up to 50 percent of land slated for growing crops covered under the program, such as cotton and rice.

Most Black farmers, however, are growing soybeans because less money is needed for production compared to rice and cotton. However, soybeans are not included in the PIK program.

Davis explained that the PIK program has helped the large planters to reap a bonanza while the smaller farmers hit bottom.

"With three bad crops in a row," Davis said, assessing his prospects for this year, he won't be rescued from debt by PIK. "What you get from the PIK program is based on a farmer's yield last year. But last season was a bad year."

To illustrate, Davis described a decent yield as 750 pounds of cotton an acre. PIK only gives farmers 600 pounds for every acre they don't plant. Or as Davis put it, "150 pounds you don't get paid for."

"We ought to be getting \$700 to \$800 a bale to come out even. Last year we only got \$250 to \$275 a bale," he said, calculating this will cost him more losses again this year with or without PIK.

## High ginning costs

We asked him about a Black-owned cooperative cotton gin in nearby Mileston.

"We've got our own gin, but it's obsolete now," he said. The gin, he explained, was built in the 1940s and produces six to eight bales of cotton an hour. The new automated gins owned by the plantation owners produce 30 bales an hour.

"My son who works in one just pushes buttons on the new gins," Davis said, describing where most small farmers now take their cotton to be ginned.

The cost for ginning a bale of cotton Davis told us has soared from \$12 a bale several years ago to \$35 a bale today.

Davis explained the impact of the PIK program on Black farm workers dependent on the large plantations for work. Compared to a farm the size of Davis', these plantations range in size from 3,000 to 40,000 acres.

"Many of the hands are out of work. Usually a planter will have eight or nine hands. Now with half his land laying idle, there's lots of people out of work," Davis stated. He added that 90 percent of the cotton plantations in the area had idled half their cotton lands this year.

Davis hires no workers on his farm and does all the work himself. Black "hands," as he calls the Black farm workers, do all the work on the big farms, from driving tractors and combines to the maintenance of the equipment. For this they receive a paltry \$3,000 a year on the average. Those doing maintenance work earn a bit more.

In addition to the layoffs caused by PIK, Davis predicted more workers will lose their jobs to mechanization. The rich planters are buying combine tractors that can pick as many as eight rows of cotton at one time. Davis pointed out that this is four times as much as most of the tractors presently used on the big plantations can do.

At the end of our discussion, Davis shared his recollections of the civil rights movement and the role of Black farmers in it.

"If it hadn't been for small Black farmers and landowners, there wouldn't have been as many people registering to vote," he remembered.

Before cotton was completely mechanized many more families lived on the plantations and were totally in the grip of the owners. The cotton planters didn't want to end this situation of cheap labor and were ardent opponents of the movement to eliminate segregation.

Many Black families were afraid to defy the racist plantation owners for fear of losing their jobs and homes. "We told them if you all go to the courthouse to register, the man can't do anything."

## Among first to register

Black farmers in Holmes County were among the first Blacks in the state to register to vote, according to Davis. Many owned their own land and feared less retaliation from the plantation owners.

However, they did face cop and Ku Klux Klan terror. "We held meetings in Mileston with police all around us. Every week for two nights a week, we registered people," he recalled proudly.

Davis and other Black farmers in the area worked closely in the registration effort with civil rights leaders such as Robert Moses and Medgar Evers.

It is this tradition that Davis represented when he led other Black farmers here in 1981 to put up their land to pay the bail to free Tchula mayor Eddie Carthan. Carthan was framed up and jailed by the same racist forces that so violently opposed the civil rights movement.

In recent years an alliance has been developing among some small white farmers who are also fed up with the antifarmer policies of the government. Davis told us that he and other Black and white farmers from Mississippi participated in the "tractorcade" protest of thousands of farmers that converged on Washington, D.C., in 1977.

# Gov't policies driving Blacks off land

BY TONY DUTROW

JACKSON, Miss. — "The situation for Black farmers in Mississippi and especially full-time farmers is very gloomy." This was the forecast given *Militant* reporters here by Joe Adams, state director of the Emergency Land Fund (ELF).

The ELF was founded in 1971 in Atlanta, Georgia, by Black economists and educators to help stop the massive loss of land owned by Blacks.

Adams noted that in 1910, three out of every four Blacks lived in rural areas of the South. The years between 1910 and 1920 were the peak period of Black land ownership.

Today, according to Adams, there are only 50,000 farms operated by Blacks compared to more than 925,000 in 1920. This decrease is disproportionately greater for Blacks than whites.

The largest concentration of Black farms today is in Mississippi where there are about 8,000. The figures for Black farmers includes both landowners and tenant farmers.

The ELF steps in, Adams explained, to aid Black farmers threatened with farm foreclosures, sale of their land by the state to pay back taxes, or loss of their land

through legal treachery, including discriminatory inheritance laws.

The fund also works with other groups, such as Rural America and the American Agriculture Movement, to help forge an alliance to fight on behalf of small farmers. Adams indicated that in Alabama, important labor support has been won for Blacks and other small farmers.

The government's Farm Home Administration (FmHA), Adams said, is aiding and abetting the loss of Black farms. Black farmers see the FmHA — which is supposed to be the lender of last resort for poor farmers — as one of their biggest enemies.

Under the Reagan administration, the problems of small farmers have multiplied due to cutbacks in government authorized loans. But Black farmers, due to racism, have always stood at the end of the line for FmHA loans and have fared the worst.

Further, Adams explained, the FmHA policy "displays no sensitivity to the small farmer, whatsoever, particularly Black farmers, who face even greater problems today."

For example, the fact that the average Black farmer owns less than 100 acres presents an obstacle in getting loans. The FmHA points to the decline in land value in recent years in the state, thus claiming

Black farmers are too small to risk loans.

"So Blacks who couldn't get loans under better conditions, under the Reagan administration fare even worse," Adams summed up.

Often when an ELF representative goes with a Black farmer to help arrange an FmHA loan, he or she is only able to win a year's reprieve before foreclosure. Sadly, Adams said, this occasional concession represents a victory but offers no hope in keeping a farm.

In 1981 this anger was expressed in a protest at the FmHA regional office in Covington, Tennessee. Adams told us that the ELF helped organize this protest of about 40 Black farmers, mostly from Mississippi. For two days they staged a protest they described as a "sleep-in" to dramatize their demand for loans.

Speaking from his experience in Mississippi, Adams said that "when a white farmer dies or loses his land through a forced sale or foreclosure, this land usually goes to a young white farmer."

Rarely does land belonging to a Black farmer, however, get passed on to another Black farmer. "Normally the land falls to a white farmer, continuing the cycle of Black land loss."



# Chair, noose or needle: still legalized murder

BY HARRY RING

Most states use the electric chair. In some it's the gas chamber. A few still use the noose or firing squads. A half dozen states now offer lethal injections as an alternate choice.

No matter the method, the death penalty is still legalized murder, and it's on the rise again in this country.

For several years, capital punishment had been suspended. Since the Supreme Court reinstated it in 1976, 11 people have died, five of them in 1983.

The Supreme Court has ordered the lower courts to "streamline" the handling of death sentence appeals, and

Study after study — and simple common sense — tells you that's not so. A lot of people have been executed in this country. But crimes of violence continue.

How could it be otherwise? We live under capitalism, and capitalism is the most violence-oriented system humanity has ever known.

Try to conceive of all the people who have died in wars waged solely to line the pockets of the ruling rich.

Try to calculate the number of people who have died at the hands of trigger-happy cops.

Try to add in the violence of those twisted and torn by the merciless pressures of a totally irrational and oppressive system.

Stopping all of these criminal actions are of no concern to the people who run this country. Capital punishment is one of many weapons the wealthy capitalists use to terrorize and intimidate working people. They will use whatever violence it takes to maintain their rule.

Day after day, these past weeks, U.S. battleships and fighter jets have unleashed their guns on Lebanon. Why? Because the people there are determined to end the domination of foreign imperialism. The function of the battleships and jets is to "keep them in their place."

It's no exaggeration to say there's a connection between bombings abroad and capital punishment at home.

And it's also no exaggeration to say that the death pen-

alty is one of the ugliest examples of the racism that prevails in this country.

The depth of the racism is illustrated by the figures.

Nonwhites constitute less than 20 percent of the U.S. population. But nationwide, they constitute 48 percent of those currently on death row.

In California, according to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), there are now 144 people sentenced to death. Of these 60 are white, 53 Black, 25 Latino, 3 Native American, and 3 Asian American. That adds up to 84 nonwhite, or 58 percent.

Today capital punishment is a weapon to help keep all working people — especially nonwhites, the most oppressed of working people — "in their place."

The cold-blooded cynicism of this country's ruling class was blurred out last year by Supreme Court Justice William Rehnquist. During a hearing on one capital punishment case, Rehnquist asked an Oklahoma lawyer if it wouldn't be cheaper, "from the taxpayer's point of view," to execute a particular defendant rather than confine him for years in a psychiatric institution.

Justice Thurgood Marshall, the only Black member of the court, was moved to respond, "Well, it would be cheaper just to shoot him when you arrested him, wouldn't it."

## AS I SEE IT

it's setting the pace in doing this. It's estimated that as many as 50 people will die in 1984.

The last two executed this year were killed within 30 hours of each other. John Eldon Smith was electrocuted in Georgia and Robert Wayne Williams in Louisiana.

Politicians and the media argue that the barbaric practice of executing people is necessary as a deterrent to violent crime. But that's a hoax.

## Denver unionist is hit by government witch-hunt

Continued from back page

America and the takeback campaign of the bosses against American workers.

DIS has agents in thousands of plants around the country that do business with giant corporations such as Lockheed, McDonnell Douglas, and Martin Marietta to spy on, harass, and victimize union activists and interfere in the internal affairs of the union movement. DIS admits to keeping files on at least 10 million workers and their families.

In 1981-82 DIS launched a campaign to go after socialists and other union militants in plants that are major weapons and other military materiel producers. Investigations were initiated at McDonnell Douglas in St. Louis; General Dynamics in San Diego; Lockheed in Atlanta and Sunnyvale, California; Tenneco shipyard in Newport News, Virginia; Bendix in Kansas City; and other plants throughout the country.

The witch-hunt stalled following a Supreme Court ruling in October 1982 in *Brown v. SWP*, a campaign disclosure case. The court said that the SWP "states in its constitution that its aim is 'the abolition of capitalism and the establishment of a workers' government to achieve socialism.'... It seeks ... to achieve social change through the political process, and its members regularly run for public office." This ruling undermined the rationale

DIS was claiming as the basis for its spying.

**Hope to set a precedent**

But with the U.S. invasion of Grenada and its stepped-up intervention into Central America and Lebanon, DIS has resumed the active pursuit of investigations of SWP supporters and other union militants. The Goodman interrogation shows that they are trying to establish a precedent for such spying and victimizations.

This interrogation contradicts DIS's own regulations, which clearly state that "inquiries to the applicant or to others concerning an applicant" are "not to be directed to the applicant's opinions" about "political candidates or parties," "the constitutionality or wisdom of legislative policies," and "affiliation with unions or fraternal organizations."

Nevertheless, DIS is stepping up its investigation of Goodman's political views, associations, and personal preferences to test whether they can get away with these actions.

**'Big threat'**

After being questioned by the DIS agents, Goodman told the *Militant*, "This interrogation confirmed my suspicions that this whole investigation is improper and illegal, as well as a big threat. I only went to

the interview they demanded because I wanted to make it clear I was willing to cooperate if there was any legitimate or appropriate purpose to it. I still am.

"However, the DIS agents spent the whole time asking improper and illegal questions about my personal life and my political associations and beliefs.

"They try and put workers in an impossible position. They say that if you don't submit to their questions and spying they will revoke your security clearance for refusing to cooperate with them, which would mean your job. Then they coerce you into submitting to an interrogation where they try to probe totally improper and unconstitutional areas of personal and political activity.

"I don't think anyone should be subjected to this kind of illegal witch-hunt," Goodman concluded. "I recommend that any worker who is faced with circumstances similar to mine not submit to such an interrogation. They are the ones who are breaking the law."

**Waiting for response**

On December 8, Goodman's attorney, John Tredennick, who is being provided to Goodman by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), wrote to DIS: "We believe that the Defense Investigative Service has no legal right to interrogate Ms. Goodman with regard to her political affiliation or political beliefs. We also believe that the D.I.S. has no right to inquire into matters of personal privacy."

Attached to this letter was a statement from Goodman stating "your interview focuses solely on these two subjects, political affiliation and private life. I believe it is inappropriate to answer questions in these two areas as they violate D.I.S. regulations and my Constitutionally guaranteed rights to privacy and freedom of political association."

Goodman, her union, and her attorney are now awaiting a response from DIS as to whether they will drop their illegal investigation or continue to pursue efforts to victimize her and attack her union.

**Part of drive against union**

The DIS investigation of Goodman began in the context of a deepening drive against the work force at Martin Marietta. With a membership of 1,100, UAW 766 was forced to fight more than 400 grievances in 1982 alone. And since the investigation of Goodman began, Martin Marietta has expanded its security clearance program to intimidate and victimize workers. Several new "secure" areas now require a clearance to enter, and the number of employees who are being forced to apply for a "security clearance" has increased.

Many workers have protested these steps. During recent "Quality Circle" meetings on security in the plant, a company official has been informing groups of workers that they will be asked to fill out security clearance applications. Many of these workers have objected, and the com-

pany has told them that regardless of their seniority, they could be fired for refusing to fill out the form.

Local 766 Pres. Bob Killian, along with Lloyd Trujillo, chair of the Bargaining Committee, issued a statement supporting Goodman's right to work at Martin Marietta "without any interference or harassment by the Defense Investigative Service."

Goodman has also won the support of a number of women's and gay organizations. Both Central Denver NOW and the Colorado State NOW Board have passed resolutions supporting her right to work "without being harassed for her political affiliation and/or sexual preference."

The stakes in Goodman's case are high. The government is expanding the use of DIS as a political tool for pressuring the labor movement and to weed out socialists, women, militant unionists and others they don't like, thereby chilling discussion and political activity by their coworkers.

Public support for Goodman's case, along with continued backing from her UAW local and the ACLU, is crucial to winning the fight. The Political Rights Defense Fund (PRDF), which is coordinating the educational and fundraising efforts on Goodman's behalf, is urging that messages be sent demanding that DIS halt its investigation to DIS, c/o Martin Marietta, P.O. Box 179, Denver, Colo. 80201. Copies and contributions to aid the defense effort should be sent to PRDF, 130 W. 12th Ave., Denver, Colo. 80212.

## Steel takebacks

Continued from back page

tempts to pit one local against another over which will grant greater concessions in an effort to keep its plant open.

Another IEB member explained, "They go to the locals saying they want to talk about work rules and then they start trying to chip away at medical benefits, pensions, even wages."

One Local 65 member put the South Works situation simply and accurately, "They're trying to kill the union."

This challenge poses sharply the pressing need for a thorough, open discussion in the union ranks on a new strategy to defend the USWA. The special March 29 election to choose a new international union president can provide that opportunity.

The new IEB stance, opposing further wage concessions, is a positive change reflecting rank-and-file pressure. However, the IEB is continuing to negotiate with U.S. Steel, and a key phrase in its new position may be "wage concessions." Many of the most dangerous demands posed by the company concern other issues.

The top officials' previous support for concessions has helped to disarm the union in the face of the new assault. Any new strategy will require the active mobilization of the rank and file if it is to be effective in defending the hard-fought gains of some 50 years.

## Grenada: confusion reigns

Continued from Page 4

began circulating a letter asking workers to sign a petition to decertify the union. We've prepared a letter explaining that the union is continuing its work.

"There's also another management pamphlet going around, aimed at discrediting the AGWU and other unions. Our unions are blasted for having communist, pro-NJM leaderships. The charge is made that our unions were tied to the PRG, that they weren't really free trade unions."

One of this union leader's biggest concerns is what will happen to workers on state-owned farms. Seventy percent of the AGWU is made up of farm workers in the state sector.

"We fear," he reported, "that there will be a policy of divestment and lands may be returned to their previous owners."

The AGWU leader said their plans "center right now on just getting the union functioning again." He said that beyond that not much could be done.

"The propaganda of the U.S. government and reactionary elements here is having a big impact. Workers can see when a boss tries to victimize them, but they don't see the attacks on the PRG, NJM, and the whole revolutionary process as being attacks against their own interests.

"After awhile, however, when the benefits workers were receiving as a result of Cuban aid stop coming, workers will change their view. They will see that this new government is different — it doesn't intervene of their behalf. Then the workers will change."

Meanwhile, he said, the most important task is organizing the workers. "Great strides were made during the revolution in bringing trade union rights to the workers and they know that. There will be conscious efforts made to turn back that process. AIFLD [American Institute for Free Labor Development] is a powerful organization that will be used to try to undermine the working-class organizations.

"In the United States, workers should demand that Grenadian workers be allowed to freely organize trade unions without the interference of AIFLD and that the pro-labor laws enacted by the PRG remain in effect.

"We need your support."

### Revolutionary Continuity

#### Birth of the Communist Movement, 1918-1922

By Farrell Dobbs. This is the second volume of a series on the history of the struggle to build a revolutionary workers party in the United States. 240 pages, \$5.95.

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**PIKpockets?** — Small farmers may not get much benefit from the government's PIK (payment-in-kind) program under which grow-

ers receive surplus crops to compensate for land kept idle. But corporate growers do okay. For instance, J.G. Boswell, a giant California operation, qualified for 3.7 million worth of wheat, even though their principal crop is cotton. Of the 14,627 acres Boswell put in PIK this year, 10,151 were under water.

fany's, buy a diamond and get a doll gratis.

**Our rational society** — "Medical schools and hospital training programs will double the number of physicians in this country within the next 20 years, producing a glut that will drive up health costs and encourage unnecessary medical care . . ." News item.

**Travel tip** — If you're considering a sight-seeing flight over the capital, be advised that antiaircraft missiles have been installed in the area of the White House and those with fingers on the triggers will have about 60 seconds to respond to possible threats.

**A matter of values** — A Miami-based Nicaraguan counter-revolutionary is trying to unload a thousand motorized hang gliders on his fellow CIA mercenaries and several Central American regimes. He concedes they are chancy for those assigned to pilot them, but explains, "the relative value of soldiers and equipment in Central America makes the risk worthwhile." Ordinary soldiers, he philosophizes, are "expensible."

**Chew on this** — Presidential aide Edwin Meese wasn't really knocking the people he said go to soup kitchens simply because the food is free. Like, he attended an Xmas party thrown by a well-

heeled Republican and, stuffed as he was, managed to eat the free meal consisting of smoked trout, prime ribs, and plum pudding, accompanied by three wines. Meese played Santa at the party and even made a gut-busting joke about soup kitchens.

**Year of the great boomdoggle?** — Secretary of War Weinberger says Congress will be asked to hike the military budget 22 percent, for a grand total of \$305 billion.

**That's where they're going to put him?** — "President Seen Near Commitment on Space Station" — News headline.



Harry Ring

**Can't match army chow** — The Army and Air Force Exchange Service which operates on-base cafeterias and snack bars, is reluctantly considering letting in fast food franchisors. A Pentagon spokesperson grumbled, "The GIs like that squat-and-gobble type stuff."

**Should have checked with us** — In a San Diego TV auction, one of those hard-to-get Cabbage Patch dolls went for \$2,600 and another for \$2,200. But in New York, you can drop in at Tif-

## ConAgra buys Armour plants, reopens nonunion

BY GARY BILLS AND PAUL ABEL

PORTLAND — December 17, Greyhound Corp. shut down its Armour Feed Co. meat-processing plants here and in other cities.

December 18 they reopen nonunion under the ownership of ConAgra, with foremen and a handful of workers.

Until December 17, Armour workers were represented by the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW). Wages for UFCW Local 1011 members here were \$10.74 an hour. ConAgra is now taking applications at state employment offices for jobs at \$5 an hour.

ConAgra, an Omaha-based grain and fertilizer conglomerate, bought Armour from Greyhound for \$166 million and expects to get its investment back quickly.

Armour management tried two times this year — in September and December — to get UFCW members to accept a concessions contract that would have cut base pay to \$8.25 an hour, with new hires getting

\$1.50 less. Retirement benefits, even for members already retired, would have been cut. Sick pay would have been harder to collect.

Twice UFCW members turned Armour's concessions proposal down, the last time by 1,229 to 508, or by 71 to 29 percent.

The UFCW's international leadership had recommended that Armour workers accept the concessions contract. Local 1011's leaders didn't take a formal position.

One of the reasons here for the large no vote was provisions in the proposal that would have further weakened the Master Agreement in pork processing. The UFCW has already taken severe blows in beef processing, and many members want to stop this corporate attack on the union. This assault deepened with the bitter strike at Wilson Foods Corp. provoked by the company, which used the same bankruptcy ploy as Continental Airlines to get out of a UFCW contract and slash wages and work-

ing conditions.

One woman here has a sister who works at a Wilson plant whose workers accepted a concessions contract. Her sister told her, "It was the worst thing we ever did, voting for that contract. Now the working conditions are terrible. We get threats of being fired if we come back from break a couple of minutes late. It's like not having any union here at all."

Another reason for voting against Armour's proposals was summed up in a phrase, "Take the money and run."

This was in reference to severance pay and early retirement, provided for under the old labor agreement for plant shutdown and replacement with a new labor force.

One young worker put it this way: "This is a lousy contract. If we vote for it, we would be giving up the Master Agreement and would greatly weaken the union. We'd be better off taking our severance pay, getting rehired and voting the union back in."

While Local 1011's leadership didn't make a formal recommendation on the con-

cessions contract, they did point to an example in Seattle of another work force's replacement by a meatpacker.

The union was able to organize the new work force, but it took *three-and-a-half* years.

Another worker voiced what those who voted for the contract felt: "Here's a job, when jobs are scarce, that pays \$8.25 an hour. With so many people out of work, I'd be real lucky to find another job that pays that much."

That was the reasoning of the UFCW's international leadership in urging ratification of the concessions contract.

Neither the international nor local leaderships offered any perspective for a fight against Armour.

What will happen next is unclear. Armour has taken more than 200 applications for the Portland plant, although they have so far hired only about 18. Of the original workforce of more than 200, 50 or more have applied for their old jobs. But it is expected that ConAgra will rehire only a handful of them.

Other Armour packing plants coming under ConAgra ownership are in Mobile, Alabama; South San Francisco, California; Nampa, Idaho; Chicago; Kansas City, Missouri; Charlotte, North Carolina; Pittsburgh; Garland and Arlington, Texas; Norfolk, Virginia; and Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

The determined fight against Greyhound's bus division by members of the Amalgamated Transit Union, and the solidarity they have won, encouraged many UFCW members here. They have been discussing, like workers elsewhere, ways in which labor can bring its potential power to bear and beat back the corporations' assaults on their unions.

Gary Bills and Paul Abel are members of UFCW Local 1011 and worked at Armour's Portland plant.

## Birmingham Steelworkers turn down concessions

BY TOM MORIARTY

BIRMINGHAM — Members of Local 1013 of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) have resoundingly supported their union leadership's decision to turn down U.S. Steel's latest demand for more concessions.

U.S. Steel baited its demands — for extensive subcontracting of work done in the past by USWA members — with an "offer" to add a continuous slab caster to produce flat-rolled steel at its Fairfield plant. The company claimed this would mean 1,600 union jobs.

U.S. Steel has just completed an ultramodern seamless pipe mill at Fairfield. This mill, they say, will employ 800 workers.

The Fairfield Works, which employed 10,000 steelworkers as recently as 1979, was shut down completely in July 1982, throwing 3,000 out of work.

The steel-industry giant, thinking that the union had been softened up by the shutdown of Fairfield Works for over a year and a half, began secret negotiations with the Steelworkers union leadership.

The company demanded the right to contract out previously held union jobs in nearly every maintenance and craft — from electrician to machine shop. Transport and railroad jobs at the plant, previously performed by Steelworkers members, were to be subcontracted as well. U.S. Steel's ultimate aim of eliminating the union was clear to all.

When union officials said no to U.S. Steel's demands, the company sent a carefully worded carrot-and-stick letter to all union members. The letter's main offer was to older workers, sensing most younger workers would take whatever job they could get. The company said an early retirement plan would go into effect.

Steelworkers, at a December 5 union meeting where U.S. Steel's offer was discussed, responded like people who have been lied to before. Earlier concessions, they already knew, did not save jobs: the company shut down the plant. Eight hundred union jobs were promised at the new pipe mill. Yet fewer than 300 are

working there today.

Young steelworkers read the company's letter with suspicion. As one young worker put it outside the meeting, "When they say 'probably,' that means they won't do it. 'May,' means they don't have to do it. 'As many as' means a lot fewer than they tell you. And 'in all likelihood' means don't count on it."

Most older workers didn't buy the early retirement either — "a pension and shutdown is not going to help the young men."

U.S. Steel took their vague promises of future jobs to the local media, which quickly reported it to the recession-weary Birmingham area. U.S. Steel's message to the unemployed was clear: if the union

turns down the concessions, they are costing you a job.

But union members stood firm. Outside the meeting hall, they listed past concessions, along with their dollar value to U.S. Steel. "If they had put their damn profits into the steel industry, they wouldn't be coming to us now demanding that we pay for upgrading the mill," said one.

As they left the meeting, one young steelworker expressed pride in saying no to U.S. Steel. "Now," he said, "they can't go up to Pittsburgh or Gary or Chicago or those other northern mills and say to them, 'Those guys down in Alabama took these concessions, so you'll have to take them too.'"

## Fund close to goal, but final push needed

BY HARRY RING

It's been an uphill climb, but we're near the top of the mountain.

As of December 21 we had collected \$115,000, or 92 percent of our \$125,000 Party Building Fund. That puts us on schedule and, with a serious final push, we can complete the drive by the January 1 deadline in full and on time.

In fact, if all outstanding pledges to the Socialist Workers Party fund are collected, we can actually surpass our goal, since a total of \$140,000 was pledged.

Meanwhile, there's been a very good response to the special Farrell Dobbs Party Building Fund. Contributions and pledges for this fund were taken at meetings across the country celebrating the life and work of this veteran party leader who died October 31.

A total of nearly \$15,000 was committed to this special fund and \$8,900 has already been collected.

It was particularly fitting that there be a special party building fund in Dobbs' memory. It's exactly what he would have wanted and expected.

In this column a couple of weeks back, we wrote about how the SWP had to devel-

op a conscious organized approach to fund-raising and that this didn't happen overnight. It was really only in the 1940s that party finances were put on a (if you'll pardon the word) businesslike basis.

To the extent that any particular member of the leadership team can be credited with a given accomplishment, the main credit for improving our approach to finances goes to Farrell Dobbs.

When he left his post as an international organizer for the Teamsters to become national labor secretary of the SWP, he brought with him a special concern for effective organizational functioning. It was readily apparent to anyone who had the opportunity to observe his functioning that he had deeply absorbed the organizational as well as the political lessons of the hard-fought Minneapolis Teamster strikes of the 1930s, in which he had played a central role. Dobbs fully comprehended the reality that while program and leadership are decisive, careful, effective organization is also key in advancing the workers movement.

Dobbs was probably the first person to give fully detailed reports on party finances to meetings of its national committee, and to present carefully worked out budgets.

There was one meeting where he emphasized, with pride, that we had become a "\$100,000 organization" — that we were actually receiving, and spending, that amount of money annually.

By today's inflationary standards, that may be chicken feed. But the same principle applies. Dobbs was making the point about the scope of our financial activity to underline the leadership responsibility involved in dealing with party finances. That certainly goes in general today and applies most particularly to our present Party Building Fund and its successful completion. If we do approach the last lap that way, there's no question we'll succeed and the fund will be completed in full and on time.

## CALENDAR

New York  
Manhattan

**New Years Celebration in Solidarity with the Chilean People.** Music, dancing, food, and drink. Sat., Dec. 31, 8:30 p.m. 989 Amsterdam Ave., No. 5A. Donation: \$5. Ausp: Committee for a Free Chile. For more information call (212) 590-3907.





Protests of cop brutality occur across United States. Above, woman in Florence, South Carolina, reacts to police murder of her husband.

# Murder by Boston cops whitewashed

BY MIKE GALATI

BOSTON — On November 29 Suffolk County District Attorney Newman Flanagan announced he would not prosecute the three Boston police officers involved in the September 7 murder of Elijah Pate, a 19-year-old Black from this city's Mattapan neighborhood.

Flanagan said he made his decision after "careful review of the findings of the inquest judge," George O'Toole. After reading these findings Flanagan concluded: "It does not appear that the death of said Pate was the result of an unlawful or negligent act by any person."

This conclusion flies in the face of what more than 18 eyewitnesses reported seeing the night Pate was shot.

City officials allege that Pate stole a car and, when trapped by the cops, attempted to run several of them down. The cops claimed they fired only five shots, and all while Pate was behind the wheel of the car.

Witnesses to the murder immediately contradicted the cops' version of events. They said that, after being cornered, Pate jumped out of the car and attempted to flee. They reported seeing at least three cops gun down Pate in a hail of bullets and then proceed to beat the mortally wounded youth while demanding that neighborhood residents remain in their homes and away from their windows.

Finally, the witnesses reported that it wasn't until almost 30 minutes after the shooting that an ambulance arrived to take Pate to the hospital.

This version of the events was confirmed by a private autopsy performed at the request of the Pate family and their lawyer on September 20, after city officials refused to release the findings of the "official" autopsy to the family.

The private autopsy, performed by Dr. Michael Baden, a former New York City medical examiner, found that "four of the

five shots did not hit [Pate] while he was seated in the vehicle." In addition, the autopsy also found hemorrhaging, cuts and bruises in the head, leg, back, and groin areas.

The family's lawyer, Henry Owens, said, "This is consistent with information relayed from witnesses indicating that he was kicked and beaten while lying on the ground being handcuffed."

Owens concluded, "It is clear, based on the physical evidence, that it [Pate's death] did not take place the way law enforcement officials said it did."

When Flanagan was asked about the evidence showing the cops had beat the dying youth, he responded, "I think that after the shooting, Pate ran down the street and he was — obviously he had to be — subdued. What happened is that a struggle ensued, and there was evidence that there may have been some punching and some kicking."

But, he piously added, "force was necessary in order to effect the arrest of the deceased. In spite of the fact that he had five bullets in him."

Flanagan and other city officials continue to insist, despite the results of the private autopsy, that "there was no shooting after he [Pate] started up the street. By the time he got out of the car, all of the shooting had been done. He was not running away."

Owens blasted the findings of the inquest and the decision not to prosecute the cops responsible for the murder of Pate. He charged at a press conference that "the findings made by the judge are inconsistent with the testimony that came out in the inquest. There's no way they can justify firing 11 shots over a stolen motor vehicle."

Owens also charged that Judge O'Toole, who headed the city inquest, should have disqualified himself because he is a personal acquaintance of one of the cops who killed Pate, Walter Robinson.

Owens said he plans to file a civil suit against the city before the end of December, and he has asked the Justice Department to begin an investigation to see if Pate's civil rights were violated by the Boston cops.

## California SWP convention marks gains

BY NELSON BLACKSTOCK

SAN FRANCISCO — Delegates from Socialist Workers Party California branches gathered here December 3-4 for the state convention of the SWP. Delegates came from SWP branches in Los Angeles, San Diego, San Jose, Seaside, San Francisco, and Oakland. They came together to map plans for implementing party perspectives in the state. In the weeks leading up to the convention, a state-wide discussion had prepared for the selection of delegates.

A pre-convention discussion had opened with a draft resolution submitted by the state committee earlier in the fall. A discussion bulletin was open to all members in the state. Oral discussion on a branch level led to the selection of delegates.

The meeting convened with a celebration. One the eve of the convention, Ken Collins had been notified that all charges against him were being dropped.

Collins had faced prison in Seaside on trumped-up arson charges as the result of his role as a strike leader of hotel workers. The hotel management and police conspiracy to frame Collins had been met with an outpouring of protest.

In her report on the defense of democratic rights, state committee member Betsey Stone drew some initial lessons of the Collins victory.

"We will see more frame-ups like this as the ruling class steps up its war drive," she said. "This victory shows a united defense can win."

Stone reported on a second victory. The previous day International Association of Machinists member Lee Artz learned he had won his job back. His union beat back a company attempt to fire him on flimsy charges of disrupting production based on

discussions among workers about the U.S. invasion of Grenada.

A delegate from San Diego told of the United Auto Workers' fight on behalf of five workers at Teledyne-Ryan, an arms contractor. In violation of union contract provisions, the company has refused to reinstate the five, all socialists and union activists, during a call-back of laid-off workers.

Stone reported on the latest stage of another fight for democratic rights. Los Angeles attorney Alan Gelfand had used an obliging court in an attempt to drain the resources of the SWP through a lawsuit claiming the SWP is led by FBI agents.

Now that the judge in the case has been forced to reject Gelfand's claims, the SWP is pressing to have the court order Gelfand and his lawyers to reimburse the party for the massive legal costs required to ward off this assault.

State SWP organizer Sam Manuel reported on the current state of the ruling class offensive against the unions.

As members of industrial unions, socialists today are going through the living experiences of other members of their class in facing the rulers' attacks.

The convention assessed the present stage of the SWP's turn to industry and the major industrial unions in the state.

A modest upswing in hiring has meant that the number of party members in industrial unions has grown in recent months.

Delegates who are members of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers, International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, and International Association of Machinists spoke about the challenge their unions face. Manuel pointed out that today these three

unions are important to the life of the working class in California.

Fred Halstead, a veteran garment worker and member of International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, told of the situation his union faces in Los Angeles. With only a tiny fraction of the city's garment industry organized, the way forward will require developing a new leadership based on the composition of the largely Spanish-speaking work force, Halstead said.

Some delegates took a break from the convention the first day to join a march in defense of Greyhound strikers.

Their fight, Manuel noted, was one sign of the willingness of workers to fight back.

At a rally that evening Greyhound striker Pam Wilson spoke on behalf of her union, Local 1225 of the Amalgamated Transit Union.

Also speaking at the rally was Oba T'shanka of the Bay Area Black United Front. The rally was held in the American Indian Center, and Erna Pahe spoke for the center.

Ken Collins, fresh from his victory, received a warm response. Kweli Tutashianda of Afro-Americans Against the U.S. Invasion of Grenada also spoke.

During the convention SWP state committee member James Harris delivered a report assessing the invasion of Grenada and the defeat of the revolution. The inspiration of the revolution and the teachings of its leadership will live on, Harris said.

Delegates approved the course projected in the resolution submitted by the outgoing state committee.

The convention closed with the election of a new state committee to lead the party's work in the coming months.

### Barricada Internacional

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

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**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.

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**NEBRASKA:** Lincoln: YSA, P.O. Box

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**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.



# Lessons of Greyhound strike

Greyhound workers have made the cold-blooded decision that they can best defend their union, the Amalgamated Transit Union, by calling off their fight for now and accept a bitter concessions contract. They beat back John Teets, Greyhound's chairman, a bit from his union-busting goals, but they felt they weren't strong enough to continue.

They first looked at their leadership, and saw that most of it lacked the will to carry out the ranks' mandate to fight. In spite of a 96-percent rejection of the company's first contract offer, just a few days later a large majority of the ATU Greyhound Council recommended a contract only slightly better.

Lacking a unified leadership ready and determined to lead the fight against Greyhound's union-busting, the majority of strikers voted to accept a bad contract. Significantly, a quarter of them voted no.

In this situation, the majority of strikers knew they'd need a lot more active solidarity from other unions and a tougher leadership to get a better contract and be stronger for future battles.

The unity and combativity of the Greyhound workers throughout the strike raised their and many other workers' class-consciousness. They began to learn who their real friends were, particularly as the government, cops, courts, and media all lined up behind Greyhound's union-busting.

They also got a better view of the top labor officialdom, which for the most part gave only lip service to the strike. The officials had other priorities. Lane Kirkland, chief of the AFL-CIO, spent a lot of time campaigning for Democratic Party hopeful Walter Mondale, as did other officials. But Mondale, labor's so-called "friend," had not a word to say in support of the strike. Nor did any other top capitalist-party politician.

The AFL-CIO officials urged ATU leaders to quickly accept Greyhound's second offer. This was right after the first offer — which the ATU's Greyhound (bargaining) Council unanimously rejected — had been turned down by the ranks by 96 percent. On the second offer, to their credit, Greyhound Council delegates representing a third of the Greyhound workers, in New York, Boston, and elsewhere, stood up to this scandalous pressure and voted no.

The lessons that Greyhound workers — and many others beyond them — are drawing from this strike are

important for the entire working class.

Labor will be facing some stiff tests in 1984. A number of key union contracts expire, and we can expect the employers to follow Greyhound's example and step up their offensive against working people.

In January, contracts between major refiners and the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers run out. The refinery owners, led by Gulf, have indicated a stiff stand. The same month, contracts also expire between the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) and major grocery chains, as do those of building-trades unions with major contractors.

In June, contracts are up on major railroads and at shipping companies on three coasts. In July, postal workers' contracts expire.

Some of the biggest — and most watched — contracts come up in the fall: in September, those of the United Auto Workers (UAW) and electrical unions with General Motors, Ford, and International Harvester; and in October, those of the United Mine Workers and the soft-coal operators.

These contract negotiations will be fought out in the context of severe attacks on these and other unions. Arizona miners, organized by the United Steelworkers, continue to battle the copper barons.

U.S. Steel and the other steel companies are pressing their drive for greater union concessions.

How will workers fare in 1984? According to the employers' press, not so well, if 1983 was any indication. *Business Week* headlined its preview of labor negotiations, "Business will keep labor in line; Recession-scarred unions lack leverage in 1984's bargaining."

But it's not *leverage* that unions lack. Organized workers have plenty of potential strength. We had a tiny glimpse of that power in the Greyhound strike.

What is lacking is *leadership*. Harry Rosenblum, ATU president, made a telling comment about the Greyhound strike: "It was a game of hardball, and they played harder than we did."

The ATU's ranks, and their many supporters, fought just as hard as Greyhound. But most of the leadership, including that of other unions and the AFL-CIO officialdom, was playing softball instead.

It is an encouraging sign that many of the Greyhound strikers who have learned that a fighting leadership is needed stepped forward themselves to provide much of that leadership in the course of the strike.

# What would Castro do about racism in the U.S.?

What would Fidel Castro do about racism if he were president of the United States?

That question was discussed in a Harlem speech back in June 1963 by William Worthy, then foreign correspondent for the *Baltimore Afro American*.

In the civil rights movement, 1963 was a year of a turbulent peak culminating in the civil rights March on Washington led by Martin Luther King. At that time, Worthy was a central initiator of a call for a national Freedom Now party to oppose the racist Republicans and Democrats.

Worthy had gone to Cuba in 1962 in defiance of the U.S. ban on travel there. When he came back he was indicted for returning without a valid passport. In 1964 this was struck down as unconstitutional by a federal appeals court.

Since the victory of the Iranian revolution, Worthy has been to Iran three times. His reports on Iranian resistance to imperialism have appeared in the *Washington Post*, *Boston Globe* and *Baltimore Afro American*.

In 1981 Worthy went to Iran for CBS News. On his return, customs took from him a book published by the Iranian students who had earlier occupied the U.S. embassy there. The book consisted of documents found in the embassy confirming illegal U.S. intervention in Iranian political life. Customs turned the seized material over to the FBI.

Worthy filed suit and the government returned the material before the case came to court.

He and his two associates on the news team then sued the FBI, CIA, and customs for damages. The government settled out of court for \$16,000.

The following are Worthy's 1963 remarks on Fidel Castro and U.S. racism.

\* \* \*

May I draw a word picture of what we really are talking about when we say: "de-colonize America now." Let us imagine that in November 1960, Fidel Castro, instead of John F. Kennedy, had been elected president of the

## OUR REVOLUTIONARY HERITAGE

U.S. On the basis of his clear record of eliminating all racial barriers in Cuba and stopping police brutality, about 95 per cent of the cops in this country, black and white, North and South, would catch the first planes out to escape prosecution. Many of them would wind up in South Africa as "refugees." There they would find the political and racial climate wholly compatible and congenial.

If "Bull" Connor were caught and arrested before fleeing, Fidel would not permit anyone to lynch him. He would be given a fair trial. In open court, evidence would be presented of 30 years of his tyranny and terror as Birmingham's police commissioner. Ol' Bull would have full opportunity to testify in his own defense. His attorneys could cross-examine all of the prosecution's witnesses, many of whom would be Negroes. And then, since it is inconceivable that any court could find him innocent, he would be taken out and shot.

Meanwhile, on his first day in office, Fidel would have occupied the entire South with federal troops. Without bureaucratic delays, the jails would be emptied of all Freedom Fighters and other victims of the Jim Crow system. Fidel's new cabinet would decree the immediate desegregation of all public facilities. Henceforth, all persons who continued to discriminate would go to jail or to a humanely operated rehabilitation center in an effort to cure them of their racist insanity. All jobs, all housing, all opportunities would be made available to everyone without discrimination.

Most beautiful of all, Fidel would disband the entire repressive FBI apparatus and would burn all the secret police garbage and intimate gossip that thousands of psychopathic agents have assembled over the years. He would put J. Edgar Hoover in an integrated cell in Atlanta Penitentiary as punishment for four decades of criminal neglect of duty. Hoover has never protected the constitutional rights of Negroes.

Sadly but realistically even a pacifist has to make a prediction that will scare and alarm many persons. The prediction is that it is going to take a drastic, Castro-type revolution before this problem of the races will be resolved. North and South, the twisted white man in the U.S. has no more intention of giving up his Jim Crow system than do the fanatics in the Union of South Africa.

Five years ago, even three years ago, I wouldn't have dreamed of speaking in these terms. Today honesty and the facts before my eyes compel me.

# Asylum for Polish unionists

The U.S. government is rejecting the big majority of applications for political asylum in the United States by Poles associated with the Solidarity union movement.

Several thousand Polish nationals in the United States, most of whom were Solidarity activists and supporters, are seeking asylum. They wait months before they hear anything from the Immigration and Naturalization Service. When they do, most are denied asylum. They are then ordered to return to Poland voluntarily or face deportation proceedings. Because of their union activities, they fear reprisals from the Polish regime if they return to their homeland.

They may file appeals but it can take two or more years of struggling through red tape and heavy legal expenses before a decision is made.

The refusal of the Reagan administration to permit asylum to the Polish refugees is as hypocritical as its refusal to lift economic sanctions against Poland. While he poses as the true friend of Polish workers and Solidarity, President Reagan, in fact, carries out policies that harm them. This underscores the undeniable fact that U.S. im-

perialism is as much the enemy of the Polish people as it is the enemy of the peoples of the entire world.

The Polish refugees came to the United States following the imposition of martial law in Poland and the crackdown on Solidarity in December 1981. They were involved in the historic struggle of millions of Polish working people to establish their own independent and democratic unions — a struggle that brought them into conflict with the privileged bureaucratic caste that wields power in Poland.

Many of the leaders and activists in this fight came out of the big protests against high food prices in December 1970. Scores of workers were shot in those actions.

Thirteen years later, thousands of protesters took to the streets in major cities to commemorate those events. They were called out by the underground leadership of Solidarity.

In the United States, trade unionists can help the Polish workers by opposing the criminal policies of Washington and demand asylum for Polish Solidarity refugees and an end to all economic sanctions against Poland.

# Vamping on the hungry

Shameless hypocrisy is a trademark of capitalist politicians, and Ronald Reagan is undoubtedly a leader in the field. This was verified again when the president asserted that his counselor, Edwin Meese, was the victim of a bum rap by the media. Meese's recent remarks about undeserving people in soup kitchens, said Reagan, had been distorted.

Meese had told reporters, "I know we've had considerable information that people go to soup kitchens because the food is free and that's easier than paying for it."

He added that he didn't know of any "authoritative figures" that there are hungry children in this country.

Meese to the contrary, there are "authoritative figures" confirming that poverty and hunger do exist and are, in fact, increasing.

A few figures were presented by the *New York Times*, a paper not particularly noted as a champion of the working class.

A December 13 *Times* editorial cited a study stating that average food stamp benefits have been cut 14 percent.

And it's not only those on welfare who have been victimized. The study found that while the richest 20 percent of the country was paying the same total taxes as in 1979, the poorest 20 percent had their tax burden increased by a whopping 23 percent.

Health care is suffering as well. According to a recent report, the administration will now press for further cuts in public health care, including such care for children as vaccination against measles, mumps, and polio.

That's in the world's richest country.

The undeniable growth of poverty, hunger, and illness in this country is testimony to the bankruptcy of the capitalist system we live under. It is also testimony to the fact that the two capitalist parties that run this country are jointly responsible for the hardships of working people.

Moreover war secretary Weinberger recently announced Congress would be asked to increase next year's military budget by 22 percent to a staggering \$305 billion.

Meanwhile, they're not satisfied to leave the fate of the hungry to the whim of private charity. They have to vamp on those who are forced to turn to the soup kitchens.



# Big change in how women workers see themselves

Being determines consciousness.

The truth of this bit of materialism is well-illustrated by the fundamental changes in attitude about women and women's role in society that have resulted from the great influx of women into the work force in the last three decades.

The numbers are dramatic.

• In 1950, 18,389,000 women or 33.9 percent of all women were in the labor force. Women were 29.6 per-



## WOMEN IN REVOLT

Margaret Jayko

cent of the entire work force.

• In 1960, 23,240,000 women or 37.7 percent were working. They constituted 33.4 percent of all workers.

• By 1970, 31,520,000 women or 43.3 percent were employed, making up 38.1 percent of the labor force.

• Today the number of working women has jumped to over 47 million, or about 53 percent of all women. Women are about 43 percent of the labor force. A majority of women are now employed outside the home.

It's the qualitative shift in the situation of women in the United States, shown by these statistics, which most accounts for the new views that women and men have about women.

A report on a poll of opinions about women and work on the front page of the December 4 *New York Times* dealt with some of these changes.

In response to the question "What do you think are the

two or three most enjoyable things about being a woman today?" top ranking went to "General rights and freedoms," which received 32 percent of the choices. "Career, jobs, pay" ran neck-and-neck with "being a mother, raising a family" for second place, with both getting 26 percent.

When the same question was asked 13 years ago, in 1970, the answers were quite different. "Being a mother and raising a family" ranked an easy first, with 53 percent regarding it as one of the most enjoyable things about being a woman.

"Being a homemaker" came in second then with 43 percent. In 1983, it came in second to last, with 8 percent.

In 1970, "career, jobs, pay" was the lowest with only 9 percent choosing that. And general rights and freedoms was the second lowest, with 14 percent.

Today, 58 percent of the working women polled said that, given the choice, they would rather "have a job outside the home" than "stay home and take care of your house and family." So would 31 percent of nonworking women and 61 percent of the Black women asked.

Despite the increased propaganda against working mothers, 59 percent of the women surveyed and 44 percent of the men thought employed women make as good or better mothers than those who do not work outside the home. Among working women, this shoots up to 68 percent.

Why do women work? Thirty-two percent of the women said they worked to support their families and 24 percent to support themselves. In 1970, 18 percent of women who worked said they were doing it to support a family.

With their entry into the labor force, women come face to face with all kinds of overt, direct sexual discrimination.

According to the *Times*, "In 1970, when women were asked about their worst problems, more than a quarter said they had none. Only 13 percent were concerned about discrimination." Those responses probably reflected who was asked more than they did the reality of life for millions of women workers especially Blacks and Latinas.

More than a third of the women asked in 1983 said that "male chauvinism, discrimination and sexual stereotypes" rank as their biggest problems.

Forty-four percent of the working women polled said they had been discriminated against in the workplace. Twenty percent of the women said they had experienced sexual harassment by "male superiors." And 80 percent of the women and 68 percent of the men said that "to get ahead" a woman must be better at what she does than a man.

Despite these problems, 90 percent of the women polled said "their sex had made significant strides in moving into jobs that were once dominated by men."

Getting jobs breaks down women's economic dependence on men and their isolation in the home — several of the women quoted in the *Times* article mentioned precisely these things as the reason they favored women working.

It's this new independence, confidence, and participation in public life by women that played the major role in the rise of the women's rights movement in the late sixties.

It's this process of women coming forward as part of the working class and fighting for their rights that is the key to achieving political power for women.

These millions of working women — through their unions, as participants in the Black struggle, and as feminists — have a leadership role to play in the battle for the rights of all women.

## LETTERS

### Marine Poem

The following poem was written by three U.S. marines stationed on Okinawa. They wrote it after the death of one of their friends in the October Beirut bombing of marine barracks. It was printed in the Greensboro *Record*, the afternoon paper here. One of the authors is from Greensboro. I thought other readers would be interested.

They were born in Parris Island,  
The land that God forgot.  
The sand was 18 inches deep,  
The sun was blazing hot.

The Marines went to Lebanon  
To try and end a war.  
Instead it's Vietnam  
Just like it was before.

Many Marines have lost their lives  
in the land where snipers roam.  
But for some odd reason  
Reagan still won't bring our  
brothers home.

And to those who went to heaven  
St. Peter they will tell,  
Another Marine reporting sir.  
I've served my time in Hell.  
M.H.  
Greensboro, North Carolina

disliked by the Reagan administration.

On Saturday, there were nine workshops discussing the current political situations in El Salvador, Chile, Nicaragua, Cuba, and Grenada; the role of the church and the situation of women in Latin America; and U.S. foreign policy. The event attracting the most attention was the workshop on Grenada featuring Andrew Pulley, 1980 Socialist Workers Party presidential candidate who had visited Grenada in March 1983.

Nearly a hundred people heard Pulley describe the achievements of the New Jewel Movement under the leadership of Prime Minister Maurice Bishop and explain how the biggest danger of a nuclear war stems from the deepening of wars Washington is presently waging.

Other workshops were addressed by Alejandro Molina Lara, a Salvadoran union leader, and Cynthia Armon, from Rep. George Miller's office.

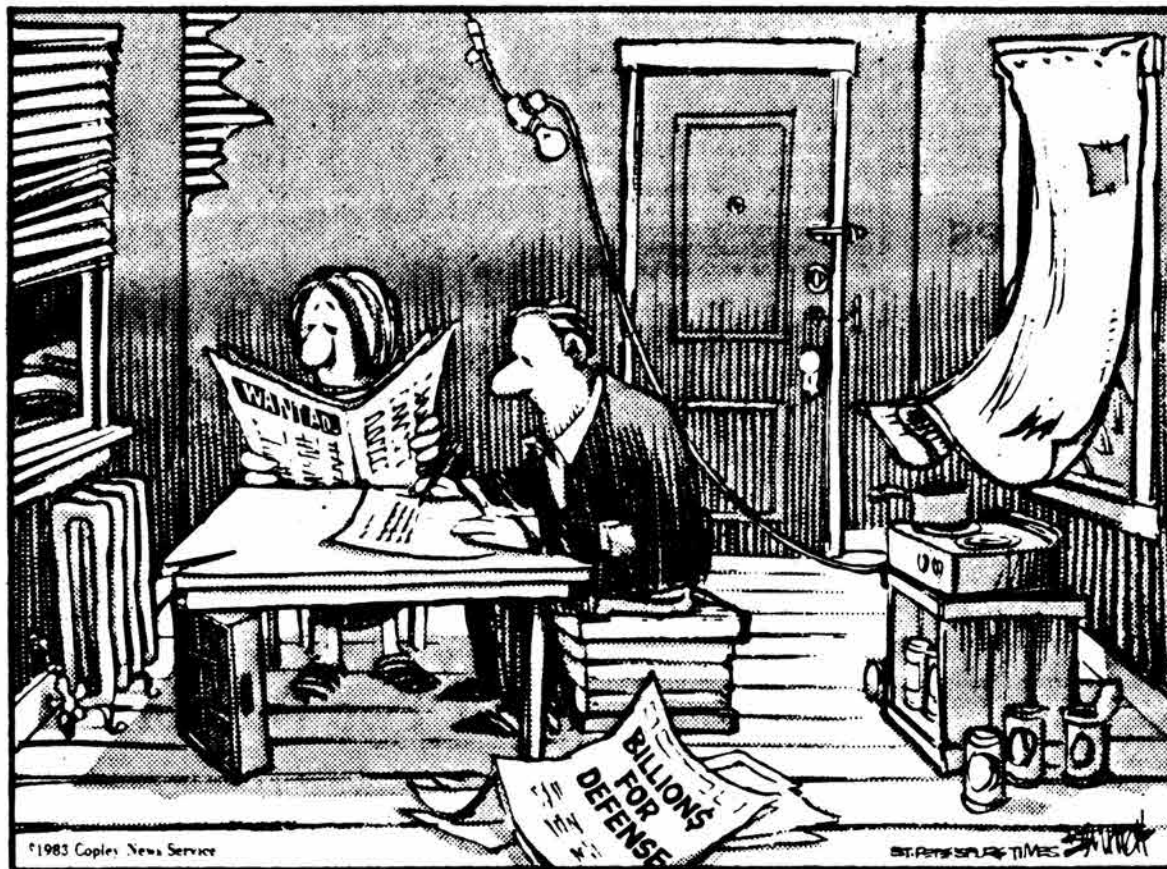
Alan Wald  
Ann Arbor, Michigan

### Khrushchev

Readers of the *Militant* may be interested in an important new book that has appeared in the United States. The book is *Khrushchev*, a biography of the late Soviet leader by Russian dissident Roy Medvedev. It is the first full biography of Khrushchev written since his death in 1971.

The book traces Khrushchev's participation in some of the most important events of modern times. Of particular interest is the description of the "Cuban missile crisis" from a Soviet point of view. Medvedev also explores Khrushchev's role in exposing the crimes of Stalin, which included many hesitations and shortcomings.

Medvedev's work is basically a positive evaluation of the Khrushchev years in light of the succeeding years of "stability." The author portrays the deceased Soviet leader sympathetically, as a human being. This makes the book refreshing reading in these days of intense propaganda concerning the "evil empire" and



"Dear Mr. President: now that you've spent so much on defense to protect our way of life, maybe you could do something to make our way of life worth protecting..."

"Soviet expansionism."

Of course, Medvedev does tend to underplay the darker side of Khrushchev's regime: his description of the Soviet intervention in Hungary is terse and incomplete. But his portrait of the relations between the USSR and the U.S. is basically accurate.

It would be interesting to see a *Militant* review of this thought-provoking biography of Stalin's successor. The book raises many questions very relevant to the present-day world situation.

Mark Chalkley  
San Antonio

### Ice cream workers

One of the largest groups of workers actively supporting striking Greyhound workers in Toledo is from Vroman Foods, an ice cream factory. It has 120 workers, members of Teamsters Local 361, who have been on strike since early November.

The company is demanding huge wage cuts and major weakening of contract language regarding workers rights. In a di-

vide-and-conquer move, Vroman demanded wage cuts of 17-19 percent from class A workers, who are almost all male, and cuts of 33-35 percent from class B workers, who are almost all female.

When workers informed the Toledo chapter of the National Organization for Women of this discrimination, NOW became actively involved in supporting the strike.

At a recent meeting to plan a December 17 strike support rally, a male worker said, "No guy can do the jobs that women do in there. Not for eight hours a day, day after day."

Vroman is operating with scabs, but the workers are determined not to give in and to see the fight through to the end. Strikers have been doing a lot of leafleting of grocery stores, asking people not to buy "Chilly Things" products. Statements of support or donations can be sent to Teamsters Local 361, 435 S. Hawley St., Toledo, Ohio 43609.

Joe Callahan  
Toledo, Ohio

### Liked article

I was happy to see the article "Court voids 1942 internment convictions," in the Nov. 18, 1983, *Militant*. Your support is appreciated and I hope can be reciprocated.

Patti Adachi  
Chicago, Illinois

The *Militant* special prisoner fund makes it possible to send reduced-rate subscriptions to prisoners who can't pay for them. To help out, send your contribution to: *Militant Prisoner Subscription Fund*, 14 Charles Lane, New York, N.Y. 10014.

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.



## U.S. Steel on new takebacks rampage

### Seeks to gut basic steel contract by threat to close mills

BY GEOFF MIRELOWITZ

CHICAGO — The U.S. Steel Corp. has declared virtual war on the United Steelworkers of America (USWA). "Big Steel," the industry giant, is spearheading a new assault that aims to reopen the basic steel industry contract. It has issued an ultimatum on wages, benefits, and working conditions at five mills, including South Works here. If the union does not cave in, the company says it will shut South Works for good and take similar action at the Cuyahoga Works in Ohio; Fairfield Works in Alabama; Johnstown Works in Pennsylvania; and Trenton Works in New Jersey.

Big Steel's demands threaten to turn the national basic steel industry agreement into a meaningless piece of paper. If U.S. Steel is successful in winning sweeping "local" concessions here at South Works and elsewhere, each of the six other major steel companies will demand more of the same.

U.S. Steel has set a December 27 corporate board meeting as the deadline for union response to its demands, including the following at South Works:

- No premium pay for Sunday work.
- "Curtailed" overtime pay for union members who work more than eight hours.
- Eliminating most "incentive" pay — amounting to another 20 percent wage cut.
- Eliminating all previous past practice and local agreements concerning manning, crew sizes, job assignments, hours of work, late starts, early quits, wash-up time, coffee breaks, lunch periods, days off, and shift selection.
- Contracting out — using non-USWA labor at lower wages — the following jobs: janitorial, mason, emergency welding, pipe fitting, rigging, trucking, general mill laborer, repair work at central shops, and mobile equipment repair. Eight current job classifications would be eliminated. One-third to one-half of current South Works jobs performed by USWA members would be contracted out.

### Ariz. miners regain medical benefits

BY KAREN KOPPERUD

PHOENIX — An important victory has been won in the six-month strike of 13 unions of copper miners in Arizona and Texas against the Phelps Dodge Corp.

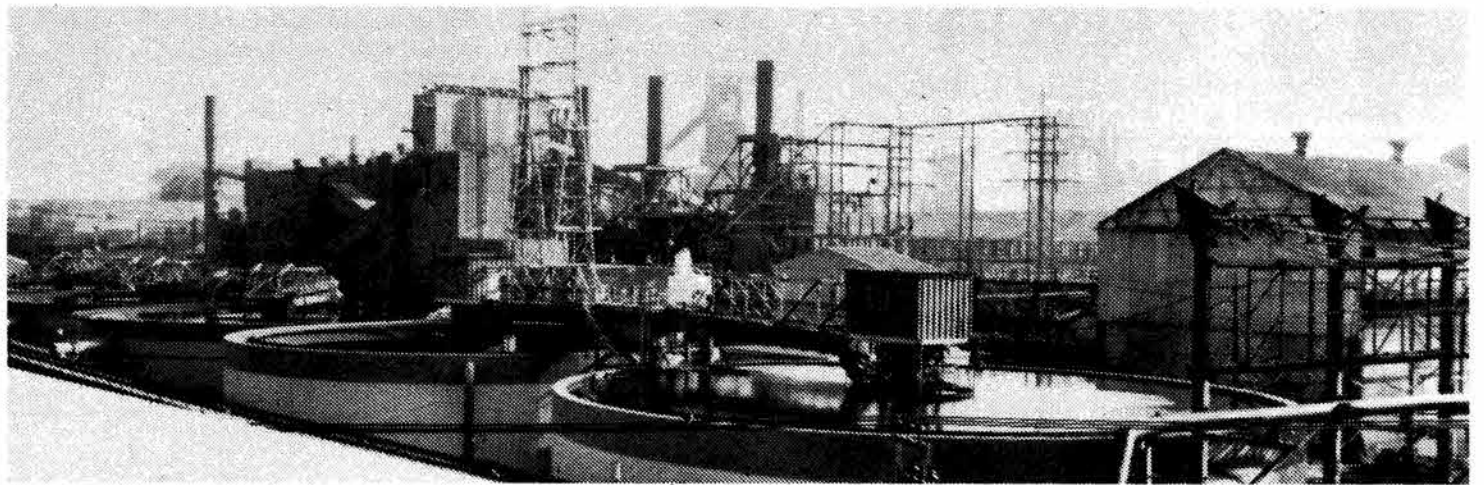
On December 16, federal arbitrator Leo Kotin made a binding arbitration decision that Phelps Dodge must restore full medical benefits to strikers retroactive to July 1, the day the strike began.

Strikers have been paying the \$4.45 per month, their share of the monthly premium. But since October 1, Phelps Dodge refused to accept the checks. The company terminated medical benefits on that date saying that since strikers had refused to return to work and had been replaced by scabs, they no longer were employees of Phelps Dodge.

Strikers greeted the decision with jubilation. In their view, not only are the medical benefits important, but the decision is a legal recognition that they are still employees involved in a labor dispute with the copper giant.

In addition, on December 19, the federal House Education and Labor subcommittee on labor-management relations issued a report stating that Phelps Dodge provoked and prolonged the strike. It stated in part "... it is apparent that Phelps Dodge has never seriously attempted to reach an agreement with the unions representing its employees."

It goes on, "Busting the unions is now the only objective that can justify the amount of money, energy and reputation, both personal and corporate, that has been expended in pursuit of the strike policy [by the company]."



Chicago South Works. U.S. Steel forced takebacks on Steelworkers here before. Big Steel is blackmailing union again with shut-down threats here and at four other mills.

• Job combinations that would combine all current mechanical and maintenance work into three classifications to be assigned on a plantwide basis.

As if this were not enough, U.S. Steel is also requesting more tax breaks and other federal, state, and municipal financial aid — on top of similar help it already received valued in the tens of millions of dollars.

A distinct change in U.S. Steel's attitude towards the USWA officialdom is also noticeable. Previously it encouraged company and union "cooperation" to "save the industry." But now Big Steel has taken a sharp, belligerent stand toward the union officials. A letter to employees from South Works manager James Wareham, for example, implies local union leaders are

not cooperating with the company now because most are eligible to retire on pension even if the plant closes.

Says USWA Local 65 Pres. Don Stazak in response, "We've worked very hard to keep South Works open, and we're very upset by the letter." He called it pure and simple coercion.

U.S. Steel and the other steel giants have already reopened the basic steel industry contract once — last March when they imposed on the union a 9 percent first-year cut in wages and benefits. U.S. Steel has already won big work-rule changes at South Works, which they got by threatening to discontinue work on construction of a new rail mill. It has already received handouts from its Democratic and Republi-

can servants in government.

Even the previously concession-minded top USWA leadership has decided the time has come to draw a line. Exactly where they will draw it will be tested in practice.

Following the December 13 USWA International Executive Board (IEB) meeting in Washington, D.C., acting international Pres. Lynn Williams announced, "We've made significant concessions; we are opposed to any more wage concessions in the steel industry. We don't want local issues to spill over and denigrate the master labor agreement."

Pittsburgh USWA District 15 Director "Lefty" Palm characterized U.S. Steel's strategy as "industry blackmail" that at-

Continued on Page 23

## Gov't witch-hunt hits Denver unionist

BY SALM KOLIS  
AND HOLBROOK MAHN

DENVER — "Are you willing to provide information in an official inquiry concerning allegations of homosexuality, membership in the SWP and affiliation with the YSA?" This question was posed last month to Sally Goodman, a United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 766 member at the Martin Marietta plant here, in the opening of a major new step by the Defense Investigative Service (DIS), a little-known secret police agency of the Pentagon, to victimize her through a year-old "national security" investigation.

DIS agents first called Goodman into the company's security office a year ago to tell her that her "security clearance" was under

review. They told her she was being investigated because of allegations that she was associated with the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialist Alliance and that she was gay. She was told she had come to their attention because she had publicly campaigned for Eileen Thournir, the 1982 SWP candidate for U.S. Senate and a co-worker of Goodman's at Martin Marietta.

### Goal: divide workers

The fact that the company is a major weapons producer with billion dollar contracts from the Pentagon to make the MX missile and other military hardware opens its employees up to the government's "Industrial Personnel Security Clearance Program." Through this program, the Pentagon's DIS spies claim the right to spy on and victimize unionists in these plants.

In addition to Goodman's political views and union activities, she is one of only three women electricians in the plant. Women who fight their way into these better paying jobs also fight attacks on themselves, their coworkers, and their union. The bosses have responded by gay-baiting to try and divide female and male workers, as well as break down solidarity among women.

The goal of the whole DIS operation is to divide the work force by whipping up a scare campaign around "national security," and to victimize those workers that DIS labels as "risks." This is part of the ideological campaign of the U.S. government to convince workers that it is in their interests to support U.S. war moves in Central America and the Caribbean and the Middle East, or to intimidate them from questioning or speaking out against those wars.

### Three-hour grilling

On Nov. 17, 1983, Goodman, accompanied by her lawyer and union representatives, was coerced into submitting to a

three-and-one-half-hour grilling by DIS agents about her private life, political beliefs, and associations. They asked additional questions like:

- "Have you ever engaged in any homosexual acts?"
- Can you describe the general types or characterizations of individuals with whom you have participated in homosexual acts, and whether or not these relationships were of a lasting nature or were they numerous transient liaisons through chance meetings?"
- "Are you presently or have you been previously a member of the Socialist Workers Party or the Young Socialist Alliance?"
- "Would you support the U.S. in a conflict with the Soviet Union, Cuba, or another workers state?"
- "How many times have you attended a function where you believed the speaker to be a member of the Fourth International?"
- "Do you believe that social and economic change within the U.S. will be accomplished through other than the electoral process?"

Goodman was given until the first week of December to submit a written summary of her answers to these questions to DIS.

### Violates own regulations

By pursuing this investigation, which violates both DIS's own regulations as well as being unconstitutional, DIS has decided to make Goodman's a test case.

As part of the government's general attack on democratic rights, DIS is asserting that the SWP is not actually a legal political party, and therefore association with it can lead to your victimization. The government is also probing how far it can go in reaching into the labor movement and victimizing those trade unionists who speak out against the U.S. war drive in Central

Continued on Page 23



Militant/Charles Ostrofsky  
Sally Goodman, target of "security" harassment.