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What's happening with the Nicaraguan workers' movement?

At the end of April, comrade Isidro Tellez ("Chilo") was attacked on the streets of Managua and beaten by a gang of thugs from the government's official trade union. Comrade Tellez is a well-known leader of the Nicaraguan workers, the General Secretary of the Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua (MAP-ML), and an elected delegate in the National Assembly. Another Marxist-Leninist worker, comrade Rigo Parales, was assaulted by two soldiers in the western town of Chichigalpa. Moreover, the radio program associated with the Marxist-Leninist Party, **Radio Periodico El Pueblo**, was shut down for more than a week.

This repression against the Marxist-Leninist workers is part of a general crackdown against the Nicaraguan workers' movement. The Sandinista regime has unleashed gangs of thugs and special police to break the strikes of the construction workers and auto mechanics. Many strikers have been fired and some arrested.

And stiff measures are being taken to block solidarity with the strikers from other sections of the workers. A police cordon was thrown up to isolate the 35 workers who went on hunger strike in support of the workers' demands. Comrade Tellez was attacked while he was agitating among the workers of Managua for solidarity with the strikers. **Radio El Pueblo** was also shut down for statements in support of the striking workers.

These developments come as the Sandinistas continue their policy of "mixed economy". Under this plan, the workers and peasants are to keep pulling in their belts, while the exploiters are given subsidies and privileges. The Nicaraguan capitalists -- the social base for the right-wing parties and contra restoration -- are pampered, while the bulwark of the revolution, the toilers, are bled white.

This crackdown also comes during the Arias peace process and the on-again, off-again

negotiations with the contras. This process involves fighting as well as negotiations, but it continues. Step by step, the Sandinistas are offering to restore more and more rights and privileges of the same big capitalists and reactionaries who cruelly oppressed and exploited the Nicaraguan working people in the epoch of Somozism. The agrarian reform has all but ceased as the government has stopped taking over the land of landlords who flee to join the contras.

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**THE REVOLUTIONARY STORM IN THE 1960'S
AND THE STRUGGLE AGAINST IMPERIALISM TODAY**

Below is the main speech from the May Day meeting in Chicago, held on the night of April 30 after a May Day demonstration earlier in the day through the streets of the Pilsen community:

Comrades and friends,

The bourgeoisie has dubbed 1988 the 20th anniversary of the 60's.

Twenty years ago a powerful movement had broken out against U.S. aggression in Vietnam. Today U.S. imperialism hasn't changed. It is waging a war against the workers and peasants of Central America. It is spending hundreds of millions to back up the contras. It is funding the death squad regimes of El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala. It has sent warships to the Persian Gulf. It is backing the Israeli zionists in their war against the Palestinians.

The situation requires the building of a militant mass movement against U.S. imperialist aggression. It requires building a movement in support of the workers and peasants of Central America, of Iran

and Iraq, of Palestine. In building such a movement we can learn from the anti-war movement of the 1960's.

What was the anti-war movement of the 1960's like?

The 1968 Democratic Party convention took place twenty years ago this August. The confrontation that took place there gives us a good picture of that phase of the movement when it had become sizeable. It had turned to more militant tactics. It had gained a lot of experience. And a section of the movement had turned towards revolutionary politics.

The actions at the '68 Democratic Party convention were a tumultuous affair. 10,000 youth participated. Diverse political trends were involved. A large section of youth came to the demonstration to back up the so-called "peace" candidate Eugene McCarthy.¹ Its leadership had banked on a "peaceful, legal demonstration". And then there were the anarchists like the Yippies. They couldn't imagine mobilizing the masses to break with the Democratic Party. Instead they threatened the people of Chicago with "putting LSD in the water supply". So we see that this action had its problems. But overall its main features were positive.

What were its positive features, the features which came to dominate this action?

The youth came out to denounce U.S. imperialism's war--10,000 of them.

Many of them took an anti-imperialist stand. There was growing recognition that the U.S. war in Vietnam was not just an aberration. It was not a simple mistake or just the result of some men with bad intentions. No, there was the feeling that the war was the inevitable result of the system of imperialism; it was the result of a system that lives off the exploitation of the workers at home and the plunder of the toilers of other lands.

Besides this, many also came in support of the liberation fighters in Vietnam. Red flags and NLF flags abounded in the demonstrations. These youth supported the Vietnamese struggle to kick the U.S. troops out of Vietnam. They supported their struggle to build a society free of U.S. exploitation and domination.

As well, many came to oppose the Democratic party as a Party. They opposed Johnson and Humphrey who were carrying out the war. And they opposed the so-called "peace" candidate

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McCarthy.

Leaflets rallying people to the action called for a "massive confrontation with our government"; an "attack on the Democratic convention"; "clogging the streets of Chicago"; and "pinning the delegates to the International Amphitheater"

Among the many actions that week in Chicago, demonstrators picketed the Hilton Hotel where Democratic Party delegates were staying. They made several attempts to march to the site of the Democratic Party convention at the International Amphitheater. They were viciously attacked. Police waded into the demonstrations with tear gas and billy clubs shouting "Kill! Kill! Kill!" The army was called out. One youth was killed. More than one hundred were hospitalized and hundreds were treated in movement clinics. But this couldn't stop the demonstrations.

This confrontation led to a major exposure of the U.S. political system in general and of the Democratic Party in particular. It showed that the Democratic Party was hellbent on the war. Its convention rubber stamped the war in Vietnam. And it was the Democratic Party that called out all the forces of repression against those who were protesting the war. The events at the Democratic Party convention brought many to revolutionary conclusions.

So how did a movement of such size and militancy and with such political features come about...?

For one thing there was the objective factor-- U.S. imperialism was desperate to maintain its interests and domination in Vietnam. By 1968 the U.S. had poured 500,000 troops into Vietnam. It was daily bombing Vietnamese cities. It had killed hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese workers and peasants. This accounted for the outrage of the masses all over the world for the U.S. war. And the Vietnamese people were fighting U.S. imperialism tit for tat. In 1968 the Vietnamese revolutionaries launched a major offensive. They attacked 36 provincial capitals in South Vietnam. They forced 6,000 U.S. marines to run from the Khe Sanh military base. They nearly toppled the reactionary regime in South Vietnam. This was inspiring people in the U.S. to struggle.

But this was not the only reason. Another reason is that there were activists who courageously fought to build up a militant mass movement. They were not necessarily clear, and they were faced with the problem that the main radical left organizations of the time were of various erroneous trends. But they fought to build a movement which opposed U.S. imperialism. They fought to build a movement which opposed the Democrats as well as the Republicans. They fought to build a movement in support of the Viet-

namese struggle.

Early in the 60's the activists had to fight the influence of the Democratic Party even to protest the war. They had to fight the social-democrats who talked of peace in general but who did not want to oppose any particular U.S. aggression. These social-democrats were willing to talk about socialism on occasion. However, in practice they did not want to embarrass the Kennedy administration. John F. Kennedy was a president who promoted himself as being for peace, hope and change. And Kennedy was also the one who started the major step up of U.S. troops in Vietnam.

Anyway, in the early 1960's one of the major peace groups was SANE, the Committee for a SANE nuclear policy. It held an annual Easter Peace Walk. But in 1963 a small group of activists went against SANE's policy of a fight for peace which didn't strike at any enemies of peace. They seized upon the opportunity of the Peace Walk to protest the Vietnam war. What followed is very enlightening. Bayard Rustin the chairman of the action stopped the rally. He demanded the removal of those placards opposing the war in Vietnam. But the crowd sympathized with the anti-Vietnam war protesters, and the leaders were unable to suppress the placards.

The activists did not just stop here. Independent of the social-democrats they organized actions and protests on their own.

In 1964, in New York City, demonstrations of about two hundred people were organized. Their slogans were anti-imperialist and in support of the Vietnamese struggle. They were attacked by the police. About forty people were arrested.

We run into this kind of situation today. This winter contra aid was debated. All but fourteen Democrats voted for so-called "humanitarian" aid to the contras. So the Democrats put out the word that they did not want demonstrations against contra aid. The hangers-on of the Democratic Party in the solidarity movement complied. There were very few demonstrations. We have to oppose this sabotage of the movement. Like the activists of the 60's, we face the need to fight obstruction from the social-democrats and liberals if we want to demonstrate against U.S. imperialism's wars.

So comrades, in 1963-64 the activists had to fight just to protest the war in Vietnam. But by 1965 the social-democrats could no longer prevent such actions. They adjusted their position. They said "Okay, you can demonstrate against the war-- but don't demand the withdrawal of U.S. troops." Can you imagine that!

The social-democrats worked to limit the demonstrations to slogans that would be acceptable to the Democratic Party. Some liberal Democrats

argued to combine negotiations with U.S. troops as the way to force Vietnam to its knees. They wanted to protect U.S. interests. They wanted to achieve U.S. domination and exploitation of Vietnam through negotiations. In line with this, the social-democrats were absolutely against any placards or slogans demanding immediate U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam or in support of the Vietnamese struggle. They demanded exclusion of any open communist or revolutionary presence from the march. They threatened to split and denounce the march if these restrictions were not met. They got the backing of the revisionist CPUSA and the trotskyite SWP for their restrictions.

The revisionists and trotskyists talked in general of the struggle for socialism. However, when it came to anything practical, they gave in to the threats of the social-democrats. They said that this would make the movement broader. They said it would avoid turning off the masses. In fact what it meant was that they would be able to invite various liberal democrats to speak from the podium.

However, as I said, **from the very beginning small demonstrations were held under slogans of anti-imperialism and in support of the Vietnamese revolution.** And there were attempts to take these slogans and actions into the large social-democratic dominated demonstrations of the period. In 1965 SANE was basically successful in preventing anyone from carrying placards for the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops or in support of the Vietnamese revolution. But a year later they were unable to prevent small numbers of people from carrying such placards.

By 1967 a significant section of the movement was already breaking free of the domination of groups like SANE. The "Stop the Draft" week in 1967 showed this. In Oakland, California 3,000 activists attempted to shut down the Oakland Induction center. They fought battles with the police. In Washington in the fall of 1967 the social-democrats organized a march. But a large section of the activists broke free from the social-democrats. They marched on the Pentagon under calls to confront the government and shut the Pentagon down. They had to break through several lines of trotskyite-trained marshals to do so.

We face a similar issue today.

The activists of the sixties were told not to demand immediate and total U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam. We are told not to demand an immediate end to all U.S. involvement in Central America. No! We should support humanitarian aid that will benefit both sides.

The activists of the sixties were told that they should demand negotiations--combined with U.S.

troops. We are told to support the Arias Peace Pact. This plan has built right into it continued millions for the contras and a continued CIA destabilization campaign against Nicaragua. It is a pact designed to bring Nicaragua to its knees.

Just like the activists of the sixties we are faced with the attempts to take the movement in the direction of supporting the ruling class plan to achieve for U.S. imperialism by talk of peace what it can not achieve with troops alone.

Thus we are faced with the issue of doing political education for, and raising slogans in support of, the revolutionary movement against U.S. imperialism. And like the activists of the 60's we too have to organize the demonstrations and actions directly under militant slogans. And we too have to seek to influence the demonstrations organized by social-democracy and liberalism.

The activists of the 60's also had to fight the attempts of the bourgeoisie to derail the mass movement into campaigns for the election of imperialist candidates who ran as so-called "peace" candidates.

In 1968 the Democratic Party was not only the mother of Johnson and Humphrey who were carrying out the war. At the same time the Democratic Party put up a "peace" candidate Eugene McCarthy.

This was nothing strange for the Democrats. In '64, Johnson himself had run as the "peace" candidate against the "nuke Vietnam" warmonger, Goldwater.

So what made McCarthy a "peace" candidate?

Did he demand the withdrawal of U.S. troops? No! He only wanted to combine negotiations with troops.

Did he support the struggle of the Vietnamese people?

No! He too wanted to defend U.S. interests in Vietnam. He just preferred diplomatic pressure along with troops.

However, in the 1960's there were courageous activists who opposed McCarthy and the Democratic Party. And the actions at the Democratic Party convention in 1968 blew many illusions in the Democratic Party to bits.

Today too the bourgeoisie is using a candidate who talks of "peace" to derail the mass movement. In 1968 there was McCarthy. Today there are Democrats galore to posture in the name of peace, and there is Jesse Jackson who is the most vociferous about peace.

But does Jesse Jackson support the toilers of Central America? No!

Does he demand an end to contra aid? No!

Does he demand that the U.S. should pull out of Central America lock, stock, and barrel. No! Not on your life.

Why, he too is for defending American inter-

ests. And of course he says "I would deploy troops according to what our needs are." He talks of peace, but wants to get for U.S. imperialism what contra troops alone could not achieve.

We have to oppose U.S. imperialism's wars of aggression abroad. We have to support the toilers of other lands. In order to do this we also have to oppose this so-called "peace" candidate. We have to build up a vigorous mass movement with independent politics.

So what did these battles of the activists in the 1960's lead to?

By 1970 at the height of the movement it is estimated that over 60% of the college youth participated in demonstrations and other protests. This is not to speak of the hundreds of thousands of workers, high school and elementary students, GIs, and others who participated in these actions. At the height of the movement in 1970 over 80% of the colleges and universities had some kind of strike action. Fifty-one were totally shut down for the rest of the year. High schools and even elementary schools were on strike. Thirty ROTC buildings were burned. Students at twenty-one campuses had National Guard troops called out against them.

A significant revolutionary wing of the movement developed. And a much wider section called itself revolutionary. Kirkpatrick Sale, in his book SDS, quotes a survey. It found that, among college students in 1968, 368,000 considered themselves to be revolutionaries. By 1970 this survey found that number to be 1,170,000. And I should point out that this was only among college students.

What do we have to learn from the anti-war movement of the 60's?

It is that we can't give in to the big shots who don't want demonstrations against U.S. imperialism's wars. We have to organize demonstrations and actions. It is that we can't give in to the naysayers who tell us that the liberals will have nothing to do with us. We have to persist in organizing for the politics of anti-imperialism. We have to persist in organizing to support the toilers of other lands who are fighting U.S. imperialism. We have to persist in exposing both the Republicans and the Democrats, including their so-called "peace" candidates. Comrades, we have to be bold. We have to stick to and organize with this politics, and we have to seek to influence the larger movement.

The anti-war movement of the sixties was tumultuous. It brought millions into struggle. It brought hundreds of thousands to revolutionary conclusions and brought forward thousands of revolutionary activists.

But the issue is not to glorify the sixties. We

need to learn from it. And not only do we have to learn from its strong points and positive features but its weaknesses. For we can not ignore the weakness in this movement.

One of the most important weaknesses was that the activists of the 1960's were not able to develop centralized revolutionary organization. They were not able to build a Marxist-Leninist party that could guide the masses through the ups and downs of the movement, a party that could pull together all the different threads of discontent into a single revolutionary struggle.

The 1960's saw a tumultuous mass movement. It grew from tens, to hundreds, to thousands, and to tens of thousands to millions. It had its up and downs. There were actions when slogans of anti-imperialism came to the fore. There were actions when these slogans were swamped. There were periods when new waves of activists came into the struggle, providing a base to appeal to against social-democratic obstruction but also bringing with them all their illusions and inexperience.

All this required revolutionary organization that could fight to orient the mass movement. It required organization that could step by step break the masses from the influence of the Democratic Party.

The movement of the 1960's fell short on this question.

Some influential activists were wedded to the illusions in the Democratic Party. They never could completely divorce themselves from social-democracy and its love affair with the Democratic Party.

There were those like Tom Hayden. In 1968 he claimed to be against the Democratic Party, against Johnson, and against McCarthy. The government put him on trial for organizing the actions at the Democratic Party convention. However, it was only a few years later that he became a Democratic Party politician. He did this under the guise of staying close to the masses.

Or take Bobby Seale. He spoke eloquently against the U.S. political system and claimed to be for revolution. The government bound and gagged him to stop his militant protests at the trial following the Democratic Party convention. But he too slid back into the Democratic Party swamp and campaigned for mayor of Oakland, California as a Democrat.

And then there were those who couldn't deal with how to influence a confused movement going to the left. Such was the Progressive Labor Party (PL). This organization had split from Khrushchovite revisionism in 1962 and rallied many Marxist-Leninists around it. It was an attempt to build a Marxist-Leninist center.

At first PL advocated doing communist work in anti-war movement and building an anti-imperialist student movement. It organized the May Second Movement as an anti-imperialist student organization. It was one of the groups which organized the actions in 1964 in New York City--the actions under the slogans of opposition to imperialism and support of the Vietnamese revolution.

However, PL couldn't sort out how to maintain independent communist work and still work in the left-wing circles. For example, SDS (Students for a Democratic Society), the major left-wing student organization at the time, wanted more militant action and slogans than social-democracy. But it never fully broke with social-democracy. It was, in fact, the left wing of social-democracy. And PL couldn't fathom how to keep up its independent stand while dealing with SDS. It couldn't fathom how to bring the forces around SDS to break with social-democracy.

So PL declared in essence that this social-democratic ideology was progressive. With the formula that new leftism was objectively progressive, it abandoned the distinction between the progressive significance of large numbers of students and activists moving to the left and the backward significance of the "new left" form of left social-democracy. It liquidated the May Second Movement into SDS, and the PL activists became those who were simply hard workers. PL did gain some influence--but only by giving up communist politics, by giving up the fight against social-democracy.

However, not all the revolutionary activists of the 1960's were so flimsy. Some learned from the tumultuous struggle and took up the tasks of building a Marxist-Leninist party. This is where our party comes from.

To learn from the 60's, to fight U.S. imperialist wars today, to support the toiling masses of other lands today--requires that we work hard to provide a revolutionary center for the struggle. It requires that we continue to build up the Marxist-Leninist Party and to propagate the party concept among the masses. It requires that we too fight against imperialism as a system, and that we stand opposed to the Democrats as well as Republicans. It requires that we fight the "peace" candidate fraud of the Democratic Party and that we support the revolutionary toilers of other lands.

Comrades, twenty years ago the activists of the 60's broke away from the "peace" frauds of the

Democratic Party. They took to the streets of Chicago to protest U.S. imperialism's war in Vietnam and to support the struggle of the Vietnamese people. They stood up against all the forces of repression that were thrown against them. We have this tradition behind us. The 1980's requires no less of us.

Notes:

(1) However, by the time of the 1968 Democratic Party convention there was almost no difference between President Johnson's (LBJ) positions and those of Eugene McCarthy. McCarthy became the "peace" candidate by demanding negotiations with the National Liberation Front (NLF) of South Vietnam and also at least cutting back the bombing of the North. In March, LBJ withdrew from the race and turned to advocating negotiations. The main difference between the two was that LBJ still did not want direct negotiations with the NLF. (Hence the long debate over the shape of the negotiating table, with the Vietnamese demanding that the NLF be recognized as a formal part of the negotiations while LBJ demanded that the NLF be part of the negotiating team from North Vietnam.)

LBJ's shift almost led to the cancellation of the call for actions at the convention. And it appears that most, if not all, of the leaders did not expect the demonstration to be large. (Actually, 10,000 was considered small, as originally, when the demonstration was called against LBJ, it was thought that several tens of thousands would come.) The SDS leaders did not really endorse the demonstration. It expected only supporters of McCarthy to come, and it addressed its literature to convincing them not to support McCarthy (but this literature did not go very far in exposing McCarthy--it only pointed out that he was a Democrat and would be "controlled" if he won the presidency and compelled to follow what imperialism wanted). They, and the rest of the leaders, were caught by surprise when large numbers of quite militant youth came out with the aim of confronting the Democratic Party.

Note that PL opposed the demonstration as wildness that turns off the workers and harms the "worker-student alliance". SWP also opposed the demonstration from a more openly rightist direction.

SPAIN: WORKERS' PROTEST TAKES OVER THE STREETS

From the May 2 issue (vol. 1 #3) issue of **Red Chronicle** from Spain.

The celebration of May Day this year has been preceded by a wave of struggles in different cities and sectors, culminating with the mobilization on the last week of April of more than one million working people.

Although during the whole month, workers and unemployed actively participated in strikes and demonstrations--such as Madrid's hostelry, Explasa in Vic, Alumina-Aluminio in San Ciprián, Corberó in Cornellá, the bus transport in Levante, Barcelona's city council, etc.--it was on April 27 when hundreds upon thousands occupied the streets of Madrid, Bilbao, Ferrol, Asturias and other places to show their opposition to the economic and social policy of [Prime Minister] Felipe Gonzalez and his social-democratic team.

In Biscay, the general strike in defense of jobs and against the industrial dismantling of the Nervión area was followed by 70% of the population. During the whole day, demonstrators in Bilbao and other villages cut the roads and railway line and burnt two buses. The workers of the Euskalduna shipyard were at the front of the struggle, facing the police forces with stones, metallic objects and molotov cocktails, burning two police vans. Several workers and policemen were injured in the fights.

On the same day, the Ferrol area was also paralyzed by a general strike against the industrial reconversion and in support of the Astano shipyard workers. In Ferrol and neighboring villages groups of pickets faced the police with several injured and arrested. In the afternoon a demonstration of 15,000 went through the main streets of Ferrol.

Also the Asturian miners made of April 27 a day of struggle, stopping their work at several pits, demonstrating in villages and occupying the head offices of the mining company Hunosa in Ponferrada. In Barcelona, 95% of the construction workers made of April 27 their ninth day of strike, and also many factories of the Catalan textile industry stopped work.

To complete this brief report on this day of protest, also to be mentioned were the demonstrations in Madrid of 100,000 striking teachers from all over Spain and of 10,000 farmers, who criticize the agricultural policy of the PSOE [social-democratic "Socialist Workers Party of Spain"] Government since Spain's entry in the European Economic

Community.

While the whole of Spain was boiling with struggles, [Prime Minister] Felipe González took the plane to visit one of his sons studying in the USA and give a conference in Boston. His number two, Alfonso Guerra, declared that "anti-democratic winds are blowing in Spain". No. The winds that are blowing are of struggle against the capitalists and the social-democrats.

May Day Celebrations

The heavy rain that fell on Spain on May Day did not prevent around 600,000 workers from taking part in the demonstrations held in the different cities and villages. The main slogans shouted were against the economic and social policy of the social-democratic government, in defense of jobs and in solidarity with Nicaragua, Palestine and other peoples of the world in struggle.

In Madrid, **Nuevo Octubre** distributed issue 4 of its journal and pasted posters calling for struggle against unemployment and capitalism. [Issue #4 of **Nuevo Octubre** contained the following articles:

- *a lead appeal for a radical struggle against capitalism;

- *a May Day poem by Gregorio Lázaro;

- *the editorial "a worker's peace or an imperialist peace" from **Prensa Proletaria**, journal of the Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua;

- *the article "for a free and socialist Kurdistan" on the struggle of the Peshmargas (armed fighters) of Komala (Kurdistan organization of the Communist Party of Iran).]

Solidarity with the Salvadoran People

- *On April 11, in the course of the showing at Madrid's Colegio Mayor Chaminade of a film on the activity of the FMLN-FDR guerrillas in El Salvador, **Nuevo Octubre** placed a wall newspaper criticizing the Arias Plan and the reformist stands of the FMLN-FDR leaders as well as calling for solidarity with the Salvadoran workers and peasants.

* * *

Issue #3 of **Red Chronicle** also contained the sections **Peasants in Struggle, Repression and Other News.**

NOTES ON THE ANTI-IMPERIALIST MOVEMENT IN SPAIN

The following is from the April 1 issue (vol. 1 #2) of **Red Chronicle** from Spain. Besides the article below, it also contained **Strikes and Workplace News, Peasants in Struggle, and Other News.** **Red Chronicle** is published by **Ediciones Nuevo Octubre**, which can be reached at Apartado 35171, 28080 Madrid, Spain.

As in previous years, March has been a month when thousands of thousands of workers and other sections of the people have demonstrated to express their opposition to the presence of U.S. military bases in Spain and NATO. The most important [were the ones that] marched along the 18 kilometers which separate Madrid from the U.S. base in Torrejon and the one held a week later in Rota (Cadiz).

In Spain, the mass movement which opposes the U.S. military presence is divided into two organized blocks, which act jointly in most campaigns. On one side the CEOP, which groups a heterogeneous mixture of associations but is headed by the Anti-NATO Committee, established several years ago by LCR (trotskyites) and MC (a mixture of trotskyism, maoinism, and linked to Soviet social-imperialism through Cuba and Nicaragua). The base of its program is "No to NATO", "U.S. bases get out" and "Neutrality".

On the other hand stands the so-called "Campaign to Get U.S. Bases Out", set up by the revisionists of the Communist Party of Spain and its collaborators in the "United Left" electoral platform. In order not to confront directly the social-democratic PSOE [Socialist Workers Party of Spain] Government, they accept Spain's NATO membership, respecting, they say, the "will" of those 9 million who voted in support of Spain's entry (forgetting the manipulation of the news media by the social-democratic Government and the nearly 7 million who voted NO). "The important thing"--in the words of its speaker, Josep Palau--"is that the conditions for Spain's entry in NATO are fulfilled and not to place the slogan 'No to

NATO' in front of every demand" (!) Only the revisionists fall so low.

Therefore, due to the influence of revisionism of different colors and of bourgeois pacifism (evident in the statement issued by the above groups on the occasion of the Rota demonstration which read, among other things, as follows: "If the desires of peace, justice and solidarity with the peoples, which those of us who have come here today bring, could transform themselves into wind, it is sure that our force would sweep away so many war apparatus, so much of military madness, so many stars and stripe flags") the anti-imperialist movement in Spain lacks revolutionary spirit. A struggle against a foreign enemy, forgetting that the main foe of the Spanish workers is the bourgeoisie and its present representative in power, the PSOE social-democrats, who allow and support the presence of U.S. troops and NATO, can only serve as a smoke screen to confuse the working class in its struggle.

But although revisionism and bourgeois pacifism try to maintain this movement under their ominous influence and prevent the revolutionary spirit of the masses, on many occasions they are overflowed. This was the case at the demonstration at Torrejon where many participants who tried to reach the base faced the police forces which surrounded it with stones, with several policemen and demonstrators injured in the fights. These advanced sectors, who oppose the pacifist litany of revisionism (and pacifist litany are both the calls for "peace" in the abstract or "peace among the peoples" [this latter slogan, "peace among the peoples", is championed by the Communist Party of Spain (Marxist-Leninist) as supposedly the alternative to the peace slogans of the CPS] are lacking a Communist Party which leads and orients them, linking the anti-imperialist struggle to socialist revolution.

[The article concluded by quoting Lenin to the effect that there is no other path to end war than proletarian revolution.] <>

CONDEMN THE ARMS TRADE OF SWEDISH IMPERIALISM!

Below is an excerpt from the lead article from **Röd Gryning (Red Dawn)**, No. #3, 1988:

There seems to be no end of the arms business scandal -- no bottom of this mire has yet been seen. One revelation is followed by another, and

step by step the truth is unveiled before our eyes on the role played in the various rounds by the social-democratic "workers' government" of the "neutral" Sweden.

First, a long series of grave facts were brought out into the daylight about the doings and dealings of the privately-owned Bofors -- gunpowder smuggling to the Khomeini regime in Iran, robot smugglings via Singapore, bribery in the business with India, and so on. It would hardly be necessary to repeat all the details here.

And just recently it has become clear that also the state-owned counterpart of Bofors, FFV, has been doing the same things. Between 1963 and 1984, FFV sold war munitions, for a total of several hundreds of million Swedish Crowns, to various countries to which the arms export had been officially prohibited by the Swedish Parliament and government. In that way countries like Israel, Saudi Arabia and, probably, Honduras and the former apartheid regime of Rhodesia, have got Swedish weapons. According to facts presented in **Dagens Nyheter** [one of the main Swedish daily newspapers] of March 5, FFV thereby also equipped Australian troops, which participated along with the U.S. in the Viet Nam war, with the Swedish trench mortar "Carl Gustaf", by order of the then Minister of Defense Sven Andersson -- contrary to the government's own arms embargo.

This once again just confirms what is the real face of the government, beyond all arms embargoes, all mediatory positions in wars (the Swedish government mediated, in the mid-1960's, in the Viet Nam war as well as, in later year, in the Iran-Iraq war) and all the hypocritical "peace" babble following the self-assumed role of "world's conscience". It confirms once again that social-democracy and the bourgeois state do not stand above classes, but that their job is to serve the interests of Swedish imperialism! <>

Also in Red Dawn #3, 1988

Among the other articles in **Red Dawn** are the following:

*The front page is a poster calling for a general boycott of Israeli commodities.

*"A Toilers' Peace Or An Imperialist Peace", reprinted from **Prensa Proletaria**, voice of the Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua.

*An interview with an activist, living in exile in Sweden, of the Palestinian student union, GUPS.

*An article entitled "Sven Andersson's Tour in the Middle East: Continued Support for the Zionists". It comments on the recent visit of the Swedish foreign Minister to Israel, Jordan and Syria. He put forward the idea of a two-state

solution. The article went into how Sweden tries to maneuver between Israel and the Palestinians, and it goes into the history of Swedish "neutrality" in general. It recalls how Swedish imperialism gained huge profits in World War II through selling iron to both Germany and Britain and how the same way of acting has been successfully repeated later. It denounces the two-state solution as being drawn up above the heads of the Palestinian masses. The article concludes that it is not wrong in itself to utilize contradictions in the enemy camp, but that this should be done as a tactic, and one must not lose sight of the strategic goal or have illusions in the enemies. So the first and foremost task for Swedish communists must be to expose and fight imperialism at home, especially "peaceful" Swedish imperialism, and carry out solidarity work with the slogan "Down with zionism -- unconditional support for the struggle of the Palestinian people!"

*The second part of the article "Trotsky and the Critique of Socio-Economic Relations and the State in the Soviet Union", from **Bolshevik Message**, voice of the Communist Party of Iran--the Committee Abroad. In its introduction to this article, **Röd Gryning** points out that it is printed as part of an ongoing discussion and that the Communist League of Norrköping does not agree with every view in the article. For example, it does not believe that the Soviet Union was already state capitalist in the 1930's but, rather, sees the degeneration as a process of gradual quantitative changes which, finally, led to a qualitative leap of counterrevolution -- a leap which took place in the mid-1950's after the death of Stalin when the Khrushchovites took over. The CL of Norrköping, the introduction points out, still holds that in the 1920's Stalin, in the fight against trotskism and bukharinism, represented the general line of revolutionary Leninism, although with a lot of weaknesses, and that the real right-wing turn began at least at the end of the first five-year plan and manifested itself programmatically at the 17th Congress of the CPSU(b) in 1934 (the "Congress of Victors"), which objectively paved the way for revisionism.

*The statement of the Central Committee of the CP of Iran on the death of comrade Jafar Shafiee is reprinted. There is also a speech by this comrade on the occasion of the fourth anniversary of the foundation of the CP of Iran.

*There is a summary of a public seminar on the Iran-Iraq war, which was held in the city of Uppsala on march 5.

*"Kurdistan--Nine Years of Struggle" and "Explosion of Struggle in the Dominican Republic" from the **Workers' Advocate**. <>

BACKGROUND NOTES ON THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN

The May 1 issue of the **Workers' Advocate** reported on the current situation in Afghanistan and the recent U.S.-Soviet accords signed in Geneva. It touched on recent Afghan history and the various social and political forces involved. Below we provide more information on the history of Afghanistan and the fiasco of the revisionist regime. This article is based on research notes used to write the articles in the May 1 **Workers' Advocate**.

Afghanistan Entering the Modern Epoch

Afghanistan is a small mountainous country which has only recently begun to come into the modern era.

Strategically located at the age-old invasion route from Central Asia into the Indian subcontinent, the area today known as Afghanistan has long been the scene of conflict between bigger powers bordering it. During the 16th through 18th centuries, this land was caught between the Mogul Empire in India and the Safavi Empire in Iran. In the 19th century, it became the focus of contention between Tsarist Russia advancing southward and British imperialism moving westward in its expanding control over India.

Besides encroachment from outside, this land was also the scene of strife among the diverse peoples that lived here. The country known as Afghanistan in its present-day form really came into existence in the 19th century. It is sometimes said that Afghanistan maintained a true independence in successful wars against invaders. But the truth is a bit more complicated. The Afghan state was established as a buffer state between Russia and Britain. Despite wars against British incursions, the Afghan state had to acknowledge British overlordship, yielding to Britain control of its foreign relations.

The Rule of Amanullah

In 1919, Afghanistan finally took control of its foreign affairs. For a decade afterwards, Amanullah ruled as monarch of the country. In his foreign policy, he was generally friendly to the socialist Soviet Union and also opened up links with various European capitalist countries. At home Amanullah tried to introduce the country-onto the path of modernization.

He attempted some bourgeois political and social reforms. He was an admirer of the Kemalists regime then ruling Turkey and tried to carry out similar changes in Afghanistan. Many of his ideas were quite reasonable, such as abolition of slavery and forced labor, various educational programs,

discouragement of the veil and of seclusion of women. Some were absurd, such as the demand that men wear European clothing and hats. Amanullah also attempted administrative reforms, such as a constitutional monarchy, a tax system, and a professional army. He sought to extend the influence of the central government to the outlying areas.

But his regime was soon faced with revolts by tribal chieftains and religious conservatives. And there was also intrigue by British imperialism.

The essential reason for the failure of Amanullah's reformist schemes was that there was no social base to carry it through in the face of reactionary opposition. There was no movement of the toilers to support democratic changes. There was no awakening of the peasants in the countryside, and the lack of economic development meant there was essentially no working class. Of course, a king would look not to a revolutionary movement, but perhaps to a liberal, monarchist bourgeoisie for support against the more backward elements. But the lack of economic development meant there was essentially no bourgeoisie either.

The Reign of Zahir Shah

The country more or less remained in turmoil until Zahir Shah became king in 1933. He reigned until his removal in 1973. Although Zahir Shah was formally the king, the Afghan government was, for most of his rule, actually run by other figures from the royal family. For example, until 1953, the king's uncles ruled for him. All along, though, the monarchy ruled in alliance with traditional tribal chieftains and feudal landlords. The Zahir Shah monarchy also established the dominance of the Pushtun nationality over other nationalities and tribes.

From the 30's on, some capitalist development began, giving rise to the growth of urban upper classes, such as merchants, other businessmen, and government officials. The country's first bank was set up and capitalist interests emerged in trade and a few small industries. Most of the bourgeoisie was still quite small in wealth and the size

of its enterprises. And there was also the emergence of an intelligentsia.

In the late 40's, there was some motion by the petty bourgeoisie, within the bounds of a liberal bourgeois program. Voices were raised for political reforms. Press censorship was lifted in 1951, and several newspapers were published. As well, a student movement emerged at Kabul University.

Prince Daud Becomes Prime Minister

The government soon tired of its limited liberal experiment and cracked down. Student unions and newspapers were banned and many activists were put in jail. Many of the activists from this period were to become key figures in the political ferment that mushroomed in the 1960's. It is in the post-World War II period that capitalist development expanded. Much of this began in the decade during which the King's cousin, Prince Daud, was Prime Minister. Daud was an important figure in the Afghan military and he sought to economically develop Afghanistan in the Kemalist way as had taken place in Turkey -- with considerable state involvement and without allowing political liberalization.

Both the U.S. and Soviet governments provided economic aid for Daud's economic plans. Soviet aid increased considerably during Khrushchov's rule. This was a time during which the Soviet Union -- now no longer socialist but a country restoring capitalism -- stepped up its capitalist penetration of the "third world" countries.

Not much industrial development however took place. It was mainly in the infrastructure, such as the building of roads, highways, transport, and electric power. There was also some growth of schools and university education. And the military was expanded. Soviet aid also went into this front.

As a result of the economic growth, both the bourgeois and petty bourgeois classes grew. And the industrial working class, which could be earlier counted in thousands, now grew larger, although it still remained small. (By 1978 it had only grown to about 35,000 or so.)

Not much appears to have taken place in the countryside. But some of the landed rich also took on business interests, in order to profit from state funding of road building and transport. There was no peasant movement.

It should be noted that the economic growth mainly fattened the pockets of the rich, while the actual conditions of the poor worsened. Their wages were pitiful, prices rose, and the ranks of the unemployed grew.

Politically the regime ruled with an iron fist. Its secret police supervised the urban areas. Ar-

rests and jailings of political opponents were routine.

Political Life Emerges in the 60's

Daud lost power in 1963 in a royal power squabble. But there remained considerable continuity from the Daud government.

Pressure had been mounting for political reform. The monarchy responded with some half measures. In 1964, a new constitution was introduced and much noise was made about the so-called "new democracy". Parliamentary elections were held with a limited franchise but political parties remained illegal.

Despite the restrictions on politics, there was widespread urban ferment, especially among the petty bourgeois intelligentsia and among the students. And there were also workers' strikes in this period.

Student demonstrations emerged as a regular feature. There were many demonstrations and even an attempt to sit-in in the parliament. In 1969, there was a city-wide student strike in Kabul for a month and a half. Police attacks on student demonstrations were common.

With a new Press Law in 1965 that eased censorship, a number of newspapers were launched. They reflected various political trends that were emerging. Many of the newspapers were, however, faced with bans fairly quickly.

The political trends which emerged spanned the spectrum. The activists who led these trends and the non-government press were mainly from the intelligentsia but they reflected various class interests.

On the right there were conservative Islamic forces and Islamic fundamentalists. These were connected to fundamentalist trends abroad and probably received patronage from Saudi Arabia. They were virulently anti-communist. They began to clamor louder and louder against what they saw as a dangerous slide towards secularism and modernization. The fundamentalists organized public demonstrations as well as such acts as acid-throwing on women who did not wear the veil.

Various bourgeois liberal and reformist trends also emerged. And there was also the emergence of left trends with influence especially among the students.

The People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) was formed in 1965. It was a left nationalist party oriented in favor of Soviet revisionism. The PDPA had a reformist program and focused its work on parliament.

The PDPA was really formed by two trends, and in a couple of years the party quickly split back into these two factions. One was the "**Khalq**"

(Masses) faction. The other was the "**Parcham**" (Flag) faction. The two factions had differing views on tactical questions and also seem to have had different social bases.

Parcham was the more rightist of the two revisionist factions. It was led by Babrak Karmal who was the son of a prominent general connected to the royal family. It had many connections with the Kabul bourgeoisie. Parcham used to be derided by many as the "royal communist party".

Khalq was led by Noor Mohammed Taraki. It appears to have been mainly based among petty bourgeois strata, especially from the provinces.

A couple of radical left currents also emerged. One was called "**Eternal Flame**" which some say was the largest left group in Kabul by 1970. This group stood to the left of the PDPA. It opposed imperialism and opposed the king. It supported workers' strikes. And it fought against Soviet revisionism as well as the flabby reformist views of the PDPA factions.

Another group which emerged was called "**Against National Oppression**" which organized among oppressed minorities.

But open political life was again soon suppressed. Left publications were only allowed briefly. It may also be noted that much of the political awakening barely affected the countryside.

However, dissatisfaction continued to grow among wide sections of society. Corruption was rampant in the government. The country's foreign debt burdens were considerable. The cost of living skyrocketed. The bourgeoisie and professionals chafed at being kept out of power and privilege. Students were leaving colleges but finding few job opportunities. There was opposition to the government's repression. To top it off, in the early 70's a famine hit the country.

This generalized unrest was to be a backdrop to the changes to come.

The King is Overthrown

In 1973, a military coup proclaimed a republic, forced the king out, and brought his cousin Daud back into power. This was the same man who had been prime minister until 1963.

Thus this was not all that much of a change. Daud was also a member of the royal family. And he represented the dominant bourgeoisie in Afghanistan. He had a particular base in the army. But unlike the king and his cronies, Daud and his supporters decided to rule in the name of a republic.

The revisionists of the Parcham faction helped Daud to power. Parchamis even became cabinet ministers. Parcham's stand reflected their view

that change in Afghanistan had to come through an alliance with the national bourgeoisie, which they identified with Daud and his supporters. But the Parchamis were cast aside as soon as Daud consolidated his regime.

Daud talked of reforms but took minimal steps. He even talked about land reform but nothing was really done; he continued to rule in alliance with the traditional landed interests.

Soon Daud, who the revisionists had championed as a bourgeois-democratic hero, turned towards stepped-up repression. A ban on the press was imposed in 1975. But a different kind of press quickly emerged in Kabul. This was the so-called **Evening News**, which consisted of anti-government mimeographed leaflets which were distributed at night by all opposition groups.

Islamic fundamentalists had organized against the Daud regime quite early. Daud ruled with the support of the conservative mullahs, but he was not inclined to groom the fundamentalists. Faced with Daud's attacks on them, many of them fled to Pakistan. There they got the support of the Bhutto regime¹. One of the Islamic politicians involved in this was Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, an Islamic student activist from Kabul University. (Hekmatyar is today head of the main faction of the Islamic Party which is one of the most rabid right-wing groups in the mujahedeen resistance. This is the group which has received the most lavish aid from the U.S. and Pakistan.)

The left also continued to be active in this period. Details on radical left activity are sketchy. The Khalq and Parcham revisionists are reported to have grown in this period. They recruited among schoolteachers, army officers, civil servants, etc. The two revisionist factions reunited in 1977, as the PDPA, although the factional divisions continued.

In its foreign policy, the Daud regime remained friendly to the Soviet Union but also expanded ties with the Shah of Iran and Saudi Arabia. Indeed, his ties with the Shah's regime were extremely cozy and included military and secret police collaboration with the Shah's Savak.

As time went on, the Daud regime was moving further and further to the right. His cabinet became dominated by extreme right-wingers. In foreign affairs his collaboration with reactionary Gulf regimes widened. And he clamped down hard with his police apparatus. Large numbers of leftists were thrown into jail.

The "April Revolution"

In the face of increasing repression, a military coup overthrew Daud in April 1978. It is this coup which is known as the so-called April revolution.

The military officers who organized the coup handed over power to a civilian-military junta dominated by the revisionist PDPA. Both Parcham and Khalq factions were represented. Taraki, leader of the Khalqis, became president, while Babrak Karmal, head of Parcham, became vice-president. However, Hafizullah Amin, a key Khalq leader, was soon to become the dominant figure in the regime.

Was this a revolution?

The old ruling aristocracy was indeed cast aside and a regime based more on the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie came to power. They sought to modernize Afghanistan by introducing social and economic reforms.

But there was no mass revolution. Indeed, there was little mass mobilization in support of the new regime, even though the Afghan people generally greeted the new government with sympathy.

During the Period of Khalq Dominance

Shortly after the April coup, the new regime went through some internal changes. The Khalq faction became dominant, and both Parchamis and bourgeois figures were cast aside or put to pasture. The next period saw Khalq trying to carry out its own vision of social change for Afghanistan.

Khalq was basically a petty bourgeois trend, heavily based among schoolteachers and junior army officers. This was not a reformist party of the labor aristocracy as many pro-Soviet revisionist parties tend to be. In fact, the PDPA, unlike many other revisionist parties, does not appear to have done much organizing among the workers and peasants.

The new regime introduced a series of reforms. In general they were quite reasonable. They included steps in favor of women's rights, steps in favor of the peasantry such as the abolition of usury and the cancellation of the debts of the poor peasants, a literacy program, etc.

But the Khalq regime had mistaken notions of how to carry these things out. Its methods were a combination of schoolteacher messianic zeal and militarist commandism. Its conception of strategy and tactics did not include mobilizing the poor themselves into class struggle. And it did not include building organization among the masses.

And it's not as if Khalq had a large base of activists. Quite the contrary. It had a narrow social base among the urban petty bourgeoisie and it lacked much following among the urban and rural toilers. Its numbers were in the few thousands and it had very little organization. What's more, even the old government apparatus which the regime had inherited had not really extended

far into the rural areas. The tribal chieftains and landlords had been the power there. And yet it was in the rural areas that the majority lived and it was there that the new government sought to extend its reforms to.

Under these conditions the Khalq's reform program turned out to be a fiasco. For example, the regime decreed an end to usury and the cancellation of debts owed by the poor peasants to the rich moneylenders. This was at first favorably greeted by many of the poor. But the regime lacked organization and government administration in the villages. And it didn't provide alternative sources of credit or other financial help to the peasantry to replace usury. This left the peasants in a quandary. Under these conditions the moneylenders and rural rich cynically manipulated the grievances of the peasantry against the regime and were soon able to reverse the tables on the reform.

Ruling by Repression

Faced with this and similar fiascoes, the new regime turned more and more to military methods and repression. This was directed not just against the wealthy exploiters but also against many toilers.

Indeed, the regime all along had a tendency to rule the masses by decree and military methods rather than persuasion, education, and organization. And it also widely resorted to repression. Quite early on, the radical currents in the left were attacked and jailed. And then the Khalq regime also used police methods in its internal factional struggle with the Parchamis and even among its own Khalq members.

Racked by internal conflict, alienating the masses everywhere, allowing the traditional exploiters to rally mass discontent, the regime dominated by the Khalqis managed to turn virtually the entire population against itself. Discontent grew into armed rebellion around the country.

At the same time, outside forces were also getting more and more involved in the Afghan civil war. Although the Khalq leaders sought both U.S. and Soviet assistance, the Kabul regime ended up more and more dependent on the Soviet imperialists' support. Military and police ties between the Soviet Union and Kabul had greatly expanded and Soviet military men were active in organizing the regime's war. Meanwhile, the Islamic fundamentalists on the Pakistan border had all along been groomed by Pakistan. And the Chinese revisionists, the CIA, and the Khomeini regime in Iran also began to get involved with the Afghan civil war.

Soviet Invasion

By the end of 1979, the Khalq regime led by Amin was on the verge of collapse. The Soviet Union tried to get rid of Amin through a palace coup by the other Khalq leader Taraki. But this failed and Taraki was murdered.

Finally in late December the Soviet Union invaded. It overthrew Amin who was labeled both a CIA agent and ultra-leftist. Instead, Moscow imposed its own favored regime led by Babrak Karmal. The Parcham leaders who were more favorably looked at by Moscow were put in control, although the Khalqis were not shut out.

Contrary to what is said by the pro-Soviet revisionist, and the "Hail the Red Army in Afghanistan" shouters of the trotskyist Spartacist League, the Soviet Union did not invade to advance revolution in Afghanistan.

It invaded out of its big-power imperialist interests. It wanted to preserve, at a time when it was on the verge of being overthrown, a regime friendly to itself. It sought to expand its economic and political control of the country. Revisionist leader Brezhnev in Moscow also wanted to use the Afghan invasion to puff up his prestige at home by showing that Soviet revisionism was allegedly gaining in support abroad. (At the time, Moscow actually thought that this would be a Czechoslovakia-type brief adventure and not the morass it ended up as.)

Far from invading to extend revolution in Afghanistan, in fact the Soviet revisionists and the new Karmal regime put a brake on reforms in Afghanistan. In fact, Moscow had never really favored the Khalq reform program. Despite its words, it wasn't that it opposed Khalq's methods, but that it wasn't really eager for pushing forward the social reforms. Its plan was instead for working hand-in-hand with the conservative elements in Afghanistan. So the Soviet occupation authorities and the new Karmal regime tried to woo many of the traditional elements into an alliance. The new Karmal regime made an honored place for those Islamic mullahs who were willing to support it. It retreated on women's rights. Its goal was a coalition with bourgeois and tribal interests, but dominated by the PDPA.

But despite scattered victories here and there, Moscow did not achieve much success with this attempt. By adding to local grievances the inflammatory factors of a foreign invasion and a puppet regime, it added new fuel to revolt against the PDPA rulers. Mass opposition mounted. And it may be noted that Moscow waged its war on the Afghan people with great cruelty. This did not endear the masses to its side.

Meanwhile, after the Soviet invasion, the other

outside powers also stepped up their activity. Afghanistan became the CIA's No. 1 project, funded by \$600 million yearly. The Saudis added additional funds. So did Pakistan, China, the European imperialists and others.

Moscow's war did not go well. The revisionists ended up giving up most of the countryside and holding on only to the towns. And the war dragged on, year after year.

Meanwhile, support from the CIA and Saudi and Pakistani reaction ensured that the most reactionary, barbaric, and right-wing sectors emerged as the dominant force in the resistance. This includes the "traditionalists" (i.e., the forces connected to the old ruling elite under both the monarchy and Daud's republic) and also the Islamic fundamentalists. They have an uneasy alliance among themselves. Now, with the planned withdrawal of Russian forces, more and more splits and fights are breaking out among the mujahedeen groups.

Immediate Prospects

Now Moscow has agreed to withdraw. In effect, this is an admission of defeat. Without Russian support, the Kabul regime (now headed by Dr. Najibullah, the secret police chief who succeeded Karmal a few years ago) will probably not last very long.

Since both the U.S. and Soviet Union plan to keep arming their clients, the future prospects with the Soviet withdrawal appear to be bleak. More bloodshed and strife are in store.

It is not clear what force, or combination of forces, will eventually come to the top. Or how much more bloodshed there will be. The PDPA regime turned out to be a mess for the Afghan people, but victory for the mujahedeen forces -- of whatever faction -- will not mean any progress for Afghanistan either. It will be yet another plague over Afghanistan. The mujahedeen are not known to be democrats, they will be out for revenge, and they have vowed to turn the clock back on such things as women's rights and education. The revisionist chieftains will probably find easy exile abroad. But those who benefited to this or that extent from the regime's reforms, such as some Afghan women, will face a trying time in the future Afghanistan.

Unfortunately, at present there doesn't seem to be any progressive Afghani force which is strong enough to rally the masses against the various warring factions of oppressors. The working class is too small and lacks an independent voice, and there is still no revolutionary movement among the peasants. There is no radical current among the toilers which can function as an influential left

revolutionary alternative. (However, some remnants of the old radical left currents may still be active in parts of the interior of Afghanistan and in the urban underground.)

* * *

So the situation is still bleak for the Afghan toilers. This is Afghanistan's tragedy. Entering into the modern era only recently, the social forces that could move the country forward were either too weak or managed to turn the idea of democratic advance into a fiasco. This eventually strengthened the hands of the traditional exploiters and conservatives. As well, no small responsibility for this lies on Soviet revisionism which gained influence over much of the Afghan left. And shame on U.S. imperialism which has poured in billions of dollars to turn the clock back in this poor coun-

try.

Notes:

(1) Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was president of Pakistan in the mid-70's. He was widely praised by many reformists worldwide as a progressive hero, and the Chinese leaders in the time of Mao also liked him. He himself paraded as a socialist and people's politician. But in reality he had a long record of reactionary activity. At the same time as he was supporting Islamic fundamentalists from Afghanistan, he was conducting a vicious war of national oppression against the Baluchi people in the west of Pakistan. In 1971, he had vigorously supported the Pakistani military's brutal war against East Bengal, which seceded to form Bangladesh. <>

WHY WE SUPPORT THE PALESTINIAN REVOLUTION

by the CAMPAIGN AGAINST APARTHEID, Berkeley, California

From a recent (undated) leaflet of the Campaign Against Apartheid, an organization of progressive students at the Berkeley campus of the University of California. The article "Defenders of Israel try to sidetrack anti-apartheid struggle" (the **Workers' Advocate**, May 1) refers to this article and reports on the struggle at Berkeley over whether the anti-apartheid activists should support the Palestinians.

The Campaign Against Apartheid supports the Palestinian liberation struggle. The purpose of this leaflet is to set forth our pro-Palestinian position, and to explain why we as an anti-apartheid organization feel the necessity to take this stand.

Our position on the Palestine question is based on the following four elements. The first element is support for the creation of a democratic, secular state in all of Palestine. The second point is support for the right of every Palestinian exile to return to Palestine. The third point is opposition to all forms of zionism, as a racist and imperialist ideology. The final point is full support for the Palestinian revolution.

We call on everyone to take the stand outlined above. But, as anti-apartheid activists, we feel particularly obligated to take this position, because of the basic similarity of Israeli and South African society, and because of the close ties between the Israeli and South African regimes.

* * *

We support the creation of a democratic, secular state in Palestine. This is the platform of the Palestinian revolution. This position recognizes the presence of three million Jewish Israelis in Palestine, and demands equal rights for all residents of the country. This state must ultimately cover all of Palestine. That this position is controversial on the American Left is a measure of the backwardness of much of our movement on this issue. Israel is neither democratic nor secular. Like South Africa, Israel is a racist, settler-colonial state.

The South African regime apportions political and economic rights to its citizens according to a hierarchy of race; similarly, Israel apportions political and economic rights according to race and religion. Jews in Israel have the right of political organization, and some freedom of speech and assembly. For Palestinians the situation is different. Palestinians who live inside the "Green Line", the pre-1967 border of Israel, can vote but have no right to political organization. Israel is a Jewish state, and bans by law the organization of any po-

litical party which opposes its nature as such. This law is not enforced against some progressive Jewish organizations, but it is used to block the organization of any Palestinian political party. "Green Liners", like Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, are banned from contact with exiled Palestinian organizations. They are even forbidden to possess the Palestinian flag.

92% of the land in Israel is under what is known in America as "racially restrictive covenant"; by law, only those with four generations of Maternal Jewish ancestry may buy or rent it. Government social expenditures per capita are four times higher for Jews than for non-Jews. The overwhelming majority of Arab Israeli citizens are in the poorest part of the working class, as are most non-white Jews.

As bad as the situation inside the Green Line is, the situation of Palestinians in the part of Palestine occupied in 1967 is much worse. The West Bank (of the Jordan River), East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip, with the Golan Heights (Syrian territory also occupied in 1967), make up the areas known as the "Occupied Territories". The Israeli state itself refers to its occupation methods as the "Iron Fist Policy".

All forms of communication and education in the Territories are under extreme repression. Palestinian universities are regularly assaulted by Israeli troops, and are routinely shut down by the army, sometimes for months at a time. Hundreds of books are banned in the Territories, and the Palestinian news media is under intense military censorship. The leading Palestinian source of information about Palestine, the Palestine Press Service, was shut down for six months, starting in late March 1988.

All political activity is forbidden to Palestinians in the Territories. Local elections were held once under Israeli occupation, but when anti-Israeli leaders were elected, they were removed from office by the military authorities. Several mayors were the victims of assassination attempts by death squads made up of Israeli Army officers and settlers. Local officials are now appointed by the Israeli Army. Trade union organization in the territories must be carried out underground. Any expression of Palestinian identity in the territories is regarded as a political crime. Palestinians in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip, like those in Israel, are legally banned from flying their own flag or having contact with the exiled Palestinian organizations. Many Palestinians have been arrested for merely wearing the colors of the Palestinian flag.

In the Territories, Palestinians may be arrested and held without charge for renewable, six-month periods. If military authorities do make charges

against a Palestinian, the defendant is forbidden access to the prosecution's evidence, making legal defense practically impossible. Hundreds of Palestinians have been deported, including mayors, university professors, and labor leaders. Most detainees are tortured. Israeli Army occupiers are so skilled at torture that they have been used to teach their techniques to the notorious Guatemalan Army. A former Israeli intelligence agent has said that nearly all convictions in the military courts are based on confessions under torture.

The West Bank, and especially the Gaza Strip, are grossly overpopulated, because about 1 million refugees from the Zionist massacres of 1948 and their children live there along with the pre-1948 population. Arab residents of the Occupied Territories are allowed to work at menial jobs in Israel, but may not move there or even sleep in Jewish areas. In the West Bank, the overpopulation is compounded by the fact that 52% of the land has been confiscated for Israeli "settlements" and military bases. The population of the West Bank has tripled since 1948, while the amount of land available to support the population has decreased by 52%. To make matters worse, since 1967 Jewish settlements using modern irrigation techniques and confiscation of water for use in Israel have lowered the water table, but only "settlers" and the military have been allowed to dig new wells or deepen old ones, so agriculture is more difficult in the West Bank than it was before 1967. Conditions are even worse in the Gaza Strip, where 600,000 people live in an area of 135 square miles. Gaza's infant mortality rate is 8 times higher than Israel's. Rev. Alan Boesak, leader of the South African United Democratic Front, has called Gaza "worse than Soweto".

* * *

We support the right of all Palestinians to live in Palestine. Israel refuses to 2.5 million Palestinians even the right to be in Palestine. Although the current uprising in Palestine has focused attention on the Palestinians living under occupation, 58% of Palestinians are in exile.

The exiles left Palestine in two waves. The first wave consists of those who fled the massacres by Zionist forces at the founding of Israel in 1948; the second wave of refugees fled in 1967 from the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem; many of these were already 1948 refugees. The largest group of Palestinian exiles live across the river from Palestine, in Jordan, where they are the majority of the population. Jordan is ruled by King Hussein, a stooge of U.S. interests and long-time enemy of the Palestinian cause. Many more, who are citizens of no coun-

try, live in Lebanon and other Arab countries. Thousands live in the United States and other western countries. The refugees are not allowed into Palestine.

* * *

The third point of our position is opposition to all forms of zionism. Zionism is a movement with a specific program, support for Israel as a Jewish state. It should not be confused with mere support for the right of Jews now living in Palestine to remain there.

The zionist support for a Jewish state on Arab territory is premised on the belief that a third world people do not have the right to sovereignty, or even residence, in their homeland. It is instructive that the other country considered by early zionists for the Jewish state was Uganda. Zionism is an ideology of White European racists; although the majority of Israeli Jews today are of Arab, Persian, and Turkish descent, Israel was founded by Europeans and the Israeli elite is exclusively White. Zionism originated in Europe, and had nothing to do with conditions in the Middle East. The zionist attitude toward non-white people is best expressed in the early zionist slogan "A land without people for a people without land." Certainly the early zionists were not so ignorant that they did not know that Palestine was populated. When Israel was founded, Christian and Muslim Palestinians outnumbered Jews, including Jewish Palestinians, in Palestine by 1.4 million to 600,000, and today Palestinians outnumber Israeli Jews by 5 million to 3 million. The true meaning of the zionist slogan was that the population of Palestine, as Arabs, were not "people." More recently, former Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin has stated his opinion that Arabs are "two-legged beats of prey." Even the United Nations, which created Israel, is now forced to recognize zionism as a racist ideology.

A Jewish state built on Arab land can not be a democratic, secular state. A state ruled by White Europeans in a conquered Middle Eastern land is a racist state. For these reasons we oppose all forms of zionism, whether Labor, Revisionist, Kahanist or any other zionism.

Anti-racists must recognize that the historic relationship of Israelis to Palestinians is the same as that of South African Whites to South African Blacks, or that of American Whites to American Indians. It is the relationship of settler colonists to the indigenous population of the land. Israel was built by the eradication of Palestinian society. In the words of Moshe Dayan, Israel's most revered military hero: "There is not one single place built in this country that did not have

a former Arab population."

* * *

In light of the similarity of the Israeli and South African societies, it is not surprising that there are close ties between the regimes ruling the two countries. There is another reason for this cooperation; in South Africa (as in Latin America), Israel is a proxy of the U.S., doing the dirty work of imperialism when it is politically difficult for the U.S. to do so directly.

Israel, one of South Africa's largest trading partners, is now South Africa's only substantial foreign source of arms. Israeli weapons sales to South Africa were estimated several years ago by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute at \$800 million per year. According to Israeli political scientist Aaron Klieman, South Africa buys 35% of Israeli arms exports. Israel has pledged to reduce arms exports to South Africa, but since the trade is highly secretive, such a reduction will be difficult [to] verify.

In 1976, after years of military collaboration, Israel and South Africa set up a "Ministerial Joint Committee" of their Defense Ministers in order to facilitate this cooperation. The agreement called for the provision by Israel to South Africa of arms and expertise in "three major areas: conventional arms trade, nuclear collaboration and counter-insurgency." Israel has lived up to this agreement in all three areas mentioned.

In the area of conventional arms trade, Israel has sold South Africa patrol boats, conventional missiles, self-propelled howitzers, antitank missiles, air-to-air missiles, submachine guns, and radar and other surveillance equipment. A jointly-owned arms company builds military helicopters in factories in South Africa and Israel. Israel has provided howitzers that it was unable to produce in Israel because of agreements with the U.S. Many Israeli military advisors work with the South African military and intelligence services. South Africa uses an Israeli-built electric fence along the border between Angola and Namibia to prevent the Namibian freedom fighters of SWAPO from crossing the border to fight the South African army in Namibia. Israeli weapons have also been used by South Africa to invade Angola several times, and to attack Mozambique and Zambia.

The most frightening area of military cooperation between Israel and South Africa is nuclear collaboration. Revelations by Israeli defector Mordechai Vanunu about the extent of Israel's nuclear weapons capability were, typically, totally suppressed in the American press until Israeli agents created an international incident by apparently kidnapping Vanunu in Britain and bringing him to

Israel via Italy. What was never revealed in the American press was the identity of Israel's main partner in nuclear weapons development -- South Africa. South Africa and Israel bring to this collaboration complementary advantages. Israel has nuclear scientists with the necessary knowledge; South Africa has vast supplies of uranium. The collaboration is thought to have begun in the 1960's. In 1979, an event was detected by satellites and seismographs that the C.I.A. concluded was a joint Israeli-South African nuclear test.

Military ties are the most important, but not the only, ties between the Israeli and South African regimes. Israel has a great deal of trade with South Africa, and large investments in the South African economy.

Israel does a lucrative trade in importing semi-finished materials, especially diamonds, from South Africa, finishing them, labeling them "Made in Israel", and exporting them to the west. Thus, South Africa takes advantage of Israel's favorable-trade treatment by the U.S. and the E.E.C. [European Economic Community or Common Market] Israel markets about \$500 million per year worth of South African diamonds.

The erstwhile socialists of Israel's Histadrut labor federation, a mainstay of Israeli Labor Party support, have extensive business holdings in South Africa. These holdings are mainly in agriculture and in the high technology computer and commun-

ications industries that are critical to the apartheid regime's repressive power. In a twist on the usual bogus "disinvestment" ploy whereby American companies leave South Africa but set up companies owned by white South Africans to sell their products in South Africa, Motorola stopped selling radios directly to the South African police. Its Israeli subsidiary has taken over this trade, under a distribution contract with a Histadrut-owned South African company.

* * *

The final point of our position on Palestine is full support for the Palestinian revolution. Just as we support the revolution against apartheid, we support the revolution against zionism. The conditions under which the Palestinians live, in exile and under occupation, leave them no alternative but to organize to overthrow zionism. Only revolution can liberate Palestine and create a democratic, secular state there.

* * *

The Campaign Against Apartheid is dedicated to fighting the apartheid regime, which is both very similar to the zionist state and closely tied to it. We call on all people to take a stand against zionism and in favor of Palestinian revolution. <>

ON THE CONDITIONS FACING HAITIAN REFUGEES IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

In January 1988, an activist from Chicago toured Haitian refugee camps in the Dominican Republic. The following report is based on an interview with the comrade in late February.

Haitians that crossed into the Dominican Republic fleeing the Duvalier dictatorship or the present *dislocation* and "Duvalierism without Duvalier" are considered illegal aliens and are forced into squalid refugee camps where they serve as a semi-slave labor force to cut sugar cane. People disappear into the bateys, and their families in Haiti may never hear from them again. They are restricted to these camps, and some have been there for generations.

The Dominican government is running an intense racist campaign against Haitians. In addition to the recent hysteria about Haitians lining up on

the border to swarm into the Dominican Republic, there is Balaguer's (President of the Dominican Republic) race theory. He has a book out whose main idea is that "Haitians are ruining Dominican culture."

In 1985 the sugar companies funded a census and study of these camps. Its results can be found in the book **El Batey**, which is considered a good reference. The word "batey" comes from the Indian word for neighborhood and was the original word for slave camps of the sugar plantation owners. The bateys are camps or neighborhoods connected to a large sugar enterprise. There is a

large sugar plantation and a large sugar mill associated with each large sugar enterprise. The Haitian refugees are something of a semi-slave caste. They cut cane, but are not allowed to have other jobs. Sometimes they manage to get jobs in the sugar mills or other factories, but when it's harvest time the government will grab Haitians out of the factories and throw them into the batey to cut cane.

The **Batey** census said there were 160,000 Haitians living in these camps in 1985. There are certainly more now because of the political situation in Haiti. Many of the companies that own the sugar mills are state-owned. One of the mills visited was owned by Gulf and Western.

She visited about seven sugar companies and many neighborhoods. These were in the west and south of the Dominican Republic. These included the bateys of Ingenio Rio Haina; La Ramana-- where a sugar mill is located and where the Dominican army is occupying the batey to keep order; and batey Enrique.

Each batey or neighborhood has a security force, which rides horses and wakes people at 4 or 5 a.m. to make sure everybody works.

The refugees live in shacks, and only one batey had running water. One had electricity, but no water; one has to go to the river to get water. There is never indoor plumbing. There are outhouses in some bateys, but not all of them. Note that the outhouses are built above ground so rain will wash out waste. And so there is "black water" -- rivers of mud and shit.

Lighter-skinned Haitians can work sometimes in sugar mills; others are forced to cut cane. There is cheating on wages: for example, letting the

cane dry before weighing (payment is by amount harvested). Or, since most Haitians are illiterate, the boss just writes down the wrong amount. And there are company stores. The average wage is less than \$1/day, sometimes lower, while the maximum is \$1.50/day. This is for a workday of 14 hours of cutting cane. And the Haitians must provide their own transportation (when sugar prices were high, transportation was provided for them). In order for a family to get by, even 12-year-olds cut cane.

On the radio it would be announced that Haitians were being taken out of some workplace. The trade unions would denounce it. But no demonstrations take place. And if the Haitians protest, the Army will come in and shoot them.

One mill has a union. It is tolerated only at Ingenio Rio Haina. It is more like a workers' council and is not connected to other unions. It is hard for it to spread since the Haitians can't leave their bateys. An atmosphere of terror exists. When members are asked what will happen if they strike, they reply "we'd all be killed". There are a lot of disappearances of Haitians. No one knows their fate, whether they are sent to other bateys or just killed.

In January, two Haitians were killed trying to organize a sugar cane workers' union at La Ramana, some time after the comrade had visited this batey. The organizers were found dead by the side of the road.

But despite everything, ferment continues and develops. Attempts to organize unions continue. And youth, hungry for knowledge, were excited with the materials brought them by the comrade.<>

**PRISONER CORRESPONDENCE:
DOWN WITH THE INTERFERENCE
IN THE DEFENSE OF PRISON ACTIVIST ALBERTO ARANDA**

Comrade Alberto Aranda is one of the leaders of Prisoners United for Revolutionary Education. After a joint action by various prisoners, the Texas prison authorities singled him out for special punishment. Other prisoners involved were never charged with felonies and had their cases dropped. But Aranda was charged with aggravated assault by throwing liquid at a prison guard. This was reported in the July 20, 1987 issue of the **Supplement** ("Defend Prison Activist Alberto Aranda!")

This case is still dragging on. The latest news is that the local authorities are seeking to sabotage his legal defense by saddling him with an indifferent or hostile lawyer. This in-

formation has been relayed to us by another prison activist and leader of PURE, Ana Lucia Gelabert. Below we include excerpts from comrade Gelabert's letter and the documents she included with it.

April 11, 1988

Dear friends/comrades,

Our Alberto Aranda needs help, and the prisoncrats are in an all-out effort to interfere with Alberto's defense (witness both his and my typewriter temporarily confiscated). For over a week now, I have tried to get documents to you (and others):

The "Petition for Removal" describes the TDC's [Texas Department of Corrections] efforts to interfere with Alberto's defense, while Parts III and IV of the "Affidavit" describe, respectively, a state-sponsored murder and an instance of physical torture.

With revolutionary regards,

VENCEREMOS!
Ana Lucia Gelabert
PURE

[Prisoners United for Revolutionary Education]

In the United States District Court
For the Eastern District of Texas
Tyler Division

Alberto Aranda, pro se,
petitioner-defendant,
v.
The State of Texas,
respondent-plaintiff

Petition for Removal
(excerpts)

To the honorable judge of said court:

Comes now Alberto Aranda ... who has been named the defendant ... for the alleged offense of aggravated assault ... petitions this Honorable Court to remove to federal court the said criminal prosecution from the 278th District Court of the State of Texas; and in the furtherance thereof would show to this Court as follows:

I

This Court has jurisdiction under S1443...

II

Federal action in the subject matter arises under S1443(b) because the 278th Texas court has refused and continues to refuse the petitioner-defendant a well-settled constitutional right to be his own counsel. ... Further the forced-upon "defense" counsel which the 278th Court appointed and refuses to withdraw has shown complete contempt or disregard for the rights of the petitioner-defendant or the outcome of the criminal prosecution he now faces, or otherwise act in any manner even resembling the advocate for the defendant-petitioner he is supposed to be and for which he is getting paid at a premium with public funds. ...

Therefor the petitioner-defendant on March 16, 1988 filed in the 278th Court a Motion To Dismiss Counsel wherein he explained the above problems in some detail, yet the 278th Court state judge refused to hear the petitioner-defendant's plea to grant him relief, and further made it clear to the defendant that appointed counsel would not be replaced.

IV

Since the petitioner-defendant is a Ruiz Witness(*) and it can be shown that factual matters giving rise to the criminal prosecution against him in the 278th Court are tied intimately to revenge by unscrupulous TDC officials against the petitioner-defendant as a result of his being a Ruiz Witness and thereafter a prisoner rights activist, this matter is further removable ...

(*) that is, a TDC prisoner who testified against the TDC in the Ruiz v. Estelle lawsuit ... in the U.S. District Court-Houston ... and is thus entitled to the protection to which federal witnesses are entitled to when the U.S. is a party to the prosecution (like in Ruiz) or criminal indictments under U.S. law are likely to result from their testimony (like in Ruiz) ... and which protections the Ruiz Court had made yet more specific and obliging for the prisoner witnesses.

V

In addition to being denied the right to self-representation the petitioner-defendant was denied Miranda warnings and is being denied effective

relevant or even minimal pre-trial motions, or petitioning for the obviously mandatory change of venue, which certain TDC officials whose positions empower them to do so have engaged in an apparent conspiracy to sabotage his defense and his rights to access courts and counsel. ...

WHEREFORE, PREMISES CONSIDERED the petitioner-defendant prays that this Court remove criminal cause No. 14359-C from the 278th District Court of Walker County, State of Texas, and into this federal Court. ...

Respectfully submitted
/s/ alberto aranda/by ALG
ALBERTO ARANDA...

AFFIDAVIT

I, ANA LUCIA GELABERT, hereinafter called the Affiant, ... do say:

I

It is the practice of the Texas Department of Corrections (TDC) that after an inmate receives a "case" (that is, when a guard makes an oral or written report that the inmate has committed an infraction to a disciplinary rule), said case is investigated pursuant to TDC Disciplinary Rules I.B. It has been my direct experience that:

1. No Miranda or equivalent warnings of any kind against self-incrimination are ever given to the accused inmate prior to or during questioning him or her as to the particulars of the incident for which the report was made, even if it could be foreseen that the TDC might thereafter press for criminal charges before a State Court on the facts of the same incident.

2. Not only there are no Miranda warnings of any kind ever given, but TDC guards can and usually exert duress when questioning the inmate in the so-called "investigation" and that if the inmate refuses to answer to the guard's satisfaction he or she can be punished under a Code 32 violation: failing to or refusing to respond to an officer's questions.(*)

(*) As an example, Mountain View Unit's disciplinary offense No. 301666, dated December 31, 1986, by Officer K. Porter, against the affiant Ana Lucia Gelabert, for an alleged Code 32 violation: failing or refusing to respond to an officer's question, namely as reported therein:

"At approximately 5:40 pm, I asked inmate Ana Gelabert #384484 if she wanted her food tray. Inmate Gelabert ignored me. ..."

for which heinous crime the affiant was

punished by the unit disciplinary committee to not less than 90 days and possibly one year of additional imprisonment. It shouldn't be hard to figure that on an alleged fact potentially leading to State Court criminal charges, at least equal duress would be exerted.

3. Data obtained in such a manner during the "investigation" is not only never ever used to clear the inmate of the charges, but rather used to "polish" the accusation before the offense report is written, that is to distort the facts as needed to make the accusation stick no matter what.

II

If requested to do so I would gladly furnish not less than one hundred other TDC inmates who will furnish similar details of their own experience ...

III

On information and belief the same guard pressing criminal charges against the defendant Alberto Aranda in this cause, to wit, TDC Officer Peter Miles, is one and the same Peter Miles who in August 1983 orchestrated and carried out the vile assassination in cold blood of prisoner activist Johnny Edward Swift ("Companero Awali") during a "legal visit" (a meeting of two inmates for purposes of an inmate consulting some legal problems with a "writ writer", that is a prisoner who is knowledgeable about the law; but which at Mt. View and other units is instead used by the TDC to reward their "good" inmates with a free session with his (or her) homosexual lover; while legitimate legal visits with writ writers or prisoner activists are very frequently denied with or without a pretext).

The Swift murder was carried out by convicted murderer and death row prisoner Demouchette, who later on even bragged to the local press about his part in carrying out the actual killing ("The Meanest Man On Death Row," The Magazine, The Houston Post, June 28, 1987 or thereabouts).

It should be pointed out that before a legal visit the guard(s) in charge are required to thoroughly search both inmates and their legal materials, for which they are equipped with sensitive metal detectors and the authority to conduct thorough searches. Especially with an inmate as cynical and who likes to brag about his "deeds" as Demouchette, such a search is mandatory. And that from my own experiences, there is absolutely no way in which the Swift killing could have been done at that time without the explicit and full complicity of Officer Peter Miles, who was in charge of overseeing the legal visit.

That is the same Peter Miles who now accuses prisoner civil rights activist Alberto Aranda of a criminal offense.

IV

Of my own knowledge and belief, some TDC guards, with full knowledge of their superiors systemwide, make use of handcuffs to inflict physical pain upon prisoners, or certain prisoners, and often for no reason at all and with no provocation at all. That is, that handcuffs are not used as a means to restrain prisoners, but as one more means to cause physical and psychological pain and degrading treatment.

Witness the following incident:

On May 18, 1987, I, the affiant, was in solitary confinement in Cell #20 of the Administrative Segregation eastern wing at Mt. View Unit, Gatesville, Texas. Shortly after lunch time (which I had been denied for no reason) several officers came to my cell and asked me to come to the door. I refused to come to the door but offered no resistance of any kind, simply lying on my bed. Several officers came into my cell, one of them hitting me with a plastic shield on my face while others held me, handcuffed me with "twisted" cuffs (to inflict pain by making the cuff's edges cut into the person's skin) and leg irons, wrapped me inside my blanket, then dumped me on the shower room floor, where two male officers kept me fully pressed on the floor with their body weights, my legs fully stretched painfully with my left leg under my chest and one guard pressing my face against the tile floor. I remained in that position, with guards pressing on me, for not less than thirty minutes and possibly up to an hour. I had lost the bra piece in my cell during the handcuffing and was thus nude, wearing only panties, no bra or even socks. Whenever I tried to ease myself from the uncomfortable position, or reposition myself, the two male guards on top of me would press in a heavier manner, one spreading my legs further, and the other my face against the floor, both pressing their body weights against mine. Finally I was wrapped again in the same blanket and dumped on the bunk in my bed, by now stripped of all furnishings (except the blanket used to transport me. Notice that the Mt. View Unit has at least six stretchers and/or wheel chairs, yet prefer to use blankets to transport certain prisoners.)

I remained in my cell half conscious, in a state of shock. Sometime after I felt again I was handcuffed and leg cuffed, wrapped again in the blanket and dumped again on the floor of the shower room. Again I offered no resistance (nor could I have had in the physical condition and

state of shock in which I was). I was lying face down and felt very cold (though it was mid-May), the double or triple twisted handcuffs made the pain excruciating; I was facing down, on the blanket, but if I tried to turn over, face up or to a side, the pain was even worse. Outside in the hallway I could hear guards laughing at my contortions. I remained in that position for over one hour, and possibly two hours. ... [There was a description of the number of guards present, including a nurse who took the affiant's pulse while the two male guards remained on top of her and her face remained pressed against the floor.] ... Dr. Bailey (who shortly thereafter quit his post at TDC) ... was who insisted that an ambulance be called and I was taken to the Gatesville Hospital.

The ambulance came but I was not taken to any hospital. I was wrapped again in the blanket (yes, the unit still had several modern aluminum stretchers), through the hallways, and out of the building through the old infirmary. Except that the ambulance attendant refused to "load" me into his ambulance wrapped in the blanket (where I could die of asphyxiation if I was still alive). And apparently that act by the ambulance attendant "fouled up" the disappearance: because right there and at that time ... were some prisoners who after supper stand in line to wait for their prescription medicines; and some of them saw my face as I was "unwrapped" and recognized me; on information, some even reported ... that I was dead. Thus I was unwrapped and placed on the ambulance stretcher, still with the handcuffs double or triple twisted and with leg irons, and later dumped into an isolated cell in another unit (Gatesville Reception).

There I received no medical attention whatsoever (yes, a doctor saw me, but just advised me to next time be more careful in the showers; despite the fact that I was covered with cuts and bruises from head to toe and in such a state of shock that I couldn't even talk coherently).

Those are the same "civil servants" who now press criminal charges against civil rights activist Alberto Aranda.

V

On information and belief a change of venue is mandated at least out of the Walker County, Huntsville, Texas, "the home town" of the TDC, and if possible to a federal court ... because of the inherent civil rights violation against the defendant Alberto Aranda or his vulnerable condition within the TDC as a Ruiz Witness. ...

ANA LUCIA GELABERT, affiant<>

**CORRESPONDENCE ON THE LITERARY DEBATE:
ANONYMOUS LETTER**

March 16, 1988

Dear Editor,

I have been following the "literary debate" with close attention since it began last August. With your permission, I would like to register the following opinions. I also have some question concerning the stand of the Party on this matter.

In your February 20th, 1988 "Comment by the Supplement", you state on page 14,

"We would be happy to see them once again take their stand side-by-side with the other comrades in revolutionary struggle. But time has shown that no real unity can be developed without addressing the serious ideological differences. In this case these differences have been expressed sharply in the literary debate but they concern whether to uphold an independent communist stand in all activity." (underlining added [by "loyal reader"])

It strikes me as absurd that the stand one takes on the "question of literature" or in point of act, a debate over the editorial policy of Tim Hall, editor of **Struggle** magazine can be considered as the dividing line between support for revolutionary politics in general or opposition to revolutionary politics in general. Do you really mean to say that whether one is in the camp of what amounts to liquidationism is determined by one's stand on the "literary debate"?

If such a severe stand must be taken, then one must ask the questions, when and where are the documents the MLP has produced which flesh out in detail its line on literature? In other such watershed or vexed issues facing the revolutionary movement, the Marxist-Leninist party took up serious study and produced important documents for all to see. However, on this question an extensive "debate", in which the dividing line between Marxism-Leninism and liquidationism is declared to exist, has ensued without any historical elaboration of the line of the Marxist-Leninist Party.

This raises a related point. I don't believe that in fact, the Marxist-Leninist Party has had a line on literature which is scientific enough to allow for its's veracity to be raised to the level of Marxist-Leninist theory. It seems to me that a question which is as complex and arouses such passion as one's view of differing forms of litera-

ture should be handled with care and with scientifically researched opinions. This has not happened, yet in this case the Marxist-Leninist Party has declared the "literary debate" to be a current dividing line between revolutionary politics and liquidationism.

Please extend to me the courtesy of one more observation on the matter. I have always respected the Marxist-Leninist Party because of the scientific theoretical approach it took to the problems of revolution. This was always a hallmark of the Marxist-Leninist Party. After watching and participating in this "literary debate" I must say it is extremely disheartening to see the non-scientific argumentation utilized by the editor of the **Workers' Advocate Supplement** and by the member of the Central Committee being equated with Marxist-Leninist truth. Shame on the **Workers' Advocate Supplement** and its editor for allowing this so-called debate to develop as it has.

Comradely yours,
A loyal reader<>

Comment by the Supplement:

This letter had no name or return address. Up to now, we have usually only received anonymous letters of the type "Go back to Russia, you commie bastard". But now "loyal reader", who is upset with our method of allowing all comrades to see the differing views by bringing the literary debate into the press, has decided that the anonymous letter is the proper method for resolving ideological questions.

We are not fond of the idea of printing anonymous letters. We receive letters on serious issues and with serious assertions about events. It is important to know who takes responsibility for such views and assertions before printing them. (Of course, we often omit or abbreviate the names when publishing letters.) But since this letter from "loyal reader" rather faithfully reflects the views of various of the discontented comrades, this time we will print a anonymous letter.

"Loyal reader" is dismayed by our articles on the literary debate and accuses us of non-scientific argumentation. Since "loyal reader" gives no examples of what's wrong with our views on literature, we of course are hard put to defend our argumentation or to provide the additional documentation that "loyal reader" craves.

Moreover, "loyal reader's" complaint seems rather odd to us. The literary debate began with the **Draft Letter** of criticism from the discontented on the occasion of the first issue of **Struggle** in 1985. For two years it was carried on in small circles and with gossip. Yet now, when the **Supplement** publishes materials for all to see, there are complaints of a lack of "documentation". It seems to us that this is just the latest catch phrase for the complaint that the literary debate shouldn't have been brought out in the open. The actual complaint is not the lack of documentation, but its existence. The real complaint is not that we are departing from our past methods of dealing with questions of revolutionary theory and orientation, but that we are upholding them.

In our opinion, when "loyal reader" complains about our views, and even wants us to be ashamed of our views, without telling us what is wrong, this is an example of the peek-a-boo method which has been used repeatedly by the discontented comrades in the literary debate. The **Struggle** editorial and orientation was supposedly wrong. But when one inquires concerning a series of issues raised by the discontented, one is likely to receive only the reply that there are "no easy answers", etc.

Instead of preparing worked-out views and presenting them, the discontented have denigrated the relevance of Marxism-Leninism for literature. "Loyal reader", for example, thinks that our Party does not have

"a line on literature which is scientific enough to allow for it's veracity to be raised to the level of Marxist-Leninist theory."

Well, the literary debate deals with such questions as whether literature is one of the key ideological forms or is something that lives in a purified and refined atmosphere beyond such crass considerations as classes and ideology. It concerns basic questions of materialist theory.

Marx and Engels dealt with such basic issues right from the start of their revolutionary activity. And our Party, and its predecessors, have been dealing with literary and cultural questions right from the beginning. After all, we owe our origin to the revolutionary upsurge of the 1960's, and ideological issues were quite sharp in the 1960's. We have certainly refined our views on all questions, political as well as literary, over the years. But we would have learned nothing if we had taken the line that the world was a mystery, rather than plunging into the class struggle and the revolutionary movement. Perhaps there are some people who are ashamed of the ardent revolutionary strivings of the early years because the analysis wasn't as advanced as now. But we, on

the contrary, are proud of this revolutionary activity and draw valuable lessons from it. We have a Marxist-Leninist orientation on literature, it has been refined over the years, and it will be refined further through the course of revolutionary literary work.

It seems to us a little late to declare that no one knows anything and the class struggle had better wait until someone develops sufficient "documentation". What type of orientation is this to give to the revolutionary writers and activists who contribute to **Struggle**? It would mean that they should simply sit on their hands and wait. It would mean ending the publication of **Struggle** and abandoning the work to build up a revolutionary literary current. And since it is unlikely that the bourgeois cultural trends and the bourgeois magazines and universities will consent to similarly suspend their work, it would mean, in practice, capitulating to bourgeois literature and culture.

"Loyal reader" says that various articles have been "equated with Marxist-Leninist truth". This seems to be simply another way of complaining that we have a view on the subject. Or can "loyal reader" really be worried whether our other readers think for themselves? In our opinion, it is precisely those who are actively involved in revolutionary work and who depend on the accuracy of the revolutionary theory to guide their work, who have the greatest incentive to think for themselves and the greatest possibility of throwing off the fashionable prejudices of present-day society.

In any case, we declared at the start that the articles by "a member of the Central Committee" were not "Party directives" or even "editorials" but instead expressed "the views of one member of the Central Committee on the literary debate that has been forced on the Party" (**Supplement**, 20 August 1987, page 6)

It seems to us that "loyal reader" is reproducing a view among many of the discontented that criticism and ideological clarification is impermissible. We are supposed to have entered the realm where nothing is definite, and only the narrowness of those who still have firm convictions can be criticized.

In fact, "Loyal reader" seems to find something wrong in that various contributors to the **Supplement**, including contributors of discussion articles such as "a member of the Central Committee", regard themselves as seeking to present the "Marxist-Leninist truth". This puzzles us. What should be in a proletarian journal except the "Marxist-Leninist truth"?

It takes hard work to produce revolutionary literature and distribute it among the masses. One

doesn't get a career and the applause of society, but instead pours one's life blood into the enterprise. And in return for this sacrifice, one gets the scorn of society, is labelled a "true believer", or may even be thrown into jail. There has to be a good reason to do this.

The reason is that the leaflets, newspaper, supplements, and magazines of the Party take the "Marxist-Leninist truth" to the working masses. This truth is needed to orient the mass struggle, to organize the proletariat, and to provide ideological clarity. The work to organize the masses, to spread the Marxist ideology, and to develop the revolution is the only path to liberation. It is the only path to develop the true potential of the oppressed masses and of individual activists.

And now we are told to be embarrassed over the idea that the Marxist theory exists and is our guide? We are told to be ashamed that we hold definite convictions? We are told to be sorry that we don't just scratch our heads and let the world go by without striving to change it, to transform it, to bring forth a socialist revolution?

We are sorry to say this, but we believe that "loyal reader" has fallen into a liquidationist mood. In this mood, active revolutionary work is step by step replaced by turning up one's nose at Marxism-Leninism and at Party-building and at those who still have the passionate beliefs needed to engage in revolutionary work.

But "loyal reader" is upset over the issue of liquidationism being raised. The issues "loyal reader" raises have been explained in previous articles, but let's go through it again anyway.

(1) We do not think that revolutionary virtue is measured by how much one likes **Struggle**. Party members, for example, are not even required to take an interest in this local literary magazine.

(2) We never said that literary questions were the dividing line between liquidationism and Marxism-Leninism. Nor do we believe that all literary differences are worrisome. Right from the start, we have pointed out that certain types of literary differences and controversies are natural and inevitable. We cited approvingly, from **Struggle's** Editorial Policy, the statement that

"inside the general trend of revolutionary cultural and artistic work, and among communist activists linked with the working class, there are different views on certain cultural and artistic questions and different methods of ap-

proach."

We did, however, point out that certain ideas concerning literature were liquidationist ideas. We believe that placing literature above ideology, opposing the materialist standpoint towards literature, and denying the existence of a materialist or Marxist standpoint on literature are liquidationist ideas.

(3) Furthermore the authors of the **Draft Letter** did not only express what we consider to be liquidationist ideas on literature. They also expressed ideas concerning political issues in the **Draft Letter**. These ideas went against maintaining an independent communist stand. It seems to us that these ideas go hand-in-hand with the demoralization of these comrades and their abandonment of revolutionary work.

This is what was expressed by the very quotation cited by "loyal reader". It pointed out that the differences that had started out as literary issues turned out in practice to also concern

"whether to uphold an independent communist stand in all activity."

(4) We have repeatedly stressed that the expression of liquidationist views on literature is not a dread disease. We would be quite happy if the discontented comrades became active again in the struggle against the bourgeoisie. We would welcome it if they took up their places again side-by-side with other comrades in the class struggle. And we do not believe that the existence of literary differences, in itself, need prevent common action against the bourgeoisie.

But we believe that ideological differences cannot be swept under the rug. They must be addressed. And at present it is not true that the differences only concern literature. This is verified by the fact that it is the discontented comrades themselves who have abandoned revolutionary work -- they weren't driven out by some dividing line concocted in the **Supplement**. <>

Coming in a future issue:

Since we received the anonymous letter, we have also received a far longer letter from another of the discontented comrades, in part elaborating essentially the same points. But we did not have the time or space in this issue to deal with it. We will publish this letter and related materials in a coming issue. <>

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH THE NICARAGUAN WORKERS' MOVEMENT

Continued from the front page

The CIA and contra mouthpiece, **La Prensa**, publishes again on government-supplied paper. And if the Sandinistas obtain a deal with the contras, it will mean further privileges to the right-wing and restrictions of the toilers.

Meanwhile, while the Sandinistas haggle over what rights to restore to the reactionaries, the revolutionary workers see their leaders beaten; their radio voice intermittently silenced; their strikes set upon with thugs and police.

And meanwhile, due to the Sandinista enforcement of exploitation in the name of the revolution, the right-wing forces are attempting to exploit the workers' struggles for their own reactionary ends. They are helped in this by the leaders of the pro-Soviet Socialist and Communist Parties that control the construction workers' and the auto mechanics' unions respectively. These revisionist parties have joined the right-wing bloc of 14 opposition parties that is led by the U.S.-backed pro-contra forces.

However, the presence of these filthy revisionists in the workers' strikes does not mean that the workers' demands are not legitimate and just. Nor does it justify the tactics of the Sandinista officials, who have resorted to thuggery against the workers' movement as a whole. Such tactics can only create a further opening for the right-wing and revisionists to exploit.

We vigorously protest the thuggery being unleashed against the left-wing Marxist-Leninist organizations of the workers. The Marxist-Leninist Party and its Workers Front trade union organization militantly champion the workers' demands and defend their revolutionary aims. They are the only force that stands up to both the repression of

the Sandinista bureaucracy and to the efforts of the right-wing and revisionist bloc to manipulate the workers' struggles.

We denounce the assault on comrade Tellez and the repression against the Marxist-Leninist Party, the Workers Front, **Radio El Pueblo**, and the Nicaraguan workers' movement. The Nicaraguan workers' movement showed its strength in the revolution that toppled Somoza, the hated dictator and U.S. puppet. It has been a pillar of resistance to the CIA's contras and the internal counterrevolution. Ultimately it is the pivotal force in the sharpening political struggle inside Nicaragua. Even today, in spite of the heavy handed repression, the workers' strikes and protests keep gaining strength. The hunger strike has apparently been stopped, but now there is discussion of a general strike in solidarity with the construction workers and auto mechanics who have been out on strike for over two months.

In the midst of this movement, the Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua is striving to mobilize the working class towards deepening the revolution. They stress that the workers' movement is the only force capable of challenging a Sandinista-contra agreement that sacrifices the gains of the revolution and restores the rights and positions of the overthrown big exploiters and Somocistas. They are striving to block the path of U.S. imperialist-sponsored reaction, and they seek to open the way for the revolutionary power of the workers and toilers. This will be a power that defends the working masses against the rich reactionaries. It will not send thugs and police to put down the workers' movement while giving every type of economic and political concession to the bloodstained contras and other tools of imperialism. That is why the U.S. workers and anti-imperialist activists should lend their support to the revolutionary Nicaraguan workers. <>

Nicaraguan Marxist-Leninists Declare: OUR REVOLUTIONARY SALUTE TO THE STRIKING WORKERS

From **Prensa Proletaria**, newspaper of the Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua (MAP-ML), April 1988, #32. Translated by the **Workers' Advocate** staff.

The construction workers, the workers of the auto workshops, and the other workers rising for their legitimate demands, have won the respect and

admiration of the rest of the workers' movement and of the Nicaraguan people in general. In nine years of populist government, never has such an important sector of the workers assumed such a firm and clear attitude.

We the Marxist-Leninists of Nicaragua salute this spirit of struggle of the workers. From the end of February, as an immediate reaction to the announcement of the monetary reform so haughtily

propagandized by the Sandinistas, the workers stripped bare the true nature of the governmental political economy: it's a policy that leads to more work for lower wages for the proletariat and the rest of the toilers.

Naturally, the movement of the strikers showed the enormous weaknesses of the workers' movement: it was highly spontaneous; it was not suitably organized or prepared; it lacked clear slogans; it didn't sufficiently mobilize the workers on strike, nor for that matter the rest of the workers' movement; it was very late paying attention to propagating the strike and building solidarity with it; it didn't suitably assist the workers of construction, the workshops, etc., with a single coordinated movement; and other such weaknesses.

But at the same time it showed the enormous potential of the proletariat. It really demonstrates the tenacious heroism of the toilers to sustain the strike in such hard economic conditions and with the frightful growth of inflation brought on by the consequences of the monetary reform. By necessity the worker had to bear -- together with the rest of his family, his wife, his children -- the consequences of having taken the decision to go on strike and therefore not earning wages.

This firm decision of the workers attracted the attention of the reactionary forces, especially those gathered around the group called the fourteen political parties of the opposition. These types of rightist and opportunist forces saw an opportunity to take advantage of this spirit of struggle, an opportunity to bring water to their mill.

They tried to bring the workers to Masaya [during the first week of March the right-wing and revisionist bloc organized a reactionary rally in Masaya], pretending that they supported the workers' mobilization and demands. But when for diverse reasons they could not utilize the workers as cannon fodder, they have not moved a finger to maintain the mobilization of the workers. And, with the exception of the Socialist Party [the reformist party that controls the construction workers union] they did not even bother to press the government, in the name of the national dialogue, to look for a solution to the problem.

The Marxist-Leninist Party and its trade union center, the Workers Front, continue to accompany the workers in their struggle and devote all our efforts for its successful outcome. <>

CORRESPONDENCE:

FROM THE MARXIST-LENINIST PARTY OF NICARAGUA

The following letter has been translated from the Spanish by the **Workers' Advocate** staff:

Managua
April 30, 1988

Executive Committee Comrades
Marxist-Leninist Party
United States

Receive a fraternal salute from the Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua, and take this salute to all the militants of your party.

Nicaragua is passing through a political conjuncture in which all the projections that our party has made are being realized. After the signing of the Esquipulas accords and the meeting of the Central American presidents in Alajuela, Costa

Rica, came the first meeting of the Sandinistas with the contras on Nicaraguan soil, in Sapoa, a village on the frontier with Costa Rica.

The analysis of the national situation that we presented to you during your last visit, at the beginning of March, corroborates the tendency pointed out by our Party in the sense that the process of direct negotiation with the contras has had as a characteristic the reaffirmation of the political-economic program of the Sandinista government and that what was in conflict were demands more clearly defined in favor of the bourgeoisie.

In this negotiating process, that which was in play was the future of the revolutionary process, the popular interests. And already we have been seeing this.

When you came, the strikes of the construction and auto workers was one week old. Now they

have been going on for 60 days and simultaneously a group of 35 workers have been on hunger strike for one week at the local of the CGT, the union organization of the Socialist Party.

As we have informed you, the right has tried to manipulate the strike but our presence has hindered them from completely gaining their objectives.

While the Sandinistas discuss with the contras in the Hotel Camino Real, they are suppressing the workers' movement. And not only with their famous union shock forces but also with special forces of the police.

In recent days, comrade Chilo [General Secretary of the MLP of Nicaragua and a member of the Nicaraguan National Assembly] was attacked by a gang of Sandinista unionists; a comrade in the West was assaulted with a fire arm by two soldiers; and for three days already, the police have

sealed off the local where the workers are on hunger strike.

All the interests of Sandinism is to gain a negotiation with the contras in terms "advantageous for both [sides]", as Humberto Ortega has said, chief of the government delegation that is in the negotiations. To this end, Sandinism represses the workers movement which is already the only force capable of shaking and breaking this negotiating process.

...

Finally we take leave wishing you the greatest successes in your struggles.

[signed]

Executive Secretariat
Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua<>

WHAT WE SAW IN NICARAGUA

The following eyewitness account was given at the Boston May Day meeting on April 30:

Last month, we were in Nicaragua visiting with our friends of the Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua. We talked to workers of the Party and its Workers' Front trade union center. We talked to workers and soldiers in the streets. We wanted to make an assessment of the situation, especially in light of the Arias peace plan and the cease-fire talks with the contras. This is what we would like to discuss tonight, and to get to points that people have on their minds more directly, we would like to do this mainly in the form of taking questions. However, to begin, I would like to comment on the tasks of international solidarity with the Nicaraguan revolution and on the political situation inside Nicaragua today.

The first thing is that as workers in this country we cannot accept that the U.S. government tramples on the peoples of other countries. We cannot accept that either Reagan or Congress has the right to put the squeeze on the Nicaraguan workers and peasants. But that's just what the Arias peace pact is all about. It's another means of imposing the will of the American ruling class

on the working people of Nicaragua.

A Central American Solution?

We are told that it is something else. We are told that the Arias plan is a "Central American solution". We are told that the Sandinista-contra talks represent the Nicaraguans solving their own problems. This is what we are told by Michael Dukakis, Jesse Jackson and the other Democratic Party politicians. We are even told this by the reformist bigshots in the solidarity movement.

But the problem with this is that, at the negotiating table, it is the U.S. government which is dealing the cards. They have dealt the Nicaraguan people an economic and military blockade, threats of war, and CIA-destabilization. Meanwhile, the contras bring to the table tens of millions of new contra aid just voted by Congress. They bring the support of the neighboring death squad regimes, which are armed to the teeth by the Pentagon. And when the contras needed a little extra negotiating muscle, Reagan sent down the 102nd Airborne to threaten Nicaragua with an outright invasion.

No, this isn't a Nicaraguan solution. It's a White House and Congressional solution. It's a

Pentagon and "death squad" solution. It's a means to squeeze out of Nicaragua by diplomatic means what the U.S. imperialists have failed to gain by military means alone.

Real friends of the Nicaraguan revolution won't try to sell the Arias pact as something that it isn't. Real fighters against U.S. aggression will expose it as the dirty deal that it is.

More U.S. Aggression

Some may object. Some of the reformist leaders of the solidarity movement, for example, will argue that "OK, the peace pact may be pretty bad. But it's either that or the worse alternative of even more aggression." One of the problems with this way of thinking is that the U.S. intervention to strangle Nicaragua goes on despite the peace pact. The Arias plan was signed last August. Yet the attempts to destabilize and overthrow the Nicaraguan government go on non-stop. A couple of days ago, the Reagan administration renewed and even strengthened economic sanctions against Nicaragua in its attempts to suffocate the already gasping Nicaraguan economy. Now even the Nicaraguan "Nica-coffee" imported through third countries via solidarity groups has been banned.

Last month Congress voted another \$50 million in supposedly "humanitarian" aid for the contras. These funds are keeping the contras together. And they come with the understanding that full-scale military funding will resume if the talks don't go Washington's way. There is nothing "humanitarian" about this. It's called holding a contra bayonet at the throat of the Nicaraguan people.

Revolutionary Solidarity

Then there is the other touchstone of solidarity. This is a question that cannot be separated from the struggle against U.S. intervention. And it is fundamental if we are to talk about a revolutionary or working class solidarity. This is the question of support for the workers, for the poor peasants, for all the exploited working people, and for their revolutionary movement.

So what does this mean in terms of the Arias plan?

The only thing on the negotiating table in the Arias talks is the dismantling of the revolution of the workers and poor. And along with this, the restoration of the rights and privileges of the capitalists and reactionaries.

And every concession the Sandinistas make, the contras and Elliot Abrams demand more.

We attended the March 8 Women's Day rally in

Managua. This was the day before the Sapoá talks were originally scheduled to begin. Daniel Ortega was the featured speaker. The Sandinista president swore that the talks would not reverse the agrarian reform or give the land back to the previous owners. But the agrarian reform had already slowed to a halt with the Arias plan; the government has abandoned its earlier policy of confiscating the lands of owners who leave the country to join the contras. And there are reports of behind-the-scenes negotiations for the properties previously confiscated from the contras.

The Sandinista leaders keep saying that the concessions that they are making under the peace pact are no big deal. But that's just their wishful thinking. Because the political situation inside Nicaragua is getting hotter and hotter.

The Economy

One of the hottest points is the economy.

When we were there this time, the new cordoba and the monetary reform had just been put in place. Wages under the new currency are so meager that many cannot afford to keep working. But even when the workers have some money, the shortages of basic necessities--bread, beans, rice--and everything else means that there's not much you can do with it. These days there is a lot of papaya fruit being eaten in the workers' homes; but that hardly makes up for the meat and grains that the workers need.

More and more, the workers are losing patience with the government's economic policy. In January the state of emergency was lifted. Since then, there have been a wave of strikes and protests, demanding economic relief.

The Sandinista officialdom takes an arrogant and bureaucratic attitude towards the just demands of the workers. They send in police and scabs against strikers. And they lecture the workers for being selfish in their demands. These are the same workers who have shed so much blood in the struggle against Somoza and the contras, and who have borne the brunt of the hardships of the economic blockade. This neglect of the workers' demands and the repression against the strike movement is a dangerous thing to do. It is feeding right into the hands of the counterrevolutionaries.

The right-wing forces have gotten a big boost out of the Arias plan concessions. They are pushing hard and aggressively to destabilize the regime and make a grab for power. And the rightists are making a special push to seize on the workers' grievances for their own reactionary aims.

It's quite a sight to see these overfed capitalists talking about the rights of the workers. But

the Sandinista policy is so bureaucratic and stupid that they are actually pushing a section of workers towards these reactionaries.

For example, the right-wing forces have now joined the workers' protests against the national wage tables. These wage tables discriminate against the lower-paid workers and they are hated by all the workers. They were first put into force by the Sandinistas to please the employers who wanted a means to hold wages down. Now the capitalists are cashing in twice: they are reaping the profits of the low wages, and they are trying to cash in on the workers' hatred for the government's wage scales.

Or take another, smaller, example. With the revolution there was a move to abolish tipping in restaurants as a humiliating practice. The government took the half-way measure of making tips a required part of the bill. A few months ago, in their push to create a more profitable business climate, the Sandinistas reversed this measure. They made tips optional again. This enraged the waiters and waitresses who protested and threatened a strike. The right-wing trade unions joined this protest. And so did the reactionary rag **La Prensa**. This created a strange situation. At one restaurant we were in, the waiter was complaining to us how the government had reversed this gain the workers won in the revolution. Then he pointed to **La Prensa** as a paper that allegedly defends the workers -- **La Prensa**, the CIA mouthpiece of the most reactionary enemies of the working people.

It must be stressed that only the more backward section of the workers go to the point of identifying in this way with **La Prensa**. But even important sections of the more militant and conscious workers--workers who despise the U.S. intervention and the contras--are not so clear about the role of the right-wing forces in their struggle for economic relief.

The Nicaraguan Marxist-Leninists

That's why it is so important that there is another force within the workers' movement. There is the Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua and its Workers' Front trade union center. This is the force that is posing the left-wing alternative. It poses a revolutionary working class policy against the bureaucratic and anti-worker policies of Sandinism. And it challenges the attempts of the right-wing/revisionist coalition to seize on the workers' discontent.

The MLPN and the WF don't have the benefit

of government support; their activists face firings and harassment. Nor do they have the wealthy backing and imperialist sponsors like the AFL-CIO, as the right-wing unions do. Nonetheless, they are a force to be reckoned with in almost all the large work centers in the country. And the influence of the Marxist-Leninists was felt in the big strikes last fall at the San Antonio sugar combine and at the Puerto Corinto docks.

When we were there in March, the right-wing/revisionist bloc was trying to organize rallies in support of the striking construction workers and other just demands of the workers. And in the midst of this, the right-wing was attempting to raise their reactionary and pro-imperialist politics with slogans like "Down with the commandantes!" or "Down with the Sandinista army!" The comrades of the MLPN and WF were going into these protests to struggle on two fronts: first, to encourage the strikers and the just demands of the workers; and at the same time to confront the attempts to push right-wing politics onto these struggles.

As the political struggle heats up, the Marxist-Leninists have also been sharpening their weapons. Among other things, their daily radio program has been very active as the voice of the revolutionary workers in the daily conflicts.

Another development is that the newspaper **El Pueblo** has reemerged after nearly eight years of forced silence. In the days of the 1978-79 insurrection the daily newspaper **El Pueblo** was the voice of the revolutionary toilers. During the workers' upsurge that following the overthrow of Somoza, **El Pueblo** was shut down and its equipment was confiscated, as the then coalition Sandinista-bourgeois government tried to put a lid on the workers' upheaval.

In March a pilot issue of the new **El Pueblo** was distributed widely across the country. The lifting of the censorship has created a certain opportunity. And by this month or next, the comrades hope to be publishing **El Pueblo** every week as a rallying center for the masses seeking a revolutionary, working class alternative to both bureaucratic Sandinism and the threat of the right wing.

We think such work deserves the whole-hearted sympathy and support of the workers and anti-intervention activists here in the U.S. Because it holds out the best hope of the Nicaragua working people triumphing over the CIA-sponsored counterrevolution, and of opening the doors to a socialist Nicaragua where the workers and peasants are the masters in their own house. <>

CORRESPONDENCE:
WHEN BOURGEOIS POLITICAL SHYSTERS/BLACK POLITICIANS SPEAK
OF THE NEED OF BLACK UNITY,
OF WHICH BLACK PEOPLE DO THEY SPEAK?

The first part of this article appeared in the March issue of the **Supplement**. It was sent in by Gary Donn Washington, Minister of Culture of PURE (Prisoners United for Revolutionary Education) in light of the discussion over the candidacy of Jesse Jackson for presidency.

The article began by referring to a case in 1986 when black woman officers of the Houston Police Department were convicted of brutality and assault against the prisoners in their custody, who were white women. The black bourgeoisie jumped to the defense of the black police officers.

The article discussed the role of the black bourgeoisie. It pointed out that the black officers were members of an organization with a long history of brutality and murders of black prisoners. The black officers were in the very least complicit in these crimes.

The article stated that it was certainly racism that was responsible for some justice being meted out to the black officers as punishment for brutalizing the prisoners. However, the article states, "the black masses have no class interests along with the black bourgeoisie in obtaining their "rights" to brutalize prisoners on an equal footing with their white racist counterparts. This has always been the heart and soul of black bourgeois ideology--to be equal to the imperialist class chauvinists, sexists, racists, exploiters and oppressors."

Below we conclude with excerpts from the remainder of the article:

* * *

To share equally in the imperialist plunder of the world under the heinous class system of capitalist exploitation of labor and all its lopsided social relations is the carnal quest of the black capitalist class. It is in the interests of these black forerunners of "upward mobility", careerist hustlers, to aspire to the roles of enforcers of bourgeois law and capitalist-imperialist order such as the black Mayor Goode(s)--the Great Evictor--who orders the dropping of a bomb, in the twentieth century, on a black neighborhood and none other than a black family (far "less" than bourgeois Amerikan-oriented!), men, women and children, in the name of Amerika proper, in the city called, deceptively, "Brotherly Love".

The slogan of "black community" and the ideological myth of a homogenous black existence

based on shared race distinction without class divisions is a deception of the black bourgeoisie and their WASP ruling class progenitors. A slogan and false idea sold to the black masses by those who aspire to the imperialist throne, to oppose and smite the potential for self-determination of the economically and politically impoverished black working class masses. The slogan of "black community" covers over the black reality and hides from the masses its own class existence, while it serves to corral the black mass despair, yearning and capability and to feed them whole back into the system from which they must be liberated. A major weapon of the black bourgeoisie wielded against the black masses to keep them ever bound to their oppression and to powerlessness. It has been this absence of the realization of the economic base of society and therefore how society is divided along socio-economic class lines that has precluded the development of class consciousness of the black masses and stifled their abilities to organize the political movement of their true class interests, including the fight against racism.

History makes clear that the blackness of our skin is not and cannot correctly be viewed as the basis of our social reality. While racism is an aspect of the centuries old super oppression of black people in Amerika, neither racism nor the hue of their skin is the fundamental cause of this historical predicament. Racism is the result of the history of economic exploitation and political powerlessness of black people in Amerika since the advent of European capitalist expansions into Africa and slavery over two centuries ago. At the base of this effect, the very cause of racism in Amerika society, is the capitalist economic social system itself and its exploitation imperatives of labor. ...

* * *

In the black country of Haiti a black capitalist military regime, backed by U.S. imperialism, murders the impoverished black masses in the streets to abort a free Haiti. ...

In revolutionary Grenada, under the leadership of socialist black leader Maurice Bishop, the tiny country of Grenada saw its first true experience in national self-determination. ... Till "democratic" control was established in the form a black puppet elite ruling with police force and ideological resources supplied and organized by U.S. im-

perialism.

In the Union of South Africa the black lackeys fighting heart and soul against the black Azanian masses die on their treacherous feet to stay the liberation of the people for their white settler "massahs" and U.S. imperialism, including to a lesser extent British and other European capitalist-imperialist nations. When these black political police are terminated by the people we hear that there is disunity and internal conflict within "black South Africa". When the truth is that there is a definite unity, class unity within the black masses and it is precisely on account of this unity that the people have discovered their class enemies and the enemies to freedom in the state, imperialism and all its flunkey functionaries and blooded mercenary soldiers including, as it must include, the infamous black petty-bourgeois-oriented bantustan police.

* * *

In the history of the struggles of black people in Amerika a dream was conjured, of a thousand dreams a dream rooted in the Amerikan dream was expounded. A particular dream of a time when ex-slave owners and ex-slaves, more precisely their sons and daughters, would gather themselves at the round table of peace and together chart the course of a great nation of freedom and humanity. To our great dismay this dream, articulated by the black capitalist elite, has already been realized. They now gather in the state houses in agreement, open and secret, with the class forces of oppression on the continued exploitation of the working class and black proletarian masses. An agreement extending to the imperialist strong-arming of the Third World. Black pilots were among the bombers of Libyan homes flying the flag of lies of U.S. imperialism; it was a black Mayor dropping a bomb on black children and their family in a murderous "eviction" in Philadelphia, and black police are members of the most racist organization, besides the hooded-klan, in the history of so-racist a society--"doing their duty". Another deferred dream... The twisted, perverse black capitalist ideology of "upward mobility" is injected into the weakened body of the black proletariat like opium for their souls.

Like its upward mobility, the call for "black unity" by the black capitalist class is no less treachery against the black people. It is a class tactic in the strengthening of their strategic material and ideological hold upon the energies and resources of the black masses, to control and exploit these masses in the interests of capital. With all the cultural trappings most sentimental and sensitive to black people the black capitalist class has raised scheme upon scheme. In a later paper it will be necessary to analyze the recent

black capitalist class scheme of "POWER" being put forward as the rise of a true black cultural imperative, and a means to empower the black proletariat through deliverance of its hard won dollars to the purse of black business. A proposal that over-steps the ludicrous and one which we will illuminate, in all its rags, but saved for a subsequent communication as the people are deserving of a more detailed exposure of this putrid capitalist scheme than suits the scope of this paper.

Malcolm X said, in his latter realization, that ours is not a race struggle--though surely we must continue and develop the fight against the system's racism--"we're gonna have to learn how to determine who our friends are"; and to paraphrase yet another martyred black man, "not by the color of his skin but by the content of his character." It is of utmost importance for the masses of working class, proletarian blacks in the U.S. to understand that "character" is always class character. In a class-divided society, the actions of an individual are every single minute and always in the interests of one class or another--contributing to the perpetuation of the oppressive order or the death of it into liberation. No act of man or woman escapes the realm of the particular society in which they live and move.

Through the eyes of class consciousness the black proletariat will finally see itself in relation to the world and set its noble sights upon the course to liberation. Through the removal of the class-blinding ideology of the black petty bourgeoisie the black workers of the world will come to view their world in a whole new way, a revolutionarily different way. No longer victims but people with an historic vision and mission, in class-conscious struggle, the black proletariat will create its own true power and together with its true friends, all other oppressed forces of society, will develop a proletarian culture and political organization truly in its own image and interests. This coming of age of the black proletarian masses will mark the historic period of the sharpening of class contradictions internal to the so-called "black community", a period when the black elite will lay nakedly exposed before the glaring, unwavering class intelligence of the now conscious and uncompromising black makers of history. And unity is the power of the people--the righteous ones. Develop class consciousness!

Power to the people!

Gary Donn Washington
Minister of Culture

PURE

Prisoners United for Revolutionary Education<>