

INTERNATIONAL VIEWPOINT

10 January 1983

ISSUE No 21



1983 THE YEAR OF THE MISSILE

8 FF, British Pound 0.65, Irish Pound 0.70, Skr 9, Dkr 12, Nkr 10, Ikr 17, US dollars 1.50, Canadian dollars 1.70, Australian dollars 1.35, DM 3.50, Dutch fl. 3.25, Austrian schillings 24, Drachmas 14.8, IS 25, Mexican Pesos 40, Cypriot Pound 0.65, Yen 400, Leban. Piastres 6, BF 65, SF 2.5, Portuguese Escudos 90, Rand 1.30, Pesetas 145, Italian Lire 1 700.

War threat overshadows holiday season in Nicaragua

Rolf BERGKVIST and Maria SUNDVALL
MANAGUA — They were preparing for Christmas in the Nicaraguan capital.

In the Roberto Huembes market, they were selling plastic Christmas trees, garlands, and gift-wrapping paper.

In the upper class neighborhoods, we saw the first plastic Christmas trees decorated with painted metal balls. But it is not just the upper and middle classes that celebrate Christmas.

A dressmaker we knew talked about how her people deck a branch of a lemon tree with garlands and use that as their Christmas tree.

But the Christmas time 1982 in Nicaragua could not be dominated by the shopping rush. The holiday season was over-shadowed by two immediate threats, which were reflected daily in the newspaper headlines and in the conversations of people in the street — the threat of war and the economic crisis.

War is coming; all the signs here in Nicaragua point to that. It might even be more correct to say that the war is already underway. Speaking to a meeting of the Organization of American States on November 18, Nicaragua's deputy minister for foreign affairs, Victor Hugo Tinoco, said that up to that time Nicaragua had been subjected to the following acts of aggression:

- 200 attacks on land.
- 15 maritime assaults.
- 30 incursions by counterrevolutionary groups.
- 127 violations of Nicaraguan airspace.

More than 200 Nicaraguans have died in these attacks, and a hundred have been kidnapped or disappeared. There has also been great material damage. Every day we read in the newspapers about new disappearances, new savage murders of Nicaraguan peasants in the areas near the Honduran border. On all the official buildings, flags are flying at half-mast in mourning for those who have been murdered.

War was coming sometime in December, people thought. There were rumors about big joint U.S.-Honduras maneuvers near the Nicaraguan border. And Nicaraguans are preparing for war. On a Sunday in November, the neighborhood committees, the CDS, held civil-defense practice. They learned how to build barricades, dig trenches, to give first aid. The slogan for the practice was "The Contras shouldn't

make any mistake about it, we will defend ourselves neighborhood by neighborhood."

The threat of war comes from the U.S., and Americans are not very popular in Nicaragua these days. So, it was not surprising one evening that, after we told our taxi driver that we were Swedes, he said that if we had been *yanquis* he would not have driven us but would have left us on the sidewalk.

"We don't want to have anything to do with imperialism."

He illustrated with gestures how Yankees should best be handled.

ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES

With war approaching, Nicaragua has been hard hit by the economic crisis from which all the Central American countries are suffering. Its exports are almost exclusively agricultural products. And now its exports are down because of the economic decline in the imperialist countries; at the same time raw materials prices have dropped. On the other hand, the prices of imports have gone up.

The result is a growing deficit in the balance of trade. In order to make up for the deficit, they have borrowed dollars, and the foreign debt now amounts to three billion dollars. And in recent speech, Commandante Henry Ruiz from the Sandinista movement said that in the coming year the payments on the interest and principal on this debt is going to total 90% of income from exports!

On top of everything, the economy has been hit by natural disaster. In May, floods caused 350 billion dollars worth of damage and these were followed by a three-months drought, which itself is estimated to have caused 80 million dollars worth of damage. These disasters affected every Nicaraguan directly.

In the first year after the victory over the dictator, Somoza, the government succeeded in cutting unemployment from 25% to 17%. But now it is going up again. This year, 10,000 industrial workers, out of a total of perhaps 90,000 in the entire country, have been put out of work because their factories have been forced to close for lack of foreign currency. There are not enough dollars to import even essential raw materials and spare parts.

Prices have also increased by about 30% this year. On the other hand, wages have in general stood still in the last two

years, and it has been promised only that the worst paid will have their wages increased.

Despite everything, inflation lower in Nicaragua than in any other Central American country. Price controls have been established for a lot of goods, and the state distribution network, ENABAS distributes necessities to People's Stores in the neighborhoods of the capital city.

However, it is difficult to control prices in the markets. And the CDS complains that there are too few People's Inspectors. There are also scarcities of a lot of necessities. At the moment rice, sugar, and gasoline are rationed.

In October, Standard Fruit broke its contract with Nicaragua and stopped its activity in the country. Some 3,500 banana workers are faced with losing their jobs. In all 20,000 people are affected, and Nicaragua is losing 400,000 dollars a week. But the banana workers rallied in a protest meeting. They mounted a guard on Standard Fruit's installation to make sure that there was no sabotage. And now it seems that the crisis has lessened somewhat, since Nicaragua has found new banana buyers in the U.S.

Despite the crisis, it seems that some people have money. In a letter to the labor ministry on November 21, the national cement workers union pointed to factory owners who bought dollars on the black market for 50 cordobas (five times the official rate) so that they could leave the country. The cement workers also pointed to factory owners who have increased their prices for cement 90%, although the cost of raw materials and production costs have not risen. The workers demanded that the authorities step in to deal with such abuses.

The economic crisis and unemployment are not just a threat to the standard of living of the working people; they are also a threat to the FSLN's plans to build a new society. Over the past three years, the Sandinista front has sought to transform its spontaneous mass support into a firm base in the working class. It has tried to accomplish this by encouraging the working people to organize in trade unions and other mass organizations and by giving leadership to this process.

But when workers lose their jobs and are put on the street, then the organization of the class is also weakened. Against this background, it can be under-

stood why, despite a galloping economic crisis, the FSLN is giving priority to setting up relief work projects in order to hold the working class together.

The crisis also has to be seen as a threat to the FSLN's mass support. There has been considerable discontent for some time. The letters columns in the newspapers are filled with complaints about scarcities in the People's Stores and about the unjust division of what products are available. Moreover, it is a serious situation when the CDS in Managua has rather pointedly asked the Ministry of Trade when the rice problem is going to be solved:

"We are having a hard time explaining

aries, the funerals have been transformed into mass protest marches.

SHARPENING CLASS CONFRONTATION

At the same time, the class conflict is sharpening. On May Day the Sandinists union, the CST, declared that the goal in Nicaragua is socialism: "Socialism is the future," the CST posters everywhere proclaimed.

As could be expected, this aroused sharp reactions from the representatives of the bourgeoisie. The latest example of the bourgeois opposition campaign is the proposal from the Conservative Democratic Party for negotiations between the

country's future that must certainly already have taken place at the top levels. And it must be difficult for the Nicaraguans too. In fact, it must be a big problem that there are so few possibilities to discuss the country's situation openly and to express justified discontent.

On the basis of the threat of war, press censorship was established in March 1982. But that has not prevented a full-scale press war from going on between the FSLN's *Barricada* and the opposition's *La Prensa*. The latter publication is the bourgeoisie's most effective instrument, and it is more and more playing the sort of role that the scandal sheet *El Mercurio* did in Chile to prepare the way for the 1973 coup.

However, *Barricada* is often distorted and one-sided in its reporting. The result is a "press debate" that is sometimes almost absurd. An example is the reporting of the civil war in El Salvador. In *La Prensa*, you read only about gains by the government army. In *Barricada*, you read only about advances by the FMLN-FDR. And the Nicaraguans cannot rely very much on the news that they get.

Another example of this problem is the position of the mass organizations. In the paper of the CST, a lot of concrete cases of bad conditions in the workplaces are reported. For example, there is an account of how in the state factory ENVACA the administrators only work three hours a day and draw salaries of 9,000 cordobas (six times the minimum wage). The chiefs of the maintenance division often do not show up at all for work, and when a machine breaks down they take it to repair company that they themselves own, and then let ENVACA pay big bills.

The CST can, to be sure, take up problems, but how can it attack them? Strikes are banned on the grounds of the crisis situation, and since it is a loyal Sandinista union it knows that the most important thing is to increase production so that imports can be increased and more foreign currency can be brought in. So, the editorials in the CST paper stress that workers should not demand that administrators be thrown out, because that could endanger production. Instead, workers are encouraged to start discussions with the factory management about how production can be maintained and unemployment avoided.

Reading such statements, a number of thoughts occur to you. Isn't there a danger that justified discontent will be shouted down with revolutionary appeals? Isn't there a danger that the most conscious and active groups inside the FSLN and the mass organizations may isolate themselves from the broad masses, who despite everything have to be able to look forward improvements in their standard of living?

On the other hand, what other way out is there? How can press censorship be relaxed in a war situation? And how can the trade unions call for strikes when the economic crisis is so deep and there is a real need to increase production?



'An armed people will never be defeated.' (DR)

to the people in the neighborhoods why there is no rice in the stores. And it does not make things any easier when you still have not even answered our earlier questions."

The revolution has brought big social improvements, literacy campaigns, schools, clinics, day-care centres. But that is easily forgotten when families cannot make ends meet, or when their breadwinners lose their jobs. And at the moment the FSLN can promise nothing but continued hard times. The poster campaigns going on now are on the need to raise labor productivity and the need for stepping up revolutionary vigilance.

But to say that there is discontent is not the same thing as saying that the masses have lost their fighting spirit, that they now longer support the FSLN. The clearest evidence that the opposite is true can be seen in the mobilizations against the counterrevolutionaries. The numbers of the revolutionary guards who do voluntary night watch in every neighborhood, have increased by tens of thousands in Managua in November. More and more people are joining the people's militias. When local Sandinistas are murdered by the counterrevolution-

government "and the external and internal opposition" — that means negotiating with the Somocistas in Honduras! It goes without saying that this proposal has been rejected by the government and the FSLN.

In a recent speech, Minister of Internal Affairs Tomas Borge made a frontal attack on the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie.

"In Cuba," Borge said, "the imperialists had the bourgeoisie leave the country so that they could prepare an armed invasion from outside. But here the imperialists have kept the bourgeoisie in the country to cause us internal problems."

Certainly, it is being said more and more often that "socialism is the future." But at the same time one might wonder what the model for this socialist future is. In the union headquarters, visitors are being asked to sign a letter of condolences to the Soviet brother people mourning the death of *companero* Brezhnev. Is this uncritical hailing of the Soviet Union only diplomacy? This situation seems all the more contradictory because the Sandinistas do not at all want to build a Soviet-type society.

It is hard for foreigners to get an impression of the discussions about the

Storm Warnings in Argentina

Gerry FOLEY

More and more signals point to the buildup of an explosion in Argentina, which could become the biggest yet in the recent series of revolutionary blowups in colonial countries.

The growing crisis in Argentina has already seriously setback the efforts of U.S. imperialism to smother one of these outbreaks. In *New York Times* of December 3, George Crile, a former CBS correspondent in Central America, gave evidence that Washington had been planning a major military move against the Nicaraguan revolution in March.

The operation was called off at the last minute, apparently because of a rapid deterioration in the position of the Argentine junta, on which Washington was counting heavily.

Massive workers demonstrations in Argentina on March 30, the first since the establishment of the bloody military dictatorship almost exactly six years before, made it clear that the regime was beginning to founder. Then on April 2, three days later, the ruling generals staged a show of military force in the Malvinas, seeking to regain credibility as leaders of the Argentine state.

Unfortunately for the Argentine dictators, the Thatcher government was scarcely less in need of a show of force to shore up its own sagging credibility. Once the right-wing British government decided to respond with a military adventure of its own, disaster for imperialism and its agents became nearly inevitable.

The U.S. was forced to line up openly with Britain, since it has a much more fundamental interest at stake in the alliance with the British imperialists than in its relationship with even the biggest of its Latin-American gorillas. So, it had to jettison the political cover of "Pan-Americanism" that it had been carefully building up for a "joint" intervention in Central America.

The military forces under the junta's command went down to an inglorious defeat. But the British forces did not come out unscathed either. They were obliged to pay a price that will be more and more resented by the British workers, who are suffering a disastrous decline in wages and basic social services. What is more, the conflict exposed the outdatedness of British naval power, and thus further undermined the pretences of British imperialism that it can still play

an independent world role.

The Argentine dictatorship was decisively weakened. If it did not fall immediately in the wake of the defeat and was able to put forward an alternative government, it seems clear now that this was mainly because the major opposition groups used the war as an excuse to try to make a rapprochement with the military. They accepted the military's appeals for "national unity" against the enemy, and did not take an independent line rejecting the leadership of the junta in the fight against British and American imperialism.

The leading Peronist trade unionist, Lorenzo Miguel, went so far as to compare General Galtieri, head of the junta at the time, to the sainted father of "justicialismo" himself. In an article by him the Peronist magazine *El Caudillo*, entitled "The Brothers Are United," a picture of Galtieri was included. The caption was "It is a long time since we heard a president talk like this."

As for the non-Peronists in the Multi-partidaria, the bloc of the bourgeois opposition, their attitude was illustrated by Oscar Allende of the Partido Intransigente: "My party will not follow and will not support the new course of the military regime (that is, the turn represented by the installation of Bignone to replace Galtieri) but it will not try to destabilize it either."

The bourgeois opposition, including the Peronists, was, and remains, anxious to negotiate a slow restoration of parliamentary government to avoid any risky breaks in continuity. It is an indication of the combativity of the masses of working people, and of the hatred of virtually the entire Argentine people for the generals that the opposition has not been able to keep company with the military. Instead it finds itself caught up inexorably in a sharpening confrontation.

As a result of the collaborationism of the Peronist unionists, the junta was able, following its defeat in the Malvinas, to promote the setting up of a rival national labor confederation based on the unions that had been most ready to cooperate with it. This is the origin of the so-called CGT-Azopardo, which was given the headquarters of the old legal CGT on Azopardo St. But it was precisely this confederation that issued the call for the first effective general strike since the establishment of the dictatorship. The Peronist CGT-Brazil then came in

behind it.

Seven million workers followed the strike call on December 6 (the population of the country is about 28 million). Everything stopped. The shutdown of industry and transport was total. In addition, about 95% of stores closed.

"You could see housewives going after the few shopkeepers that opened their doors," Jacques Despres reported in the December 8 issue of *Le Monde*. "They told them angrily, 'We have to show the generals that the people are united.'"

Even in governmental offices and facilities, including the presidential palace and military bases, large numbers of employees did not show up for work.

On the radio stations, a minute of silence was observed every hour to show solidarity with the strike. Postal and telephone communication were paralyzed.

Furthermore, the strike seems to have basically built itself. The Buenos Aires daily *Clarín* noted that there had been "no picket lines, no leafleting, and no pressures of any kind."

Even the progovernment press had to recognize that time was rapidly running out for the generals. "The country does not want military men in power any more," wrote the magazine *Somos*.

But while the military must know that it cannot hold onto power, it has good reasons for fearing to relinquish it. It is no longer possible for it to retire intact into the barracks as it did in 1973 and several times before in Argentine history.

The *Le Monde* correspondent Jacques Despres noted:

"It is obvious that the chances for establishing the sort of 'limited democracy' that the dictatorships in the Southern Cone are fond of are fading away. The political leaders, who in fact want an accord with the military, categorically rejected the junta's offer of 'cooperation' a month ago."

So, the bourgeois opposition is no longer looking for ways to get close to the junta but is increasingly nervous about being seen anywhere near it.

There are basically two reasons why the military cannot relinquish dictatorial power without risking being torn apart. One is that it has murdered too many people, and done so by outright gangster methods.

During the dictatorship, some 30,000 people have simply "disappeared." Their friends and relatives make up a significant percent of the population. As the fear of



Argentinian workers protest against unemployment and low wages (DR)

the regime has receded, the graves in which the bodies were buried started being reported. By mid-November, 1,500 bodies had been found.

If these people had even been sentenced to death by military tribunals, the restoration of bourgeois legality and legal guarantees might reassure a section of the population. But what are legal guarantees worth now after the armed forces and police have simply slaughtered tens of thousands of people in gangland style? Even the small children of "missing persons" were apparently often killed to cover up the crimes of the military and police.

With the rise of a massive wave of indignation against the hired killers of the local bourgeoisie and its imperialist godfathers, a major weapon of the rulers is now turning against them.

The method of extensive covert repressive attacks and executions dates back to the Castillo Armas regime in Guatemala, which was installed by the first big U.S. intervention in Latin America after the second world war. It was apparently thought up by the U.S. "experts" who directed the overthrow of the Arbenz, since it has showed up everywhere the U.S. services were heavily involved in "counterinsurgency" and in fighting "subversion."

The tactic of simply "rubbing out" those considered to be potential or actual "troublemakers" has the advantage that it makes it possible to get the maximum repressive effect while making it difficult to mobilize a political response. The problem with it, as the development in Argentina is showing, is that after a certain time it makes the confrontation between the masses and the forces of the bourgeois state a total one.

The demonstrations of relatives of "missing persons" have grown from the courageous few who were the only ones who dared to demonstrate in the worst years of the dictatorship to the 6,000 people who defied a huge mobilization of police in Buenos Aires on December 9.

The commander in chief of the army, General Nicolaidis, has admitted why the military is afraid. "Before setting a date for elections, the military want to reach a compromise on the question of the 'missing persons.' It is obvious, indeed,

that they are not going to hand over power to the civilians unless they feel certain that the future constitutional government is not going to haul them in front of some new Nuremberg Tribunal (Quoted in *Le Monde*, December 8.)

But what force in the opposition can give the military that assurance when demonstrations have been growing on the question of the 'missing persons,' when this question was obviously very much on the mind of the march of 100,000 persons that the bourgeois opposition was obliged to call in Buenos Aires on December 16. In fact, at the demonstration itself, a trade-unionist was shot down by a "policeman in plainclothes."

Although the police dispersed the crowd with tear gas and gunfire, fighting went on in the streets for hours, creating scenes reminiscent of the 1969 and 1971 rebellions in industrial centers in the interior. In fact, at that time, it was these mass uprisings that forced the military to withdraw and open the way for a period of civilian rule.

After the December 16 clashes, maddened cops attacked the offices of the bourgeois parties themselves, which had been legalized only shortly before.

Along with the hatred of the murderous dictatorship, the destruction of the Argentine economy by the capitalist crisis and the increased spoliation of the imperialists is driving the Argentine working people to desperation.

In 1975, 28 Argentine pesos bought one U.S. dollar. Today it takes 20,000. In the current year, the inflation rate was jumped to between 400% and 500%. Argentine industry is working at only 55% of capacity. In the last two years, the Gross National Product has dropped by 15%. There is massive unemployment. Even the employed workers have seen their buying power cut in half in 12 months, from February 1981 to February 1982.

Whereas Argentina is one of the richest agricultural countries in the world and Argentines used to have one of the highest rates of meat consumption, now even employed workers and their families are supplementing their meagre meals by visiting the soup kitchens. "If a scapegoat for the defeat in the Malvinas could be found, it would be eaten," a Buenos Aires

humor magazine quipped.

Moreover, the industrial sector of what has been one of the most industrialized countries is rapidly being dismantled. The key industry has been automotive assembly, and General Motors has now shifted its operation to Brazil.

The ignominious performance of the Argentine military in the Malvinas war also represented the debacle of a certain model of economic development. In fact, the major industrial development and business growth under the dictatorship has been registered by firms catering to the military. All of that has now been shown to represent money down the drain. (1)

Shortly before the general strike, *Clarín* published a confidential document in which General Horacio Crespo, commander of the air-force in the south during the Malvinas war, accused the army of "pursuing domestic political aims and doing only the bare minimum during the Malvinas conflict."

In fact, the defeat of the Argentine armed forces in the Malvinas did not at all demoralize the working people of the country because they placed no confidence in the generals. That was shown by the small turnout at the demonstrations called during the conflict by the Peronists in support of the war effort. (2) Thus, the effect on the people has been the opposite, for example, of the defeat of the Nasser government in 1967 war with Israel.

The betrayal and sloth of the military only increased the masses' hatred of the regime. And so there has been an ascending course of struggles in the wake of the war. This began on August 19, only two months after the capitulation in Puerto Argentino, with the occupation of central Buenos Aires by 2,500 car-assembly workers, where one of the main leaders called for a struggle against the government.

The upsurge reached a new level on September 22, when tens of thousands of workers marched through Buenos Aires demanding "peace (i.e., an end to militarization), bread, and jobs." With the December strike and mass demonstration, it has taken another leap. And the pressure is still mounting.

There is the characteristic pattern of an upsurge that everytime the regime strikes out, the masses respond with greater anger and daring. There is also an evident mood of exasperation. When a local official refused to hear complaints of residents in a Buenos Aires suburb of Lanus about municipal taxes on November 24, he sparked a spontaneous rebellion of 20,000 people.

In such conditions, it seems that the lid can blow off at any time in a country that is the third largest in Latin America and in the colonial world owes the third largest amount to the imperialist banks.

1. See "Deepening Crisis of the Argentine Dictatorship," B. Miralles, IV, No.5, 26 April 1982.

2. See "Crisis in Argentina," Jorge Buarque, IV, no.14, 4 October 1982.

The stakes in the anti-missiles movement

John ROSS

1983 is the year in which the deployment of United States Pershing II and Cruise Missiles is to start in Europe. It could be expected, therefore, that it would be preceded by a barrage of imperialist operations aimed at demobilising the powerful West European anti-missiles movement.

These manoeuvres were duly commenced with Reagan's November 1982 television broadcast and a series of declarations on nuclear policy by Kissinger, Mondale, and other spokespersons of the U.S. ruling class. The message of all of them was that the anti-missiles movement can now demobilise, since 'negotiations' are under way with the Soviet Union.

Reagan in his broadcast placed special stress on the opening of new talks with the Soviet Union over avoiding 'accidental' nuclear war. Subsequently, it was announced that the administration intended to continue its policy of complying with certain aspects of the unratified Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty with the USSR (SALT II). It cancelled the deployment of 50 Minuteman-3 Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles, whose multiple warheads would have breached the treaty limit. The U.S. stated it would fit identifying devices on the B-52 bombers that will carry Cruise Missiles — again a specification demanded by SALT II. These decisions overturned previous announcements of the Reagan administration. The U.S. government also declared itself satisfied with Soviet compliance with the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty at the five-year review of this.

But the real content of NATO policy was shown by the two fundamental decisions that were taken in the same month. Reagan announced his advocacy of deploying the MX missiles. Research on this was then ratified by the Congress and simply the production delayed.

The Reagan proposals are an open violation of SALT II and are denounced by the Soviet bureaucracy as such. The NATO Defence Ministers at their meeting in November also reaffirmed their decision to go head with the plan to deploy Pershing II and Cruise Missiles in Europe.

In short, on a secondary question, around a treaty which in any case allows a gigantic military buildup, the United States administration was making minor concessions and manoeuvres to gain the maximum propaganda value. The Congress in reality participated in this.

Around the fundamental parts of its nuclear programme it was going ahead as rapidly as previously.

The reason for the manoeuvring is quite clear. The U.S. ruling class and its allies have no intention whatever of negotiating any limit to the military buildup. If they make any concessions at all it will be because this is forced on them. Furthermore the negotiations that are taking place are not to limit imperialism's military buildup but to allow it to deal new blows against the working class of Central America, Western Europe, and all other parts of the world. Their aim is to gain a greater complicity of the Soviet bureaucracy in this process of an international imperialist counter-offensive. As the anti-missiles movement enters this crucial year, therefore, it should have a very clear attitude towards the 'negotiations' that the imperialists are putting forward.

THE GROWTH OF THE ANTI-MISSILES MOVEMENT

The reason why NATO is forced to engage in its new round of manoeuvres is very clear. The opposition to the deployment of the missiles in Western Europe, and to current U.S. nuclear policy in general, is vastly greater than had been foreseen by imperialism when it started its current military buildup. The initial rhetoric used by the Reagan administration during 1981 — the talk of 'theatre nuclear weapons', Presidential Directive no59 on the possibility of 'limited nuclear war' in Europe, the threat of 'warning nuclear explosions' — can only have been based on an assumption that the missiles in Western Europe could be installed without problems and that the only important task was to exert the maximum pressure on the USSR.

Even ultra pro-NATO European spokespersons such as Deputy Leader of the Labour Party Dennis Healey were forced to call for a halt to such rhetoric. Healey warned Reagan that he had misjudged the relationship of forces in Europe and stated in November 1981 that, 'You must speak softly when you carry a big stick. We have unfortunately during the last twelve months had (from the U.S.) all too often a combination of belligerence and rhetoric with carelessness and confusion in defining the purposes and goals of these nuclear weapons.' (1)

Despite the subsequent tactical change in Washington's 'tone', and the more substantial manoeuvres such as the 'zero option' proposals and the campaign over Poland (see boxes and articles in this issue), struggles against the Cruise and Pershing II missiles have greatly increased during 1982. Over three million people participated in demonstrations against nuclear weapons during the summer in Western Europe, Japan, Australia, and North America. These were the largest international demonstrations on any issue since the second world war.

At the beginning of 1982, opinion polls showed 58 per cent of the population of Britain opposing the introduction of Cruise Missiles and 56 per cent opposing the Trident nuclear submarine programme. The decision in the Norwegian Parliament to allocate funds to carry out the NATO decision to install Cruise Missiles was carried only on a 77-76 vote. In a related movement, eight out of nine U.S. states holding referenda in the November 1982 elections voted 'Yes' to a nuclear freeze.

The anti-missiles and anti-nuclear weapons movement, although starting in many countries first among professional and white-collar workers, has penetrated rapidly and deeply into the workers movement as a whole. It now provides one of the biggest points of polarisation in the labour organisations since the second world war.

In West Germany, even before the fall of the Social Democratic/Liberal (SPD/FDP) government, around one third of the SPD organisations opposed deployment of the missiles. Together with austerity, the missiles will be the central issue in the March 1983 elections.

In Britain the Labour Party conferences since 1979 have consistently voted against the missiles programme and in favour of British unilateral nuclear disarmament. In 1982 this increased to a two-thirds majority. The British Trades Union Congress for the first time in its history has come out in favour of unilateral nuclear disarmament.

But despite the enormous size of the opposition there should be no illusion as to how important it is to NATO to put these nuclear weapons in place in Western Europe. They are a central part of imperialism's entire military buildup, and, as

1. *Time*, 16 November 1982.

such, crucially affect not only the workers of Western Europe and the United States but also the colonial revolution and the Soviet Union.

In order to understand how the anti-missiles movement should confront the crucial year of 1983 and the new imperialist manoeuvres we should therefore start by recalling what role the nuclear buildup in Western Europe plays in the overall international counter-offensive of imperialism. This also shows their role in the present stage of the international class struggle.

THE MEANING OF PERSHING II AND THE CRUISE MISSILES

The aim of the current imperialist military buildup has right from the beginning been oriented primarily towards confronting the colonial revolution and not at war with the Soviet Union. In that aspect it differed fundamentally from the imperialist military buildup of the late 1940s and early 1950s, which was indeed aimed at gaining the momentum for direct military conflict with the USSR.

In the real world however imperialism cannot engage in a military buildup against the colonial revolution without being forced to try also to neutralise the Soviet Union either by threats or deals. At each step in colonial revolution economic and military aid from the USSR has played a crucial role.

It was the Soviet Union that supplied the economic aid and weapons with which the NLF defeated the Americans and their puppets in Vietnam, that keeps the Cuban workers state alive, and which made possible the Cuban intervention in Angola. Any new workers state formed in Central America would necessarily seek support from the USSR and agreement to, or refusal of, this aid would in considerable measure determine its chance of survival.

The imperialist ruling classes do not at all fear the Soviet bureaucracy itself. As Henry Kissinger put it in a recent series of articles, 'There are some American conservatives in both parties who luxuriate in the myth of diabolic Soviet planners implementing a master plan for world revolution. No one who has actually dealt with the top Soviet leadership has encountered such types. If they exist, they are well hidden from foreign visitors. The leaders one in fact encounters are tough, ruthless and persistent. But they have originated no profound initiatives; they have usually avoided great risks. They have expanded into vacuums created by irresolution or weakness.' (2)

However, if U.S. imperialism does not fear 'world revolution' led by the Kremlin, it takes very seriously indeed the military potential of the Soviet Union. The U.S. also knows that in cases of imperialist 'irresolution or weakness' — by which it means successful revolutionary struggle led by others — the Soviet Union can supply major material aid to consolidate the situation. This was the case, in different

ways, with Cuba, Ethiopia, Angola, and exists as an objective potential for Nicaragua and Central America. This possibility flows from the nature of the USSR itself, and is not wholly neutralised by the policies of Brezhnev, Andropov and co.

The result of this international reality is that each imperialist military buildup against the colonial revolution has also involved an armaments programme directed against the Soviet Union. (3) The current U.S. military buildup in this follows essentially the same pattern as its previous ones. It involves directly the creation of the 'Rapid Deployment Force', the '600-ship-strong navy', the massive reinforcement of the U.S. chain of military bases, constant military pressure on the Kampuchean border, and the opening of the undeclared war in Central America — all of which are directly aimed against the colonial revolution. (See box) In this framework, however, the United States has also aimed to exert maximum pressure on the Soviet Union to prevent it from militarily or economically aiding the revolutions in Central America or any other struggle taking place against imperialism. By these means U.S. imperialism seeks to cut off the colonial revolution from its major sources of military and material aid.

The overall international policy of the Kremlin is class collaboration. Its policy in Poland and the other countries of Eastern Europe is counter-revolutionary and criminal. The use and structure of a large part of the Soviet conventional armed forces is for repressing its own working class and other states under its domination. Revolutionaries fight against all these policies and the actions of Moscow in Czechoslovakia, Warsaw and wherever they are used and exist.

But on the field of nuclear weapons there should be no illusions whatever. The Soviet bureaucracy considers its nuclear arms policy in its relations with imperialism — not for repression of the working class in Eastern Europe and the USSR. On this domain the responses of the Soviet bureaucracy are simply a response to an atomic buildup wholly and solely commenced by imperialism. Every single proposal to abolish nuclear weapons has been and continues to be opposed by the imperialist states. It is the U.S. ruling class and its allies, no one else

2. *Newsweek*, 29 November 1982.

3. Thus for example the massive American military buildup against the colonial revolution which took place in the late 1950s and early 1960s under Eisenhower and Kennedy/McNamara was accompanied by a simultaneous one against the USSR. Decisions of December 1957 and May 1958 of the NATO council led to the deployment of American Jupiter and Thor intermediate-range missiles in England, Italy, and Turkey. Major U.S. naval bases for nuclear submarines were established at Holy Loch in Scotland and Rota in Spain. The construction of 1,000 Minuteman nuclear Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles, and of the Polaris submarine-launched missile, was ordered by Kennedy. These remained the backbone of American nuclear strength into the 1970s.

This nuclear buildup against the USSR took

place alongside the huge conventional military escalation that culminated in the Vietnam war. All attempts by the Soviet bureaucracy to negotiate a halt to the arms buildup, for example through the unilateral Soviet troop reductions ordered by Khrushchev in 1959, were ignored. Kennedy and his Secretary of Defence McNamara calculated on the economic superiority of the United States to outproduce the Soviet Union and crush all obstacles in their path. It was only the strength of the Vietnamese revolution, and the crisis that the effects of the war produced inside the imperialist countries, that led the U.S. ruling class to reverse its position and embark on the policy of 'detente' followed in the early 1970s.

THE ROLE OF MISSILES

It is in this framework of policy that a major role is assigned by U.S. imperialism to the intermediate-range Pershing II and Cruise Missiles to be sited in Western Europe. These allow the United States to utilise to the utmost its strategic military and geographical advantages in relation to the Soviet Union and provide an ultra-effective and cheap military means of putting tremendous pressure on the Soviet Union in the field of armaments and also directly on its economy.

The United States has bases all around the borders of the USSR and Eastern Europe. It can hit any target in the Soviet Union from these with relatively inexpensive intermediate-range nuclear missiles. The Pershing II system for example costs less than 3 billion dollars, and the ground launched Cruise Missiles less than 4 billion dollars, compared to the 35 billion dollars plus for the MX ICBM system, or the 32 billion dollars plus for the Trident submarine missile programme. Furthermore, the Pershing II can hit targets in the USSR only 4-5 minutes after launching — which is six times more rapidly than missiles launched from the United States.

The Soviet Union in contrast has no bases from which intermediate-range missiles can hit the United States. The U.S. made it quite clear during the Cuban missile crisis that it was prepared to wage a world war to prevent the Soviet Union from gaining such bases. The intermediate-range missiles also have the advantage for the U.S. that because they are sited outside the borders of the United States they avoid the intense domestic political opposition that has for example confronted the MX programme.

Therefore, in addition to the effects of the superior size of the US economy — nearly two and a half times that of the Soviet Union — the intermediate-range missiles programme places even greater proportional military and economic pressure on the USSR. In order to prevent the possibility of a U.S. 'first strike', the Soviet Union has to spend gigantic sums on defensive measures such as multiplication of launchers, ensuring their manoeuvrability etc. This economic and military pressure on the USSR is in turn de-

place alongside the huge conventional military escalation that culminated in the Vietnam war. All attempts by the Soviet bureaucracy to negotiate a halt to the arms buildup, for example through the unilateral Soviet troop reductions ordered by Khrushchev in 1959, were ignored. Kennedy and his Secretary of Defence McNamara calculated on the economic superiority of the United States to outproduce the Soviet Union and crush all obstacles in their path. It was only the strength of the Vietnamese revolution, and the crisis that the effects of the war produced inside the imperialist countries, that led the U.S. ruling class to reverse its position and embark on the policy of 'detente' followed in the early 1970s.

As is discussed below, this 'detente' policy, however, was in no sense considered as a move towards 'liberalism' or 'peace' by the U.S. ruling class.

signed to force it to cut off its aid to the colonial revolution either through blackmail, through a 'deal', or simply through depriving the Soviet Union of the physical capacity to give it.

Together with the United States direct conventional weapons buildup against the colonial revolution, and the massive problems facing the Soviet bureaucracy in Poland and Afghanistan, there is no doubt that the U.S. ruling class considers that it has already gained significant advantages through this missile 'pressure' policy. The US ruling class noted with satisfaction the extreme Soviet passivity during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, which helped to give a free hand to imperialism's moves. Similarly the Soviet Union, in contrast to earlier massive arms supplies to Ethiopia and Angola, turned down reported Nicaraguan requests for MIG aircraft.

While of course the missile buildup in Western Europe and the United States is not the only factor in these decisions of the Soviet bureaucracy — it would for example be a much more decisive confrontation with the United States for the Soviet Union to arm Nicaragua than it was to arm Ethiopia — nevertheless there is no doubt that the American military buildup is not merely hitting directly at the colonial revolution but also affecting all parts of the world revolution through its pressure on the USSR. This shows the huge stakes in the anti-missiles and anti-nuclear weapons movement not only for the workers of the imperialist countries but also for the USSR and the colonial revolution.

THE MOVEMENT IN WESTERN EUROPE

Outside Central America, the United States has been able to carry out successfully large parts of its buildup against the colonial revolution and has achieved a major victory in the Middle East. But it has encountered tremendous direct and indirect pressure in Europe in its attempt to carry the military buildup against the USSR. On conventional weapons spending, not one single West European government, with the exception of a promise from Thatcher's Britain, has so far been able to meet the 3 per cent a year growth in military spending decided upon by NATO. The decision to deploy the nuclear weapons has rightly been seen by the workers movement as bringing nuclear war significantly closer.

Imperialism, of course, expected protest actions against its policies. But it would not have been deterred by 'routine' protests of a few tens of thousands in the various European countries and 100,000 or so in the United States. U.S. imperialism carried on the Vietnam war for years against the opposition of a majority of its population, and a routine round of protest on the nuclear weapons would have been brushed aside.

It was the truly colossal scale of the opposition actions to the missiles that had not been foreseen by imperialism.

THE MX

The MX missile is one of the two prongs of the United States attempt to get a 'first strike' capacity against the Soviet Union. The other is Pershing II.

The MX has a range of 13,000 kilometres and an accuracy with each of its 10 warheads of 150 metres. This makes quite clear that it is not a weapon aimed against cities, for which no such accuracy is needed, but is for attacks on the Soviet missile system.

The MX, with the Pershing II, is therefore a qualitative escalation of the arms race. With its existing submarine-launched missiles, and the 'Minuteman' ground based missiles, the United States has a nuclear strike force which cannot be destroyed by the USSR. It can, therefore, launch a nuclear counter-attack. But these systems are not accurate enough to knock out the Soviet missile system. So, the United States cannot launch a nuclear war without the certainty that it will be also hit by Soviet nuclear weapons.

The 'first strike' is create a capacity for missiles so accurate that they can knock out the Soviet weapons. The United States will, therefore, be able to destroy the USSR without itself being subject to attack. This is of course the recipe for a nuclear war launched by imperialism. The fight against the MX missile is, thus, one of the most important partial demands which must be fought for by the anti-nuclear and anti-missiles movement.

THE PERSHING II

This is probably the most dangerous weapon in the entire United States nuclear military buildup. Like the MX it is a 'first strike' weapon accurate to within 150 metres. But its flight time to hit targets in the Soviet Union is 4-7 minutes compared to almost 30 minutes for the MX. This means it is a superb weapon for a surprise attack.

The Pershing II is also extremely cheap compared to the MX — around 4 bn dollars for the system as compared to 35 billion for the MX. The United States has already indicated it intends to build up the Pershing II system in Europe far beyond even its original proposals. Even new Christian Democratic Chancellor Kohl is reported to have turned down a proposal by the United States to double the number of Pershing II missiles to be placed in West Germany.

These are not on the level of 'protest' demonstrations but on a scale that could deflect government policies and provoke political crises. This effect has now become intensified as the nuclear and military buildup has become directly entwined with the economic crisis wracking the capitalist system in general and the US economy in particular. It is this directly lies that behind the latest round of imperialism's manoeuvres.

THE U.S. MILITARY BUILDUP

Under any circumstances, the military buildup plans announced by the Reagan administration would have placed great strains on the U.S. economy. United States military expenditure is projected as 183 bn dollars in 1982, 240 bn dollars in 1983, 286 bn dollars in 1984, 386 bn dollars in 1986, and 401 bn dollars in 1987. This is projected spending in excess of 1.5 trillion dollars over five years and approaching 2 trillion dollars over six. It is an annual increase of 7 per cent a year in real terms, ignoring inflation, and an increase of military spending from 25 per cent to 33 per cent of the Federal budget.

At the same time as these plans for increased military expenditure are being made, however, the actual growth forecasts for the U.S. economy are being constantly revised downwards. This means that increased U.S. military spending must be financed from a much lower base than the imperialist ruling classes anti-

ipated. The effects of this work themselves through the entire economic system.

Economic stagnation means that U.S. state tax receipts are 80 bn dollars down from the 1981 projections. Government social expenditure deriving from unemployment is enormously up. A relentless pressure, therefore, exists for the Federal Budget Deficit to increase — this is now projected at over 200 bn dollars. (4). If an attempt is made to finance this budget deficit through borrowing, this inevitably means a new increase in U.S. interest rates after their falls since the summer and a further prolongation of the recession.

The effects of such a step, furthermore, could not be confined to the U.S. A new rise in interest rates would risk placing so much strain on the world debt system that a weak link of this might collapse and set off a catastrophic chain reaction. It was to avoid this, and specifically a default on debts by Mexico or the collapse of a major U.S. company such as International Harvester, that U.S. interest rates were brought down sharply after last August. Any new restrictive measures could ignite a series of massive convulsions in semi-colonial countries — exactly what the U.S. is seeking to avoid through its military policies.

4. *Business Week*, 22 November 1982.

If on the other hand interest rates are not put up again, and the same level of Federal Expenditure is maintained, then inflation in the U.S. is going to rise again rapidly. An extremely sharp increase in U.S. money supply already took place following the lowering of interest rates in August. Inflation also started to increase — it rose 0.5 per cent in October, after only rising 0.2 per cent in September, and 0.3 per cent in August.

Finally, what is crucial for the United States is not simply the absolute figures but those relative to its rivals. 'Reaganomics' has at long last begun to raise productivity in the U.S. economy after almost a decade of stagnation. But it is still rising at an extremely low rate, and capital spending, the necessary engine of long-term productivity growth, continues to decline. (5)

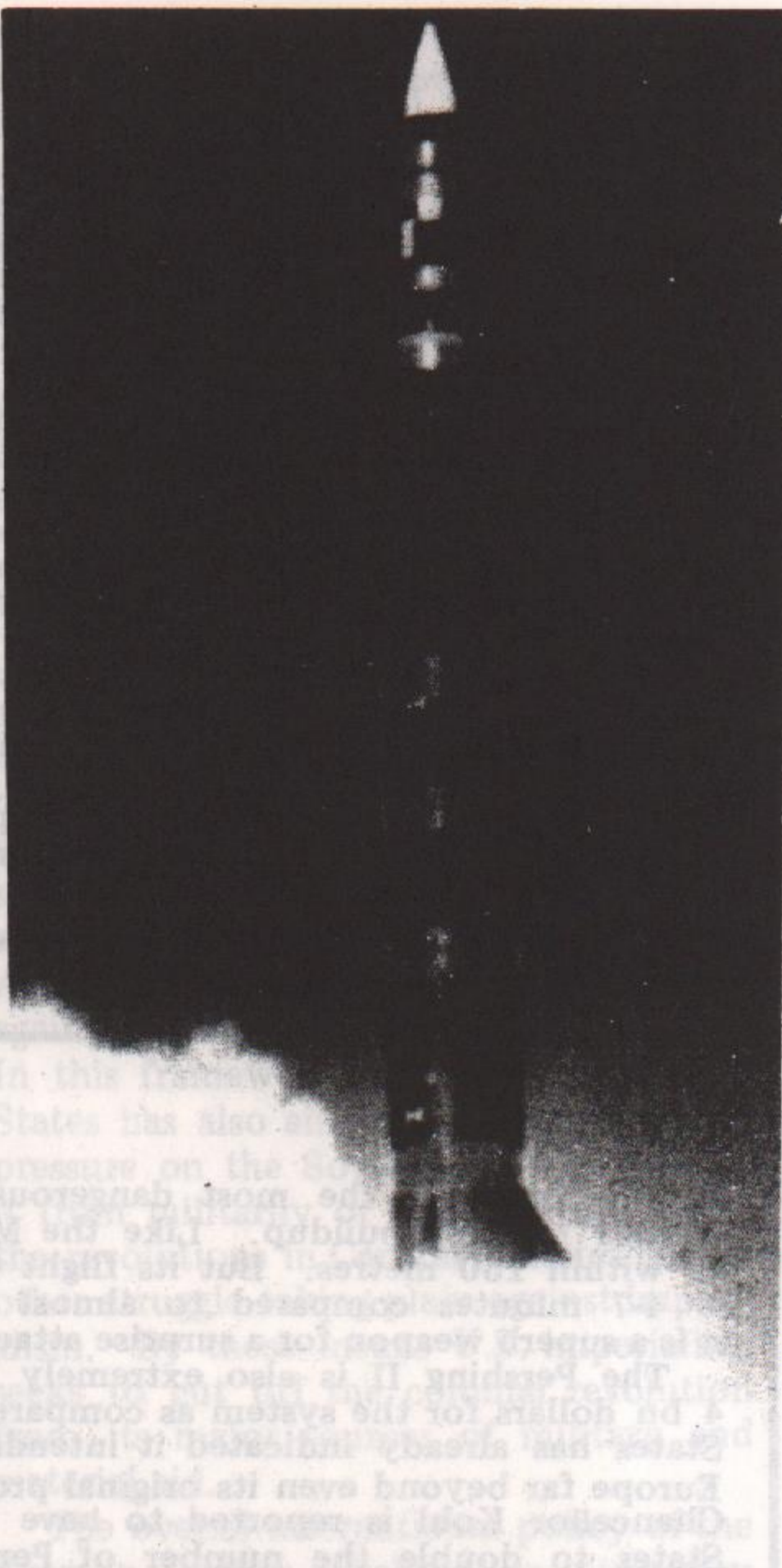
The result of this situation is that in the industrial sector U.S. goods are less and less competitive on the world market — a situation made worse by the high exchange rate of the dollar created by the high interest rates. The U.S. visible trade balance is deteriorating significantly and rapidly. (6)

It was becoming quite clear by the end of 1982 therefore that the United States economic position was becoming increasingly critical — the economy was in a 'hell of a mess' as Reagan put it in his famous unscripted comment. In particular the Federal Budget was increasingly unable to take the strain. Resources had to be released either by shifting more of the burden of the military buildup onto the United States' imperialist allies, making even greater attacks against the U.S. working class, or cutting back on the military budget.

In this context, the struggle over the missiles in Europe plays a directly economic, as well as military, role. If the Pershing II and Cruise Missiles cannot be put into Europe then, as we have seen, this means the United States faces the necessity to spend 5-10 times the cost in order to build on U.S. soil an equivalent system of ICBMs which would be less militarily effective and far less pressure on the Soviet economy. The opposition already shown to the MX system, in the United States, let alone to any extension of it, raises the gravest doubts as to whether this could actually be carried out at all.

As regards other ways out of the situation, the United States imperialist rivals recently confirmed at the GATT conference that neither directly nor indirectly are they prepared to accept extra sacrifices for the U.S. economy — on the contrary they are working out how best to attack its position.

As for the possibility of resolving the situation through a further intensification of attacks on the U.S. working class this is determined crucially by the political situation in the United States. Here a limited but definite upturn of struggle by the U.S. working class was taking place by the end of 1982. (7) While the November elections stayed firmly within the



Pershing II missile (DR)

two capitalist party system, they however gave no encouragement to the ruling class to believe that it would have rapid victories with, for example, sweeping moves to eliminate large parts of the Social Security system — the chief alternative way to a military cutback to reduce the Federal Budget Deficit.

Faced with this situation, naturally different sections of the U.S. ruling class seek different solutions corresponding to their different interests and political orientations — hence the manoeuvring being engaged in by the Reagan administration at the end of 1982 as well as the bout of pronouncements by Kissinger, McNamara and other spokespersons of U.S. military and foreign policy.

Behind all the manoeuvring, however, there is no doubt what the U.S. ruling class would like to achieve. It would like to be able to push through the whole of its present international and military policy — both to militarily attack the colonial revolution and to put

5. Productivity rose in the U.S. economy at a rate equivalent to 3.6 per cent a year in the third quarter of 1982. But this was after only a 1.4 per cent increase in 1981, and an actual fall in 1980 and 1979. During most of the 1970s, U.S. productivity did not increase at all while that of its Japanese and West European rivals did. Furthermore, sustained productivity growth depends on capital investment. Capital spending in the U.S. economy, however, fell by 4 to 5 per cent in real terms in 1982. Projections are for a further 8.5 per cent fall in 1983. (Figures from *Business Week*, 15 November 1982.)

6. In September 1982, U.S. exports fell to 17.4 bn dollars — a fall of 0.6 per cent decline in July. U.S. visible imports in September were in contrast 21.6 bn dollars. The trade balance has been deteriorating steadily since the end of

the maximum pressure on the Soviet economy. No section of the U.S. ruling class favours another fully fledged period of 'detente' with the USSR for the simple reason that the Soviet bureaucracy does not control what takes place in world politics.

Every serious section of the U.S. ruling class is aware that it was not at the behest of the Kremlin that the Iranian masses overthrew the Shah, or the FSLN waged struggle to overthrow Somoza. But the Soviet bureaucracy was not able to prevent these advances. Furthermore the Soviet Union *did* supply the equipment, supplies and back up with which Cuban troops intervened in Angola, and with which the Ethiopian regime threw back the Somali invasion. It has the material resources, if it wished, to back up a new workers state in Nicaragua. These type of openings may produce pressure which the Soviet bureaucracy is not strong enough to withstand — as indeed happened from 1975-79. It is therefore, *qualitatively* preferable for imperialism if it can impose its decisions by military and economic diktat than if it has to do any type of deal with the Soviet bureaucracy.

This explains the meaning of the manoeuvring of the U.S. ruling class and its NATO allies at the beginning of 1983. It is only the resistance that the ruling classes face inside their own countries — the explosive growth of the anti-missiles and anti-nuclear movement—together with the grinding struggle against austerity—that makes them consider giving up any part at all of their military buildup. At the same time, if the West European working class can prevent the deployment of the nuclear missiles it will have struck a major blow for the class struggle throughout the world. That must be one of its fundamental aims in the year 1983. But the outcome will be decided on the streets of Europe and the United States and not in the negotiations at Geneva.

The British Labour Party and TUC has called for the largest demonstration in post-war British history to commemorate Hiroshima day in 1983 and oppose the missiles. The Dutch anti-missiles movement is calling for action in 1983, even greater than that which created the largest demonstration in the history of the Netherlands last autumn. It is by these means, and everything that goes with them, that the missiles *can* be stopped.

1980, and since mid-1981 the trade sector has accounted for nearly one-third of the decline in U.S. real gross national production.

Furthermore, this decline is particularly concentrated in specific sectors. Exports of manufactured goods from the United States fell nearly 10 per cent during the third quarter of 1982, while imports edged higher. This included a 12 per cent decline in chemical exports, which accounted for about one fifth of the decline in the manufacturing sector; and a decline of 10 per cent in exports of machinery and transportation, which make up about two fifths of visible exports. In August imports of Japanese cars accounted for 30 per cent of the U.S. market. (*Business Week*, 15 November 1982.)

7. See 'US/Canada Workers Prepare Fightback' by Will Reissner in *International Viewpoint*, 20 December 1982.



Cruise Missile—aggressiveness emphasised (DR)

Reagan's 'zero option' fraud

John ROSS

The imperialist ruling classes have confronted opposition to their nuclear missiles programme in Western Europe on a scale far exceeding that they anticipated. For that reason they have been forced to engage in increasing manoeuvres to attempt to divert and derail that movement. The most important of these, reaffirmed at the November 1982 NATO defence ministers meeting, is the so-called 'zero option'. This is a ploy advanced by Reagan in November 1981 television broadcast, coinciding with the initiation of 'Strategic Arms Reduction Talks' (START) with the Soviet Union. It is crucial, therefore, that the anti-missiles movement have a clear position on this. It has been reaffirmed as the position of U.S. imperialism following the announcement of new nuclear arms proposals by Andropov.

THE REAL NATURE OF THE 'ZERO OPTION'

What Reagan actually proposing is clear. The Soviet Union must dismantle all its nuclear weapons in Europe — that is the SS-4, SS-5 and SS-20. In return the United States will not deploy the Pershing II and Cruise missiles, but *will* retain in place every single one of its existing nuclear weapons, as well as the entire missile submarine force in the seas that surround the USSR. Britain and France will continue to possess all their nuclear weapons and to modernise them. This is supposedly a 'zero option' which the 'aggressive' Soviet Union is turning down.

In reality, in the whole history of fraudulent imperialist 'peace talks, few

more grotesque proposals than this have ever been put forward. It more or less ranks with Johnson's claim that the North Vietnamese navy was carrying out an offensive against the U.S. fleet in the Gulf of Tonkin, or President Carter's assertion that Cuba was posing a military threat to the United States by having a few hundred Soviet troops stationed there.

Let us take first the SS-20 — which the Soviet Union is using to replace its more than twenty-year-old SS-4 and SS-5. Both are liquid propelled rockets. The SS-4 takes hours to prepare for firing. Above all, both are fixed-site missiles that cannot be made mobile. Since the United States is now developing and deploying nuclear missiles that are accurate to a few hundred meters or even less, the SS-4 and SS-5 are completely useless to defend the Soviet Union against an American 'first strike'. This would be roughly the equivalent of attempting to repel a modern tank attack using weapons from the first world war.

The SS-20 is a modern accurate weapon. Above all it is *mobile* — which means that it is far less vulnerable to an attack by a system such as the American MX, or any more accurate American submarine-launched weapon — or of course the Cruise and Pershing II.

However, the SS-20 has far too short a range to hit the United States. Whereas the American MX, Trident, Pershing are quite capable of striking the USSR. Professor Carl G Jacobsen, professor and director of Soviet Studies at the University of Miami, explained the situation clearly in the January 1982 issue of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, "The point of the matter is...that SS-20 merely con-

firm and guarantee long established Soviet strike potentials against America's allies. The Cruise and Pershing II missiles, however, threaten not just reciprocal destruction of Soviet allies; they threaten the Soviet heartland instead, just as effectively as do inter-continental range missiles based on US soil. For there to be a true analogy Moscow would have to deploy the SS-20s in Cuba. The fact (is) that Washington feels that Moscow will be forced to swallow Cruise and Pershing missiles in NATO Europe, when it is quite clear that the United States would not tolerate SS-20s outside Havana."

Professor Jacobsen could have gone even further. Washington made it quite clear in 1962 in the Cuban 'missile crisis' that it would fight a world war to prevent the Soviet Union having any bases near the United States in any way equivalent to those with which the U.S. surrounds the USSR.

A NUCLEAR FREE EUROPE

In fact the Soviet Union has made it repeatedly clear that it is prepared to give up both the SS-20 and all the nuclear weapons that it has in Europe, or aimed against it, on one simple condition: that the imperialists do likewise — namely the United States, Britain and France remove *their* nuclear weapons.

But this proposal, 'A Nuclear Free Europe from Poland to Portugal' is totally rejected by imperialism because the Soviet Union can *only* be attacked with nuclear weapons. To remove all the American, British, French nuclear weapons from Europe would precisely make it impossible to attack the USSR. Imperi-

alism, however, is absolutely determined to have that potential — now as a threat and at some future date to actually use. It totally refuses the Soviet proposal to remove all nuclear weapons from Europe.

Reagan's proposal is absurd. It demanded that the Soviet Union give up all its nuclear defences in Europe, while the United States can maintain all its existing forces, the British and French modernise theirs, and the US deploy its new submarine forces. On that basis Reagan might as well propose that the USSR simply open up its borders, haul up the white flag, and allow the U.S. tanks to roll in. The Soviet Union rightly rejected this unserious suggestion of the United States — as Reagan knew they would.

In reality, Reagan's aim was purely political — a pure propaganda ploy. The 'zero option' was directly suggested by the then West German Chancellor Schmidt as the best way of demobilising the European anti-missiles movement. The 'zero option-plus-negotiations' formula, therefore, was and is given maximum propaganda projection by the West European governments. The Italian foreign minister Emilio Colombo praised the 'decisiveness and coherence' of the Reagan proposals. French Foreign Minister Claude Cheysson declared it to be 'the desirable solution'. Thatcher called it, 'a most important initiative,' and stated, 'I believe it will receive a warm welcome not only in political circles, but in the hearts and minds of people across Europe'. Schmidt stated that he was 'very grateful' that Reagan had awakened to the 'strategic and psychological situation in Europe'.

REFORMISM AND THE 'ZERO OPTION'

While Reagan's 'zero option' made no sense militarily it did, however, neatly hook some of the reformist forces in the 'European Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament' (END). This organisation, whose best known spokesperson is the British historian E.P. Thompson, has done valuable work in getting out factual material. But, ignoring not merely the different class nature of states concerned but all elementary factual evidence, they hold that the United States and the Soviet Union equally responsible for the military buildup — a version of the 'two superpowers' argument.

This in practice leads the forces of the END to line up with the right wing of the anti-missiles movement on key questions. For example the British Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament has a clear position demanding Britain withdraw from NATO. At the November 1982 CND conference, Thompson opposed this because he said it did not also condemn the Warsaw Pact. He was defeated.

This orientation also forces the European Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament to give up the struggle even for its own alleged demands. Officially it supports the demand for a nuclear-free Europe. But while this is the official pol-

icy of the Soviet Union, for reasons we have already discussed, it is completely unacceptable to imperialism. You therefore have to choose either to break with imperialism or to give up the demand in practice.

Thompson indicated exactly what the 'two-super-powers' orientation meant in practice when he came out favourably towards Reagan's 'zero option'. This means, however, accepting every single one of the present U.S. atomic weapons in Europe and the entire nuclear armament of Britain and France! So much for a nuclear-free Europe!

On this particular issue of nuclear weapons in Europe, unlike most of its other politics, the position of the Soviet leadership is essentially correct. It states that it will agree to the withdrawal of all nuclear weapons from Europe at any time. It says that it will unconditionally renounce the use of nuclear weapons in any circumstances against any country that refuses to have nuclear weapons on its soil. It applied this correctly during the last Greek elections when Papandreou pledged he would withdraw Greece from NATO and remove the U.S. bases from the country. The Soviet leadership stated that if this were done it would renounce the use of nuclear weapons against Greece in any circumstances and create a nuclear-free zone in the entire Balkans.

Such a position was, however, totally unacceptable to imperialism. After its electoral victory the Papandreou government dropped its pledge to withdraw from NATO. All the American bases and their nuclear weapons remain in Greece. The Soviet Union has since the election proposed that Papandreou implement his election pledge, reiterating that if he did so, it would take all steps it has outlined. This has been turned down flat by NATO.

What the Soviet Union says it will *not* do, however, is *unilaterally* give up its nuclear weapons when the imperialists do not. On this, one can hardly blame it. If the Soviet Union ever unilaterally gave up its nuclear weapons that would mean the *certainty* of nuclear war. U.S. imperialism and its allies would not hesitate to use their nuclear weapons under those circumstances — they already considered doing so in Korea, during the Vietnamese war of independence from French, and during the American war in Vietnam from the 1960s to 1975. If the Soviet Union had not had nuclear weapons, the United States undoubtedly would have used them.

Furthermore, while the Soviet Union has pledged it will never be the first country to use nuclear weapons, the United States has always refused to make a corresponding commitment. Evidently, if both countries were pledged never to use nuclear weapons first, people would tend to get the idea that neither really needed them, therefore, they should be abolished. As all U.S. military strategy since World War II has been based on its nuclear weapons, and the Soviet Union can

be attacked only by such means, under no circumstances is the United States going to agree to give up nuclear weapons.

This, however, is something that must be completely *demonstrated* before the eyes of the working class of the world — starting with the imperialist countries.

There is an *immediate* way to remove the threat of nuclear destruction from the working class of Europe. This is to accept without delay the Soviet Union's proposals for a nuclear free Europe. But this means for forces such as END, abandoning all the equal-blame slogans. The fact that the imperialists *refuse* to do this is a sure sign that it is they, and not the Soviet Union, who threaten peace. It is they, not the Soviet Union, who threaten the working class with nuclear destruction. The Greek worker should demand, as those in recent demonstrations have done, that Papandreou fulfill his election pledge, get out of NATO, get the American bases out of Greece.

WHAT ATTITUDE TO THE NEW SOVIET PROPOSALS?

It is in this political framework that the working class in Western Europe should consider the new Soviet proposals to limit the number of SS-20s to the number of nuclear weapons possessed by France, and Britain, in return for NATO not deploying Cruise and Pershing II.

There can be no objection in principle to the Soviet Union proposing reduction of its armaments in order to help extract concessions from imperialism. But what the movement in Western Europe cannot and should not do is to limit itself to the proposals which are now put forward by the Soviet bureaucracy. In particular, these accept possession of nuclear weapons by British and French imperialism — something the working class of these countries should reject. The Soviet proposals would also leave all existing U. S. nuclear weapons in Europe in place. The elimination not the 'limitation' of these weapons should be the goal of the workers movement in Europe. Particularly disgraceful was the reaction of the French government — containing CP ministers! Foreign minister Cheysson declared himself 'shocked' by any proposal that French nuclear weapons should be called into question.

There is no reason to campaign against the Soviet proposals, but the demands of the workers and anti-missiles movement in Europe should be clear, and independent of any negotiation at Geneva. They should not accept any imperialist power possessing nuclear demands — the demands must be clear and simple:

— No Cruise, no Pershing, no neutron bomb!

— Unilateral nuclear disarmament by Britain and France!

That is the way to fight now against nuclear war. That is the way to start the fight to withdraw all European countries from NATO. It means total and complete rejection of the zero option fraud of Reagan. ■

The course of the anti-missiles movement

John ROSS

The anti-missiles and anti-nuclear weapons movement is the largest international movement on any political question in the imperialist countries since the second world war. Three million people participated in its demonstrations in the summer of 1982, exceeding even the numbers of the anti-Vietnam War movement. The polarization that has developed in response to this question in the organised labour movement, in Western Europe especially, is also even greater than on Vietnam. Together with austerity, the issue of the Pershing II and Cruise Missiles will dominate the political situation in Western Europe in 1983. This combination has the potential to create real political turmoil in the West European countries.

As was pointed out in the first article on this issue — 'The Stakes in the Anti-Missile Movement' — this is a struggle whose outcome will affect every dimension of world politics.

Where did this vast movement come from? What propelled it? Why did it erupt when it did? What is the historical significance? These are the fundamental questions to which the labour movement and socialists must address themselves. We will consider them briefly in this article.

WHY THE ANTI-MISSILES MOVEMENT?

In order to understand why the anti-missiles movement has assumed such scope, it is necessary to go back to the crisis that faced imperialism in general, and U.S. imperialism in particular, at the time of the war in Indochina. Tracing this clearly shows that the anti-missiles movement is not something accidental but profoundly rooted in the structure of world politics.

The defeat of the United States in Indochina was not so much a military defeat as above all a political one — the greatest political defeat that imperialism has suffered since the victory of the Chinese revolution in 1949. It was indeed one of the great strengths of the NLF and North Vietnamese leadership that it understood that, while the war was being fought militarily in Indochina, its outcome would be decided politically by the pressures brought to bear on the U.S. government from both without and

within the country.

Even the timing of the NLF's great military offensives was decided upon in the light of *political* conditions and with *political* objectives. The Tet offensive of 1972 secured the favourable Paris Peace Accords. And the 1975 offensive was pressed at a time of maximum political paralysis within the United States.

This integration of political and military struggle by the NLF made it possible to benefit from the deepening economic, social, and political crisis inside the imperialist countries to secure victory. The NLF's struggle gained the undisputed support of the overwhelming majority of the people of the world and created mass opposition inside the imperialist states to the war policies of their governments. The combined results of the military struggle itself, the economic effects of the war inside the United States, the relative economic advantages given to the U.S.'s imperialist rivals by war, and the great wave of working-class struggles in Western Europe from 1968 to 1975 created the greatest political crisis of imperialism since World War II. Finally, the Vietnam War was lost *inside* the imperialist countries — above all inside the United States. It was this reality that determined U.S. international policy.

THE 'NIXON DOCTRINE'

Faced with intolerable internal political opposition to the deployment of U.S. ground troops in Indochina, the U.S. ruling class under Nixon /Kissinger had no choice but to undertake a major readjustment of its tactics. It was politically impossible at that time to follow the policy of massive direct U.S. military intervention utilised by Kennedy, Johnson, and their predecessors. Therefore, the so-called Nixon Doctrine was launched. It aimed to control and defeat the colonial revolution through relying more on a series of heavily armed pro-imperialist states (South Vietnam, Iran, Brazil, Israel, South Africa, South Korea, etc.) Political support for imperialist policies was sought from the Soviet and Chinese bureaucracies through 'detente'. The goal was to drastically reduce the political opposition to ruling-class policies inside the United States and other imperialist countries, and gain time to reorganise the U.S. economy and military apparatus.

The policy of 'detente', therefore,

did not — contrary to the views of the Soviet bureaucracy — represent the victory of some 'liberal' or 'progressive' wing of the American bourgeoisie (not very likely with Nixon in command!). It was adopted because the effects of the Vietnam War had become intolerable inside the imperialist countries themselves. As Kissinger put it in a somewhat apologetic manner, 'What else could we do otherwise than calm the atmosphere, when in this country (the United States) the political climate was close to that of a civil war?' (*Politique Internationale*, Autumn 1982.)

The policy of detente could, therefore, never be for imperialism anything other than an enforced tactical retreat designed to enable it to reorganise its forces from a firmer basis. Detente was a policy by U.S. imperialism to try to halt or limit the enforced retreat, make it in the best possible order, and in general conserve the maximum of forces for a new offensive. The Soviet and Chinese bureaucracies duly acquiesced in the policy. They thereby created the best conditions for the new offensive by imperialism, which culminated in Reaganism.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF DETENTE

Inside the imperialist countries, the ruling-class policies accompanying the Nixon Doctrine and detente undoubtedly achieved important political successes. From 1972 onwards, following the withdrawal of the mass of American ground troops from Indochina (and, therefore, the ending of high U.S. casualty rates) Nixon succeeded in ending the mass street demonstrations against Vietnam War in the United States. From 1975 onwards, the West European ruling classes, utilising the opportunities created by the policies of the reformist parties and the impact of mass unemployment, retook the offensive against their working classes, after having been clearly on the defensive since 1968. From 1975-79, major ruling-class successes were achieved in Portugal, Britain, France, Spain, and Italy. The immediate political crisis of 1968-75 inside the imperialist centres was overcome.

However, the concessions that the capitalist rulers had been forced to give directly and indirectly to the working people in the imperialist countries in 1968-75 had weakened the capitalist system on a world scale. The military pullbacks made

necessary by the need to calm the situation inside the United States and the other imperialist countries resulted in disasters for imperialism in the colonial and semi-colonial world. The 'strong and stable' semi-colonial regimes that the Nixon Doctrine called for beefing up turned out to be economically, socially, and politically vulnerable. The South Vietnamese regime was overthrown in 1975. The South African invasion of Angola was defeated by Soviet-backed Cuban troops at the beginning of 1975. The white border states of South Africa — Angola, Mozambique, and 'Rhodesia' — were overthrown, although the U.S. State Department had counted on them remaining in place for the foreseeable future.

By 1979, this series of defeats in the colonial world began to escalate qualitatively. The shah of Iran was overthrown, ending that country's role as a U.S. relay in the Middle East. The overthrow of Somoza in Nicaragua created a revolutionary crisis in Central America, opened full-scale war in El Salvador, and deepened the impact in the Caribbean of the overthrow of the Gairy regime in Grenada. Only the imperialist allies of the United States and a few ultra-reactionary states (Israel, South Africa, and more problematically some of the Latin American dictatorships) could be regarded as stable bases of support for U.S. policies.

Under these circumstances, the U.S. ruling class had *no choice* given its dependence on maintaining exploitation and oppression, but to embark on a massive new military buildup. 'Reaganism' was not an option but a necessity. As it was put by Secretary of Defense Weinberger in a 28 April 1981 San Francisco speech, 'We must become sufficiently strong to defend our interests anywhere they are threatened.'

POLITICAL NEEDS

On the technical/logistic side of their military buildup, there should be no doubt that the U.S. ruling class has made important progress. However, the problem is that this military buildup inside the imperialist countries has necessarily recreated many of the problems that the 'Nixon Doctrine' and 'detente' were designed to overcome. It has brought the questions of militarism, of the threat of conflict and war with the Soviet Union, of imperialist wars against semi-colonial countries, right back into the centre of the situation in the imperialist countries. And now these problems are interlocked with an austerity qualitatively worse than at the time of the Vietnam War. It is this combination that has produced the enormous scope of the anti-missiles and anti-nuclear weapons movement. It also demonstrates that despite their successes from 1975 to 1979 and despite the sharp changes in the *forms* of struggle, that have taken place, the ruling classes in the imperialist countries *did not* succeed in reversing the relationship of forces qualitatively and in re-establishing the

situation that existed prior to 1968. This is despite the fact that undoubtedly today, facing austerity, the working class is generally on the defensive, whereas in 1968-1975 it was taking offensive in strike struggles.

As regards the fight against militarism and imperialist wars, however, the situation is far more favourable to the historic interests of the working class than it was at the beginning of the Vietnam War. The most immediate prospect of a major crisis inside the imperialist countries today is the combining of this fight against missiles and nuclear weapons with a new upturn of struggles against austerity and the other effects of the economic crisis.

In the coming years, all these aspects will come together. There will be general elections in Western Germany and probably in Britain. There will also be some upturn of the world economy and, therefore, better conditions for working-class struggles against austerity. This combination has the elements of important political crises in at least important parts of Western Europe, and there is no doubt that the West European imperialists are genuinely concerned about such a possibility. They are *not* convinced that they can get the missiles into Europe, or at least into key countries, against the opposition of massive sections of the population. Some believe that even if they do this will be at the expense of a political crisis with long-term effects. Hence the frenetic flurry of manoeuvres on the diplomatic front in the last weeks.

WHAT STRATEGY?

Under these circumstances, socialists have to understand what major stakes for the international class struggle in the broad sense are involved in this fight against the missiles. It will affect the future of the working class not only of the imperialist states but also of the semi-colonial countries and the Soviet Union. The anti-missiles movement is not some sort of propaganda forum in which left groups present their ideas. It is a major part of the international class struggle (understood in its full and historic dimensions). If left-wing organisations aim to split or divert that movement, and were to succeed in that, they would deliver a major blow against the international working class. What is important for revolutionaries is that the anti-missiles movement succeed. This means that the following fundamental tasks face revolutionaries within the anti-missiles movement.

Firstly, the missiles movement *must not* base itself on the arms negotiations at Geneva or whatever other diplomatic manoeuvres may open up between the United States and Soviet bureaucracy. The strength of the anti-missiles movement is the way in which it brings enormous forces to bear on one single and precise object: *No introduction of Pershing II and Cruise Missiles in 1983!* That goal corresponds not only to the interests of the West European working class but

to that of the working class of the entire world. This struggle to prevent the introduction of the missiles *can* be won. And that will alter favourably the relationship of forces between the working people and the capitalists in every country. Even if the missiles are installed, the capitalists can be dealt a portentous political defeat if the struggles against them increase in breadth and determination. Obviously in such a confrontation the long-term political costs for imperialism are extremely important.

This struggle of course, invariably means a fight with the line of the reformists — the need to build a left wing in the movement. It means rejecting the line of 'equal responsibility' of the United States and the Soviet Union for the threat of war, the idea of 'two super powers', of linking withdrawal from NATO to the question of the Warsaw Pact, etc. It means fighting against any acceptance of proposals such as Reagan's and NATO's so-called 'zero option'. It also means taking on the debate underway in many countries over civil disobedience — explaining that while not all civil disobedience need be rejected (although terrorism of the type carried out spasmodically in West Germany should be), it is *not* the strategic way forward. Rather, it is necessary to explain, the way forward lies in mass mobilisations of the anti-missiles and labour movement.

It will be whether the demonstrations of 1983 qualitatively exceed in size even those of 1982, whether the anti-missiles movement is carried even further into the labour movement, whether it can be made central issue in the coming elections in Europe, that will decide the immediate outcome of the struggle. The actions and plans we report in this issue from Holland, Britain, and West Germany are signposts on the way forward.

LINKS WITH THE COLONIAL REVOLUTION

Secondly, while a fundamental source of the strength of the anti-missiles movement is its unity on its central demands, the forces within it should seek to establish the closest possible contact with the developing struggles in the colonial world.

An excellent example of this was provided by the role of the British Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) during the Malvinas war. The CND is a mass campaign that has mobilised 300,000 people in demonstrations on the single issue of unilateral British nuclear disarmament and against the introduction of Cruise and Pershing II missiles into Europe. As such, it plays a real role in the political life of the country and powerfully affects its labour movement. For example, the impact of its campaigns was one of the main factors that led to the two-thirds vote at the 1983 Labour Party Conference in favour of unilateral nuclear disarmament. It would be a criminal betrayal of the interests of the masses of working people in terms of the historical



Demonstration against nuclear missiles in Britain (DR)

class struggle to split this organisation by introducing into its platform other issues, such as the war over the Malvinas or the conflict in Central America. This would simply be to seek to destroy a powerful instrument in the class struggle in the broad sense. The task of revolutionaries is, while maintaining the unity of this mass movement, to build simultaneously struggles against wars such as the one in the Malvinas. These will, of course, draw on the large pool of forces in the CND.

The correctness of such a policy was demonstrated vividly in the Malvinas war. The CND has no position in its platform on the Malvinas question. Nevertheless, during the war itself the CND made a major contribution to building the actions against British imperialism's aggression. The organisation as such, without altering its platform, built demonstrations against the war and participated in other actions.

Revolutionaries, the left wing of the Labour Party, and the Communist Party also participated in building the Ad-Hoc Committee Against the Falklands War. Amid raging war hysteria, with support for the Tory Party leaping 20 per cent in the opinion polls in two months, this committee built mobilisations of 15,000 people against the Malvinas war. This development provides an example of how actions against the wars in Central America and other parts of the colonial world should be organised and related to the anti-missile movement.

JOB NOT BOMBS

The anti-missiles movement cannot be a movement against austerity either. It would be wrong to attempt to add to the platform of the anti-nuclear struggles demands such as for the 35-hour week, the fight against unemployment, etc. But revolutionaries have to attempt to point up the relations between the two

struggles constantly.

Above all in Europe today this may be summed up in the slogan 'Jobs not bombs'. Many classical demands of the workers movement — for example, for a programme of social expenditures not military expenditure — take on a new importance. This is a central question that revolutionaries must take up in their propaganda and explanation.

IN CONCLUSION

The years 1975-80 were not good ones for the workers movement in general in the imperialist countries. The austerity policies of the employers, the politics of detente, the manoeuvres of the reformist leadership inflicted a whole series of important defeats on the workers movement. Under the impact of the Vietnam War and a mounting economic crisis, the working people in the United States and other imperialist states, making their power felt both directly and indirectly, dealt a reverse to the world capitalist system in the early 1970s. They, in effect, combined with the workers and oppressed in the semi-colonial states, opening the way for major advances of the colonial revolution.

However, following this, the working class of the imperialist countries, faced with the strongest bourgeoisie in the world, themselves suffered serious setbacks and defeats. The victorious struggles in the world in 1975-79 came, in general, in the colonial countries, and there was a string of defeats in the imperialist centres. This in turn allowed imperialism to launch violent new military attacks against the colonial countries — the bloody results of which can be seen in El Salvador, Lebanon, the Malvinas, and all too many other countries.

The anti-missiles movement is the first great stirring that shows that imperialism only gained an initiative. It could not turn the clock back to before 1968. The

imperialist system continues to threaten to break at its weakest links in the semi-colonial countries — above all today in Central America. But to that problem has now been added the beginning of a new upturn of struggle of the working classes in the imperialist countries. The anti-missiles movement is a crucial part of that.

THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

More important even than the immediate struggle, however, is what it reflects in a longer historical perspective. For thirty years, imperialism has brought death and destruction to the peoples of the colonial world. It, however, seemed to bring to the workers of the home countries themselves peace. The great convulsions of the first and second world wars, and all that went with them, became a dim memory. Only with the wars in Algeria and Vietnam were the workers of the imperialist countries called upon to make great sacrifices for their masters in an immediate way. The bloodletting of the American working class in Vietnam led to one of the profoundest political crises in that country in this century.

However, the development of the nuclear-weapons race has started to give the workers in the imperialist countries an inkling that one day their masters may inflict the same fate on them that they have for decades on the workers of the colonial countries. The working class and oppressed of the imperialist countries lost fifty million dead in the first and second world wars and their aftermath. A nuclear war in Europe and the United States would make even the destruction visited on Vietnam seem nothing in comparison. From a historical perspective, the spasm in European society that gave rise to the anti-missiles movement from 1980 onwards represented the beginning of the realization in the imperialist countries that the threat of war had not been eliminated even for them, but only temporarily suspended. Capitalism has not, and cannot, eliminate this threat.

It might be nice to think that masses of workers could undertake great struggles simply for the interest of others. But such a naive notion would have nothing to do with Marxism. The working class will wage mighty struggles, and finally make revolutions because it fights for its interests. The self-interest of social classes must, at specific historical moments, correspond to the interests of all which is what defines the historically progressive role of classes.

From 1968, and even more from 1975 onwards, the workers in the imperialist countries found they had to fight harder and harder to defend their jobs, their wages, their health services, and their democratic rights. Now some also believe for the first time in many years that they may have to fight as well to defend their right, and that of their children, to life. That combination is going to produce major political struggles in Western Europe in 1983. ■

Interview with a leader of the Hungarian peace movement

Although Hungary is the smallest of the Soviet-bloc states, and the one most isolated by its language, it has held a key political position since 1956. It continues to be shaped profoundly by what was the first and still the only example of a mass nationwide uprising against the rule of the totalitarian bureaucracy.

The managerial and market reform advocated by the bureaucracies throughout Eastern Europe has been much more widely implemented in Hungary than anywhere else, since the old system was thrown entirely into the melting pot by the 1956 revolution.

In the wake of the uprising and brief but massive resistance to the overwhelming Soviet interventionist forces, the new government installed by the Red Army accepted also an extensive compromise with the population. The extent of toleration is much greater than in Eastern Europe. At the same time, the regime has allowed Kremlin-style "Marxism" to wither away, to the point of becoming simply a thin veneer in official publications.

Hungary has been the laboratory for those elements in the Stalinist bureaucracies everywhere who are looking for ways to stabilize post-Stalin bureaucratic rule. These experiments now take on a greater importance since the new Kremlin chief, Yuri Andropov, masterminded the Soviet operation in Hungary (he was Soviet ambassador at the time of the uprising and during the Stalinist reconsolidation) and he continues to rely extensively on Hungarian experts trained in the Kadar experiment.

Even in Hungary a chillier wind has been blowing since the Polish December. In recent months, unofficial publishing centers have been raided, although they were more or less tolerated before. There are also signs of more independent activity, mainly around the peace movement that has developed in the last year. This is now the main example of a peace movement in Eastern Europe after the appearance of one in East Germany. And because of the relative freedom for discussion in Hungary, there seems to be more open political debate in and around the movement. That is reflected in the following interview, which offers some insight into the way opponents of bureaucratic rule view the question.

In general, it is notable that all the broad opposition movements that have developed in Eastern Europe and the USSR in recent years have been built around issues that cut against oppression both East and West and to which the bureaucratic regimes, because of their roots in the working-class movement and in the economic forms created by the overthrow of capitalism, were obliged to give lip service. That is true of the movement to support the Helsinki treaty on human rights, the Polish workers fight for trade-union rights, and now for the movement against the threat of nuclear war.

The following interview is with Istvan Szent-Ivanyi, one of the founders of the Hungarian peace movement. It was done by Klaus Ehring, and published in the October issue of the Vienna magazine *Gegenstimme*. This monthly is devoted to the movement against bureaucratic rule in Eastern Europe and the USSR. Members of the Austrian section of the Fourth International actively promote it and collaborate with it.

Q. So, an independent peace movement has been formed recently in Hungary as well?

A. The attempts to build one are very recent. They go back perhaps a year. Before that, there was little in the way of peace activity, or at least we knew of very little. There were groups of Catholic believers that had been opposing military service for then years already. This movement functioned in a very conspiratorial fashion, and embraced perhaps two to three hundred young people. Those of them who refused the draft were sentenced to two to three years in prison.

The opposition peace movement first made its views public in September 1981.

Among others, the writer Gyorgy Konrad presented the position that it was important to gain a broad base for the Hungarian opposition. An independent peace movement could not be so easily anathematized by a government whose official ideology commits it to fighting for peace and which constantly plays up the doings of the Western peace movement. His paper was essentially based on such considerations.

Within the opposition, there were big discussions about this. It was decided that such independent peace actions should not be supported because they only served the interests of the Soviet Union both in the East and in the West.

Some splinter groups in the opposition, however, decided to organize a student peace march. This proposal was openly discussed in the student parliament at the end of October. Finally, a ten-person organizing committee negotiated with the Hungarian Peace Council over the time and the route of the march.

From the very beginning, the Communist Youth Organization, the KISZ (Magyar Kommunista Ifjúsági Szövetség), strongly opposed this proposal, and planned a counterdemonstration for December 13. The secretary of the Peace Council demanded on the spot that we take part in the official KISZ rally. Of course, we did not do that, and the independent peace demonstration at the university immediately dispersed.

A similar thing had happened in April. A group of high-school students formed the Anti-Nuclear Campaign-Hungary. They planned a peace march for March 9 with their own slogans and placards, directed both against U.S. and Soviet armament. Naturally, the KISZ functionaries moved in quickly to help, so that when the demonstration finally took place, there was hardly anyone there but the "Young Guard," who browbeat the Antinuclear Committee activists.

After this demonstration, the Antinuclear Committee decided not to work with the KISZ anymore but to organize its own actions in the future. So, they printed their own leaflets, increased the number of their activists to 120, and planned to publish their own journal, which they were stopped from doing.

You run into Antinuclear Committee activists all the time in the parks and street corners working to recruit to their group. Besides this small group, there was an even smaller one of sculptors and artists that formed a peace committee in March. They are planning a big peace exhibition in Budapest. We have good contacts with them, even if they are doing work that is not so politicized in the propagandistic sense.

Outside Budapest, there is also a peace group in Szeged at the university, which also wanted to hold a peace march last spring. In Szeged, however, there is a very hard-nosed political leadership — we call them the Hungarian Pol Pot Clique — and so the members of the group there were interrogated by the police and harassed to the point that they had to give up the march.

Q. What does the peace committee at the University of Budapest plan to do next?

A. We are holding a peace congress this October. This includes some lectures on the question of peace and, if possible, the passing of a motion that will not be aimed so much at the super powers as against our own government. This seems more sensible to me because the Hungarian government can be forced to make some changes in the relationships within the country, such as creating an alterna-

tive to military service. They might also be forced to move to reduce the military budget.

Q. What's the starting point for your discussions about peace?

A. The first thing is the overall political question. This is precisely because the opposition does not want to get involved in the peace actions, since it thinks that they are in Moscow's interest. We have rejected this approach. The discussion of what consequences the fight for peace will have on the internal structure of our own country has not yet been carried any further.

The internal militarization in Hungary is not so striking anymore. In recent years, Hungary has been largely petty-bourgeoisified, liberalized, Westernized. This has also had an effect on the consciousness of people. The militarization of the society is more identifiable in the official declarations, both in what they say and the way they say it.

Q. What do you expect to gain from these peace actions? Do you hope to have an influence on the relationships inside Hungary?

A. It should not be forgotten that this is a very new movement. It has no ideology, nor any worked-out methods, nor hardly even plans and perspectives.

Q. Are you in contact with Father Bulanyi's peace group?

A. Organizationally, we have had no ties with it. It is also very difficult to develop contacts. These people are quite reserved. They do not want to get pushed into any political corner. They are committed to peace on religious grounds and oppose all forms of violence.

In fact, most draft resisters come from these Catholic groups of believers. In our group, there has been a lot of discussion about the question of draft resistance. But the more moderate members won with the argument that we should not let ourselves be divided right away over such a bone of contention but should confine ourselves in the beginning to the question of ending the arms race in the West and East.

Q. How do you expect the state to react if you carry out your planned activities?

A. We cannot predict that exactly, the state reacts quite irrationally to such things.

At present, there is sort of a compromise between the government and the opposition, between the state and society. The state tries not to intervene as long as no taboo subjects are put up for discussion, such as the presence of Soviet troops in Hungary, the question of the Hungarian minorities in the neighboring countries, or the 1956 uprising. All other questions can be discussed without the state stepping in. Just recently, however, things have begun to change. Thus, some samizdat materials have been seized.

Q. Isn't it also an element in the peace movement that those involved want to play down confrontation with their own state and therefore avoid questions that make this relationship unnecessarily difficult?

A. That was a central concern in our discussions, and we agreed to differentiate the peace movement clearly from the opposition. It wasn't so difficult, because the opposition does not want to work with us directly. In an essay in the new issue of *Beszelo*, called "Thoughts About the Immediate Future," Janos Kis has presented the tasks of the opposition rather clearly. He points to three main tasks for the future:

— The creation of a new ideology for the opposition.

— Deepening and strengthening oppositional activity.

— A thoroughgoing analysis of the Polish events.

In this context, Kis sees the fight for peace as a very secondary question. The opposition's attitude to the peace movement is not hostile, but it is not sympathetic either.

Q. What is your own view of this?

A. I also think that the peace movement is not a central arena. But I think that it is a good preparation for political commitment, and that this movement can gain a broad mass base. The movement is very popular, because everyone wants to live in peace, and it is not so dangerous as oppositional activity. ■

East German women oppose military service

The following appeal to East German premier Erich Honecker, signed by hundreds of East German women, was published December 6 by the West German weekly magazine *Der Spiegel*, from which we have translated it.

It is evidence of the growth of the peace movement in East Germany and its close connection there and elsewhere in the Stalinized countries with demands for democratic rights, the right of public discussion and the right of citizens to participate in public life and have a voice in political decisions.

In this letter, we would like to explain to you some of the thoughts that have occurred to us about military service for women since the passage of the new military service law on March 25, 1982. Among us are women both with and without children, Catholic and Lutheran women, and women without any church affiliation. Some of us have known war. Others have been spared this terrible experience. But we all have one thing in common. We are not willing to stand by passively and accept the imposition of new obligations on women that we can not reconcile with our consciences.

— We women want to break the vicious circle of violence and refuse to have anything to do with violence as a means of solving conflicts.

— We women see military service for women not as an expression of equal rights but as something that opposed to our feminine consciousness. We do not see equality as standing side by side with the men who take up arms but

rather beside those who have realized that fighting against the abstract enemy means the destruction of human life, which we reject.

— We women see readiness for military service as a threatening gesture that stands in the way of moral and military disarmament and which smothers the voice of human reason and replaces it with military obedience.

— We women feel a special interest in defending life, in aiding the old, the sick, and the weak. Working against war and for peace can only be done in the areas of social welfare and education, so as not to fail the rising generations.

— We women do not want to have to stand one day in the ranks of the National People's Army and defend a country that would become uninhabitable, even after a conventional war, and in Europe that would probably end in a nuclear catastrophe.

— We women believe that humanity stands today on the brink of an abyss and that the piling up of more arms is insane and can only lead to a catastrophe.

Such a dreadful descent into destruction can perhaps be avoided if all the tasks this situation poses for us can be discussed publicly. According to Article 65, Paragraph 3 of the Constitution of the German Democratic Republic, before being passed all proposed basic laws are supposed to be discussed publicly, so that the result of this public discussion can be incorporated in the final version.

In our opinion, the law in question is a basic one, both because of its subject, and also, and not least important, because it directly concerns half the population of the German Democratic Republic.

— We women declare that we are not prepared to accept universal conscription, and we demand a legal option for refusing to serve. The right to refuse to serve is essential, because the passage of this law imposing military service on women infringes our freedom of conscience.

Since no public discussion of this law was possible, some of us have petitioned for such a discussion. Others hoped to participate in such discussions when they were permitted. Unfortunately, these expectations have been dashed. Because we could find no one willing to discuss

a question that concerns us so vitally.

The speech given by Academician Arbatow at the World Religions Peace Congress in Moscow greatly encouraged us to turn to you with our questions. We ask that those responsible for the new military service law show a willingness to conduct a public discussion. You are no doubt familiar with this speech. In any case, we would like to quote a few sentences.

Professor Arbatow takes up the psychological and moral allies of the arms race and mentions the myth that the accumulation of arms and military forces can contribute to security.

“All these myths promote the arms race. Today, they try to conceal it with complicated notions and riddles, using

terminology incomprehensible to the layperson. I don't rule out the possibility that these things have been specially invented to gain some distance from ordinary people. It is often said that ordinary people should not be allowed to concern themselves with the question of atomic weapons, with the problems of war and peace, because they would get everything confused and do harm.

“But in my opinion, that is the most dangerous and harmful myth. ...This problem has to be solved with the active participation of all... if we want to serve humanity and not the arms race.”

We could not find a better defense of our petition.

We ask you to give us the opportunity to conduct a public discussion. ■

Dutch anti-missiles movement making big steps forward

Robert WENT

Amsterdam — A big rally was organised in Amsterdam on November 21 to commemorate the demonstration of 400,000 persons here a year ago against nuclear weapons, which was the biggest mass action of its type ever held in the Netherlands. The rally was sponsored by the Amsterdam committee that mobilized for that action. It is one of the local united fronts that decided to continue functioning after the 1981 demonstration.

The Amsterdam rally was not just a commemoration. It was first and foremost a meeting to discuss what the peace movement should do next. Thus, all the organisations involved in last year's demonstration sent a speaker. This included a representative of the FNV, the Dutch trade-union confederation, which has more than a million members. His participation marked an important step forward for the campaign against the Cruise missiles in the country's biggest trade-union body.

The FNV speaker, Cees Commandeur, who is the member of the national leadership responsible for the questions of nuclear weapons and the reconversion of military production to peaceful purposes, said that in the coming year the labor confederation intends to increase its participation in the anti-Cruise campaign. Last year the FNV did not formally endorse the demonstration. But the build-up for the action had such an impact on the union ranks that the membership and many branches began to demand that the union leadership mobilize for it. In the last weeks, the leadership was obliged to adopt the position that, while it was not officially supporting the demonstration, it hoped that large numbers of trade

unionists would come out. Some of its component unions — notably the industrial-workers union, which has about a quarter of a million members — even appealed for that on the front pages of their weeklies. In the coming year, Cees promised, the FNV would participate officially in the campaign.

This move by the FNV leadership came after a discussion in the union branches on a proposed statement of position for the FNV on nuclear weapons. The document was drawn up and submitted by the leadership after it threw out the first draft. Two things were striking about these discussions, Cees said. The first was that a lot of people showed up for the meetings. The second was that a lot of union members wanted a more radical stand than that proposed by the union leadership. This resulted in some changes in the document. One such change was the addition of a statement that the FNV is not opposed to unilateral-disarmament measures that can lead to multilateral disarmament. Another was inclusion of the pledge that the leadership would be more active on the missiles question. The effect of this decision was shown when the FNV decided to participate in the defense committee for the soldiers union leaders accused of stealing nuclear secrets.

A study done by the University of Nijmegen was published a few weeks before the Amsterdam rally. It was the results of a poll done during last year's demonstration, which showed the following things about the kind of people who participated.

— Some 29% of the demonstrators belonged to unions; 56% of these were demonstrating for the first time against

nuclear weapons. Almost half of the union members came from the industrial union, accounting for 12% of the crowd. This represents 50,000 people. Even half of that would be an impressive figure — 25,000 industrial workers demonstrating for a political demand!

— Some 71% of those present said they were demonstrating not only for moral reasons but to raise political demands on the government.

— Some 80% of the demonstrators were for the Netherlands leaving NATO the minute it tried to impose the installation of Cruise missiles in this country.

— The overwhelming majority were for more radical actions if the demonstration did not get positive results.

The most important thing for the peace movement now, the well-known spokesman for the IKV, the biggest Dutch peace organization stressed repeatedly, is to win the unions to the campaign. A considerable part of the peace movement's plans for the coming year is directed toward achieving this end.

PROJECTIONS FOR 1983

A few weeks ago, a new right-wing government was installed in the Netherlands, a coalition of two bourgeois parties, the so-called Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD) and the Christian Democrats (CDA). These two parties together have 81 of the 150 seats in parliament. So, under normal circumstances, they could make a quick decision to install the Cruise, and that is what they want to do! But because of the existence of a large peace movement the circumstances are not normal.

In an interview with British journalists, former Premier Van Agt said: “I don't

believe the Cruise will be installed on Dutch soil." This was not some expression of wishful thinking by a member of the peace movement. It came from the right-wing leader of one of the two parties that now have a majority in parliament. Even Van Agt knows that the question of the Cruise missile will not be decided in parliament but by the relationship of forces between the peace movement and its enemies. That is why the government's program on the missiles is very vague.

By the end of 1983, the government says that it will make a decision on this question and write a report to parliament. In the meantime, the first, "passive" preparations will begin for installing the missiles. Before the work is begun to actually make the missile sites "operational," the government says, parliament will have time to discuss and decide on it.

But even if the government decides to install the missiles at the end of 1983 — which they are not going to do, since the peace movement is strong enough and determined enough to stop them — the missiles cannot be stationed in Holland before 1986, and so we would have three more years to build the fight against them. It takes time to produce the missiles, so a schedule has been set.

If the government decides to accept the missiles, it will find that its problems have only begun! The peace movement learned some lessons from the last year's peace demonstration, which was followed by months of silence. The activists are determined not to let this happen again. The IKV says explicitly that in the coming year there has to be a constant campaign around the actions. A big demonstration is planned for October 1983 in The Hague. But along with this, demonstrations are being planned for the immediate aftermath of this demonstration and the following weeks and months.

At a press conference on November 21, the peace movement made public its plans and made it clear that the fight is only beginning. The main lines are the following.

— A mass demonstration in October, if possible coordinated with actions in other West European countries and the U.S.

— A program of activities building up to this demonstration, starting as soon as possible. This includes the projection of a day of action in the capitals of all eleven Dutch provinces.

— Discussions have begun between the IKV and the FNV to see if it is possible to organize a labor day of action against the Cruise, involving work stoppages throughout the country of at least two hours.

— Discussions have also started between the IKV and the PvdA, the main workers party. This party gained seats in the last general elections because it broke with the right-wing government and because it took a stand against the new Cruise missiles. The IKV is making it a priority to involve as many as possible of the 2 million people who voted

for the PvdA in the next demonstration. It argues that since this party won seats by their stand against the missiles, now they have to show that they are prepared to act on this issue.

— The IKV wants all organizations to make it clear that they are present in the demonstration by carrying their own banners and posters. In the Netherlands, there is no tradition of unions marching in contingents in demonstrations behind their own banners. But now the IKV, with its 403 branches, is going to put its forces into bringing the unions into the campaign and promoting dis-

cussions in the factories about why workers have to act against the Cruise missiles, not only as unionists, but with the union. And so, it should be much easier to get the unions to assume their own profile in the demonstrations.

The IKV has also moved to form the first national youth organization against the missiles (the first national meetings have already taken place).

In all, we see to be on the threshold of a quantitatively and a qualitatively new and higher stage of the Dutch movement against the Cruise missile and against the imperialist war drive.. ■

Rearmament against the colonial revolution

The nuclear weapons programme is only the most spectacular tip of the enormous U.S. military buildup. The other part of the programme is the conventional weapons one aimed in particular against the colonial revolution.

The core of this is the build up of the highly-mobile Rapid Deployment Force. Announced by Carter and strengthened by Reagan, this is supposed to be backed by the targeted 600-ship navy. The core of this navy is to be an increase from 12 to 15 in the number of aircraft-carrier battle groups. The number of Air force tactical fighter wings is to be increased from 38 to 44.

In addition to these central programmes, available for use in any part of the world, the following specific projects have been put in place against the colonial revolution.

1. In Central America the sending of American 'advisers' to El Salvador, the large-scale training of Salvadorian troops in the United States, the military buildup in Honduras, the support to the regime in Guatemala, and the undeclared war with Nicaragua constitute the largest direct armed military intervention by the U.S. since the Vietnam war.

2. In the Pacific, immediately following the 'fall' of 'South Vietnam', Ford announced the so-called 'New Pacific Doctrine'. According to this, the stability of South East Asia was held to depend on the military, political, and economic presence of the United States. Announcements made by Nixon of the reduction of U.S. forces in South Korea were in practice cancelled — even though they were reaffirmed on paper in 1977. Major extension of the strategic Pacific air-force base of Guam was speeded up, as was the construction of the vast Indian Ocean base of Diego Garcia. The Japanese bases of the Seventh Fleet at Yokosuka and Sasebo were completely modernised. A continuous military conflict has been fomented through support of reactionary forces on the Thailand border in Kampuchea.

3. The greatest U. S. military buildup of all has been directed to the Arab East. Right from the beginning the key American buildup area was the Gulf. The 'Rapid Deployment Force' was specially earmarked for this region. The Carter and Reagan administrations aim to create a Fifth Fleet to secure the Indian Ocean, to complement the Sixth in the Mediterranean and the Seventh in the Far East. In August 1977 Carter signed Presidential Directive 18 creating special units for intervention in the Gulf. This was declared officially an, 'area of vital interests of the United States', meaning that all weapons, up to and including nuclear ones, would be used to maintain U.S. positions there.

In November 1981, with 'Operation Brightstar', the U.S. staged largest military exercise it had even undertaken in the Middle East. The U.S. troops involved were increased from 1,500 to 6,000 following the assassination of Sadat. This operation involved landings in Sudan, Somalia, Oman, and Egypt. In summer 1982 U.S. troops were introduced into the Lebanon — complementing those already in the Sinai.

The United States, as part of this policy, also commenced an even more rapid buildup of the military potential of Israel. The Israeli raid to destroy the Iraqi nuclear reactors was carried out with the direct knowledge of the U.S. The Israeli invasion of Lebanon was prepared through a tenfold increase in U.S. arms shipments to Israel during the first months of 1982. In addition to these moves a huge increase in weapons supplies to the Saudi regime and to Egypt was commenced.

4. In Africa the United States has been the mainstay of South African policy in Namibia. It has blocked all pressure on the racist Apartheid regime and its goal is to force the Cuban troops out of Angola.

Since in addition to these quantitative expansions, there has been a major improvement in the technological level of the U.S. weaponry, as shown graphically in the Lebanon war, there should be no illusions as to what those figures mean. The U.S. today is qualitatively stronger on the technical military level than at the beginning of the Vietnam war.

The political balance sheet is of course far more mixed.

The stakes in the Bombay textile workers strike

Amar JESANI

Kunal CHATTOPADHYAY

Between two and three million workers in Bombay's textile industry have been out on strike since January 18, 1982. Workers at seven enterprises began their strike early in October 1982. The number of workers and the duration of the strike by themselves make this one of the greatest struggles ever waged by any sector of the Indian proletariat. But the importance of this strike goes far beyond that. In order to understand its implications, we have to look at the recent pattern of class struggle in India.

The state of emergency declared by Indira Gandhi's regime in 1975 was part of an effort by the Indian bourgeoisie to take a political counter-offensive against the working-class struggles and mass movements and to facilitate the restructuring of Indian industry. However, the emergency narrowed the base of the bourgeois politicians, and contradictions appeared between the industrial, commercial, and agrarian capitalists. The working class, too, in spite of the efforts of its mis-leaders, refused to take economic cut-backs passively. By the last phase of the emergency, working-class struggles were rapidly picking up.

With the March 1977 Parliamentary elections, a two-sided situation emerged. On the political plane, the bourgeoisie, ably assisted by the Stalinists (and also many far-left groups) succeeded in presenting as the primary contradiction a pseudo conflict between "democracy" in the abstract and "authoritarianism," also in the abstract. But at the same time, on the economic plane, the number of working-class struggles, including strikes, rose sharply. In the face of this, the central governments (the first one headed by Morarji Desai and the second one by Charan Singh) totally failed to impose new laws that were designed to severely restrict the rights of the common people, especially the organised working class. This led to a new rallying of the bourgeois forces around the Congress Party (Indira).

In January 1980, the Congress (I) was returned to power. This coincided with the beginning of the world capitalist recession. In the face of increasing economic difficulties, the Indian bourgeoisie had to speed up its restructuring of the industrial sector as part of its strategy to increase profits. In view of the experi-

ence that it had with the state of emergency, the bourgeoisie pushed this strategy through in a piece-meal fashion.

Repression was increasingly legalised through the National Security Act (NSA) the Essential Services Maintenance Act (ESMA), the Disturbed Areas Act (DAA), and so on. More and more workers began losing their jobs through lockouts, retrenchment, and closures. The spiralling inflation sharply reduced the standard of living of the workers. Working-class struggles began taking on a defensive character.

The state, however, intervened actively to defeat the workers. It beat down the struggles (involving 78 days on strike) of more than 100,000 public-sector workers in Bangalore and Hyderabad, of the Loco Running Staff (50,000 to 75,000 workers on strike for more than forty days) of the Railways, and of the employees of the Life Insurance Corporation.

That is the context in which the textile-workers strike developed. The owners of the textile plants, particularly in Bombay, are trying to restructure the industry. To a large extent, they are trying to shift to the production of yarn rather than cotton cloth. They are also trying to introduce a new wave of mechanization and automation. Finally, the top twenty textile barons are trying to take-over many of the less profitable concerns.

The accomplishment of all these aims would involve massive retrenchment and an increased work-load for the workers. A defeat in the present strike would almost certainly leave them helpless in the face of such an offensive from the employers. On the other hand, at present, with the prolongation of the strike beyond all the expectations of the government, the mill owners, the liberal and radical commentators, and the reformist left, this struggle is inspiring an ever widening circle of workers and other oppressed people (Untouchables, poor peasants, and the rural proletariat). A victory in this strike is likely to unleash a major proletarian fight-back on the political as well as on the economic level.

THE TEXTILE WORKERS MOVEMENT

The textile strike has challenged the bourgeoisie sharply on the political level. To understand how, we have to look at the history of the textile-workers movements and the ways the state has tried to

suppress them.

The Bombay textile industry is one of the oldest in India. Likewise, workers there have been among the vanguard of the Indian working class. In 1918, they held their first general strike. In 1924-25, over 1,500,000 workers struck work for several months. Among other things, this strike gained them their first industry-wide union. The rank-and-file initiative was given formal shape by Mill-Committees at the plant level.

This strike wave of the 1920s, and the gains it made, alarmed the colonial rulers of India, as well as the Indian bourgeoisie. To counter the militancy of the textile workers and the increasing hold of communists over the textile union, the colonialists and the bourgeoisie adopted the strategy of setting up legal negotiating machinery along lines favourable to them and suppressing strike actions.

This policy was carried a step further in 1938 when the British rulers authorised an experiment in "self-government," which was confined to the provincial level. The local government dominated by the Indian National Congress drafted by Bombay Industrial Disputes Act of 1938. This act covered not only textiles (cottons, silk, woolens, and hosiery) but also the banking, transport, and electricity supply industries.

Under this act, a union could be recognised as the representative of workers in the entire industry in collective bargaining, if it could demonstrate through complicated legal procedures that 25% of the workers in the industry were affiliated to it. This act made it virtually impossible for a militant trade union to become a representative union because of the legal hurdles it included and the state patronage to the mill-owners and the government-sponsored union that it provided for. Thus, it restricted the scope of legal militant working-class actions such as strikes.

After independence, the Bombay Industrial Disputes Act of 1938 was given a more rounded shape in the Bombay Industrial Relations Act, (BIR), which came into force on September 29, 1947. This new act increased the percentage of members from the total work force in the industry, necessary to get the status of representative union from 25% to 30%. This new act also kept all the barriers to workers getting represented by the union of their choice. Later on, the new law was also applied to the developing

sugar industry. It covers two provinces, Maharashtra and Gujarat.

The struggle against this black law was started by the textile workers as early as 1938, when the first version of the present law was originally put into effect. However, by the time the transfer of power to an independent government was effected and the present law introduced, the Congress-led Mill Mazdoor Sangh union (RMMS) had been installed as the sole bargaining agent in the textile industry. Since then it has regularly signed agreements unfavourable to the workers without their agreement. It tied the workers' hands and left the textile barons an open field to transfer their profits from textiles to other industries, such as engineering and chemicals.

Since the 1950s, workers have consistently fought to get rid of the RMMS. When their strikes in the early 1950s failed to dislodge it, in the late 1950s, they decided to experiment with legal forms of struggle. Several opposition unions came together, and a membership drive was started. Early gains were made in the Labour Court, but the RMMS appealed to the higher courts, and the proceedings were dragged on for a few years. As a legal 'representative' union, the RMMS was able to use strong-arm and pressure tactics to smash the opposition union. Thus, the workers realised the futility of legal struggles to get recognition for a union of their choice.

One result of this was the extension of the practice of forming mill committees and working through them. In 1969, the workers formed such committees and fought strongly against the RMMS leadership. In 1973-74, they carried on a 42-day strike against a wage agreement signed by the RMMS. Eventually, this resulted in a wage hike of between Rs.22 and Rs.40. In 1976, in spite of the state of emergency, the workers fought against the government order limiting bonuses to 4%.

The workers involved in the present strike have absorbed the major lessons of the earlier struggles.

The workers realised from the first that all attempts to have the RMMS derecognised through the legal process would be foiled by the provisions of the BIR Act. At the same time, all other traditional left unions were losing the confidence of workers because of their emphasis on legalism. These were the main reasons behind their choice of leadership. The workers of the seven enterprises who began their strike in October 1981 were not affiliated to any big union. But by the end of the year, Datta Samant had emerged as the undisputed leader of the textile workers.

NEW LEADERSHIP — THE ROLE OF DATTA SAMANT

After the start of the first phase of the strike in October 1981, hot debates started up at the meetings of the Mill Committees over such issues as the demand for wage parity for textile workers

with workers in other industries (e.g. engineering) and permanent status for the 100,000 substitute workers who constitute about 40% of the total work force in the Bombay textile industry. The Mill Committees decided to make a strong attempt to dislodge the RMMS. This seemed to require an alternative leadership. At the time, Datta Samant, who led the struggles of the engineering workers for higher wages in 1977-80 was at the peak of his popularity, owing to his arrest under the National Security Act. He was the obvious choice.

Datta Samant is a former Congress Party man. As far as his trade-union practices go, he has not been averse to signing agreements accepting retrenchment and workload increases. But his methods of leading struggles are militant. He prefers direct action to legal battles, and he has led a number of strike actions in other industries besides engineering.



Dr Datta Samant (DR)

It was characteristic of Datta Samant's style that the initial demand was for a wage raise of Rs.300-500 to bring the pay of textile workers to par with that in modern engineering and other industries. Unlike other union leaders, he begins by refusing to pay heed to the bosses' statistical manipulation. Other demands included provisions regarding Leave Travel Allowance, House Rent Allowance, making all substitute workers permanent. More far-reaching demands were for recognition of Datta Samant's Maharashtra Girni Kamgar Union (MEKU), and for standardisation of work-loads and working conditions throughout the industry.

However, it was not Datta Samant who led the workers to strike; the workers through their Mill Committees forced him to announce the date of the strike. When the workers found that Samant was not building decisively for the strike but was waiting for some positive response from the government, they gathered at his office in the second week of January 1982 and gave him an ultimatum. That left Samant with no alternative but to announce that the strike would begin on January 18, 1982. This was one day before the National Campaign Committee,

formed by several traditional central trade unions, called for an all-India general strike against promulgation of the NSA, ESMA, and for several economic demands.

From the beginning, therefore, several forces were operating. The provincial government, the central government, and the RMMS were determined to crush the strike. The trade-union confederations and the National Campaign Committee formed by them did not take the strike too seriously. They were also very hostile to Datta Samant. Since the rise of Samant in 1977, they had been suffering losses. They knew that if Samant were successful in textiles, that would nearly wipe out their base in Bombay, and would pave the way for his influence spreading to other parts of India. They had no political perspective for carrying such direct working-class action forward. Instead they saw it, and still do see it, as a threat to their line of maintaining the status quo.

NEW EXPERIENCES FOR INDIAN WORKERS

Over the last ten months, the strike has passed through a series of tests. The outstanding results are the following:

Strengthening and extension of the Mill Committees.

Immediately after the start of the strike, the employers obtained court orders prohibiting workers from going within a 100-meter radius of the mill gates. So, the workers began to organise Mill Committee meetings in areas; and, thus, workers of several mills started gathering for rallies at different places in Bombay. Strong centres were set up, and served as places to hold daily meetings and discussions, and for preparing various programmes of actions, as well as for caring for needy workers and their families. All of this was organised by the workers themselves.

Since Samant had no trade-union structure based on organised bureaucracy, a grass-roots leadership arose from the workers themselves. It is this leadership from the working-class activists that is spearheading the strike and is promoting a growing radicalisation amongst broader and broader layers of the working class.

Increasing emphasis on political demands.

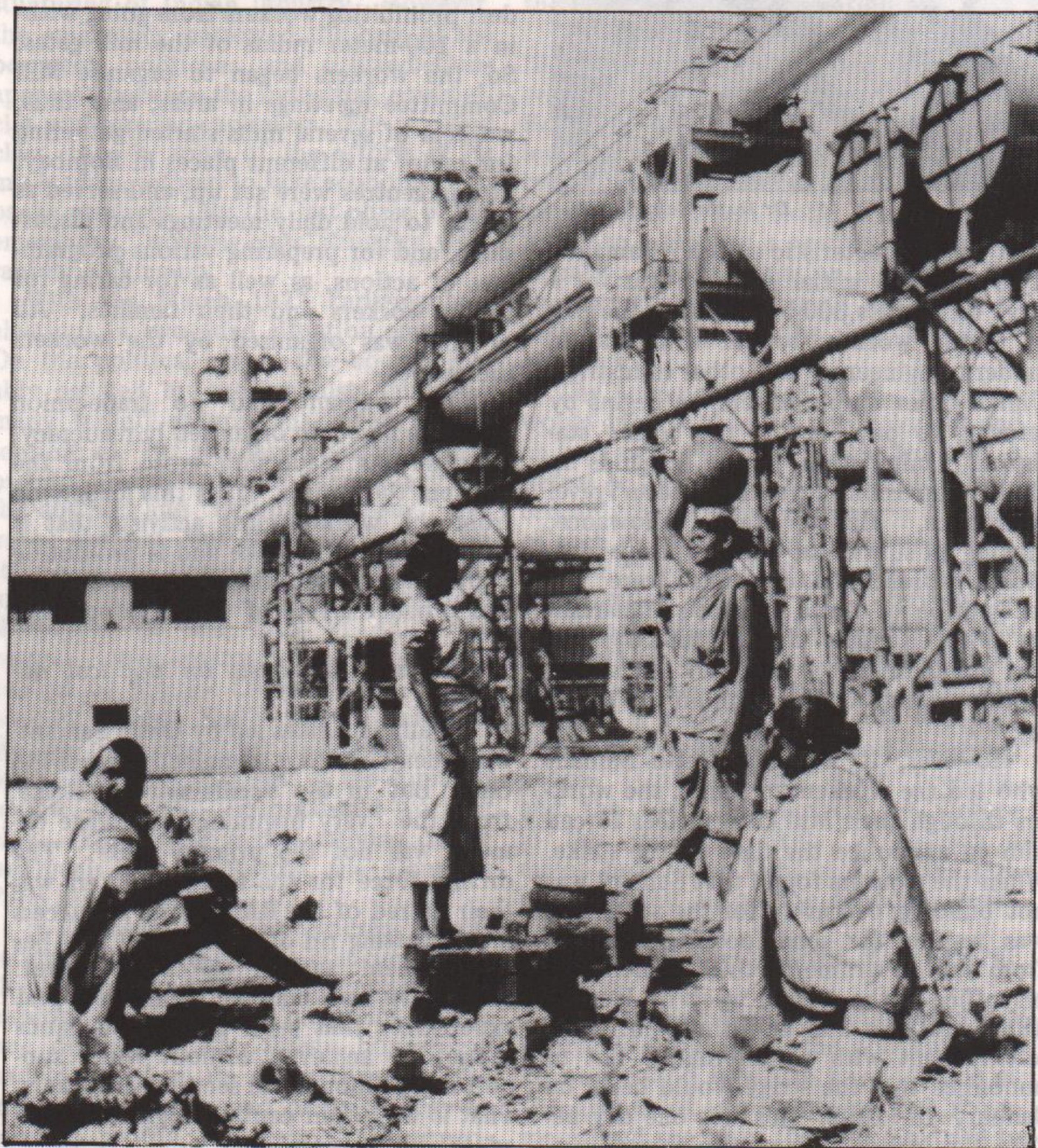
Usually in strikes led by Datta Samant, wage demands have remained the central ones. But in the textile-workers strike, from the very beginning, the wage demand was not the primary issue. The driving force for the textile workers was their hatred of the RMMS, and so success means getting rid of the RMMS. This has pitted them against the state power. They have also learned from their past experiences that such political demands cannot be achieved without wider support from amongst all sectors of workers. That is why their central slogan is "United, the Workers Will Win".

Growing sense of solidarity amongst other workers of the Western Zone of India.

Solidarity actions have included meetings, demonstrations, strikes, and financial help to the striking workers and their families. The extent of mobilization of industrial workers in Bombay and elsewhere has been really spectacular, given the fact that Datta Samant has no organised trade-union structure and also the fact that all other trade unions supporting the strike are only half-heartedly doing solidarity work. Since 18 January 1982, no public rally or meeting has drawn less than 50,000 workers.

A public rally in Shivaji Park around the middle of March drew between 300,000 and 400,000 workers. In May, about 500,000 workers joined a long march organised by the MGKU. Recently, on 2 October, a rally in Shivaji Park was attended by more than 300,000 workers. Not only that, about 1.5 million workers in different industries all over Maharashtra, affiliated to the unions led by Datta Samant and Serva Shramik Sangh, went on a three-day solidarity strike action from 11 to 13 October 1982. By not joining this strike, the Stalinists and centrist-led trade unions exposed their political bankruptcy. The pressure created by this working-class solidarity action was so great that the CITU, which is led by the CPI (M) was obliged abruptly to join

Industrial workers in India (DR)



in the strike on 13 October. Throughout these three days, to protest against the government's attitude, thousands of workers deliberately courted arrest, and all of them, including Datta Samant, were imprisoned for 14 days.

A strong worker-poor peasant alliance.

Many of the textile workers have strong roots in the countryside. As the strike dragged on, over 70% of them went home. This is a common practice in India. But this time there was a marked difference. The workers who went back to villages became propagandists, formed support committees, and sent material aid for the 70,000 workers and their families who have stayed in Bombay. Not only that, they have spread their fighting spirit in the rural areas by participating in, and organising the struggles of the rural proletariat for higher wages and against corruption in the Employment Guarantee scheme of the Maharashtra government. Thus, for the first time in the recent history of the working-class movement in this province, a concrete bond of unity was established between striking workers in the urban area and the rural proletariat and poor peasants.

Blunting of the repressive apparatus.

Despite the fact that the strike has lasted so long and despite the fact that the textile industry is classed as an "es-

sential service," the government has not been able to implement the draconian provisions of the Essential Services Maintenance Act. The repression seems to have had almost no effect on the striking workers. Twenty-two worker activists were arrested under the National Security Act in August, but their places were immediately filled by natural leaders of the working class that have been emerging in greater and greater numbers.

REACTIONS TO THE TEXTILE-WORKERS STRIKE

In previous issues of *International Viewpoint* we have described the development of the strike from the time of the fall 1982 Bombay police strike, and the solidarity strikes and other actions that took place then, to the brutal repression that followed.

These strikes involved over 1.5 million workers in a massive show of solidarity with the textile workers.

The strike has been a test for the left groups. The Stalinist and the centrist left were, to say the least, scared of this mighty show of strength by the workers. They did not expect this strike to continue for such a long time. Taking up a stance of passive moral support, they waited, and are still waiting, for the collapse of the strike and a corresponding downfall of Datta Samant himself. But the workers' militancy has upset their expectations. They thus stand exposed before the striking workers. Only the Lal Nishan Party, and its trade union, the Sarva Shramik Sangh, have consistently and actively supported the striking workers. These are the only groups that have further consolidated their position.

At the all-India level, the National Campaign Committee, founded on 4 June 1981 in Bombay by several central trade unions, has taken a totally passive attitude towards the strike. Like their comrades in Bombay, they have failed to understand the political implications of the strike.

So far they have not mapped out a concrete plan for solidarity action. In West Bengal, where a left front headed by the CPI(I) is in power, very little was done to mobilise the working class in support of the Bombay textile workers.

While the strike was on, bye-elections were held in the Thane Parliamentary constituency of Bombay. Datta Samant formed a 'Kamgar Aghadi' (Workers Front) and announced his candidature. His election campaign centered around defence of the textile strike. But the CPI and the CPI(M) decided to back a candidate of the bourgeois Janata Party against him in the name of 'Left and Democratic Unity', which is the major current variant of popular frontism in India.

A similar role was played by the leaders of the various components of the National Campaign during the presidential elections. Given the indirect method of electing the President in India, it offers little possibility for waging propaganda campaigns. But the NCC got bogged

down in parliamentary bloc making and in a much touted operation to get a 'consensus' candidate instead of concentrating on the actual class struggle in the country.

The effect of all this has been that the solidarity movement that has grown up in Maharashtra has not been duplicated in the rest of India. Even among the far left, the response to this struggle has been very poor outside Maharashtra.

THE FAR LEFT IN MAHARASHTRA

The far left in this province has seriously undertaken the task of building solidarity with the textile workers. After working separately for some time, in September 1982, several of these groups formed a united front on this issue. The components included the Navjavan Bharat Jabha, a Maoist organisation; and its student wing, the Bidzarthi Pragati Janghatna; the Lok Adhikar Ghavalval, an independent Marxist group; the UTUC, the Maharashtra branch of the trade-union confederation dominated by the Revolutionary Socialist Party; the Bolshevik-Leninist Group, a Trotskyist group; and the Communist League, Indian section of the Fourth International.

On 10 September, these organisations began a campaign centering around opposition to the National Security Act, which had been used to arrest textile-worker activists. They distributed 25,000 copies of a leaflet and held numerous street-corner meetings and demonstrations in various parts of Bombay. On 22 September, a huge public meeting was organised by them in a hall in Bombay. It was addressed by the secretary of the MGKU and representatives of the organisations in the front. The popular response to these solidarity actions showed clearly that the industrial workers, white-collar employees, and the urban petty bourgeoisie were looking for a leadership to channel their solidarity. But it should be noted that the UTUC withdrew from the front after this 22 September meeting.

This front also actively worked for the success of the October 11-13 solidarity strike. In protest against the police repression of the workers who exposed themselves to arrest at the time, these organisations issued a call for a big procession and demonstration in front of the office of the commissioner of police in Bombay on 16 October 1982. Byculla station in Bombay, where the procession was to start, was surrounded by the police. And those who came to participate in this protest march were driven away by force. Despite this, about 150 activists from the organisations in the front traveled by train instead of by road and reached a station near the commissioner's office. But that station was also surrounded by the police forces before they reached there, and so they were forced to disperse.

Then a delegation was chosen, consisting of a representative from each organisation in the front, and it submitted



Indian textile workers (DR)

a memorandum condemning the police repression.

Apart from these far-left organisations in Maharashtra, women's organisations have also mobilised in solidarity with the textile workers. Since women textile workers and the women members of the families of textile workers are also in struggle, such women are also a target of repression by the authorities. For example, a daughter of a textile worker was raped in a police station. Women's organisations built up a strong protest movement against such sexual oppression.

In Bombay, various feminist groups and organisations have supported the strike by collecting grain, raising funds, and holding demonstrations against the repression.

UNHELPFUL CRITICS

Outside Maharashtra, most of the far-left groups have not played a useful role. Several of them seem to think that carping criticism of Datta Samant is the only way that they can express solidarity with the strikers. Others are effectively down-grading the struggle by explaining that it is primarily an economic struggle around wage issues. There are exceptions to this, but they are a minority even within the far left. These problems were illustrated when some ex-Maoists called for a solidarity meeting in Calcutta. They booked a small hall, but even that was less than half filled. Of those who attended, only two or three were trade unionists with any real base. All the far-left groups active within the working class of West Bengal stayed away from the meeting.

The Communist League, Indian section of the Fourth International, has undertaken a campaign to build solidarity with the textile workers on an all-India level. Apart from the work being done by comrades in Maharashtra, extensive propaganda activity is being carried out in Gujarat. In Bihar and West Bengal, along with propaganda work, the CL is collecting financial aid for the striking textile workers. The congress of the CL, held this fall, passed a resolution on solidarity with the textile strike. And building support for the striking workers was made one of the main priorities for the

Indian Trotskyists in the coming period.

THE IMPACT OF THE TEXTILE STRIKE

The textile strike has inspired various oppressed strata such as the dalits (untouchables), women, and others in Maharashtra. It has deepened the radicalisation of the activists in these layers.

Despite the passivity of the trade-union confederations and the Stalinist and centrist left parties, workers in different parts of the country are becoming aware of the true significance of the textile strike.

The strike is not over yet. It has now gone on a year, and for some of the workers involved well over a year. This is the strike of the century for the Indian workers, and it is an international landmark as well. But unless a strong solidarity movement is built up in India and internationally, it will be difficult for the textile workers to win their central demands. And a defeat would mean a tremendous blow to the Indian proletariat. Since the government has been out to illegalise all strikes and to push through the bourgeois strategy of restructuring industry at the expense of the workers, a defeat here will mean a crucial political defeat of the Indian proletariat.

Thus, India-wide solidarity actions are urgently needed, as well as international solidarity. Working class organisations in other countries can show solidarity by passing resolutions with the striking workers and sending them to the union headquarters, by sending financial aid, and by publicizing the strike and building broad support for it. ■

Messages of Solidarity should be sent to:
International Confederation of Free
Trade Unions
37-41 Rue Montagne-aux-Herbes
Potageres
Brussels
Belgium

asking them to forward messages to India.
Please send copies to !
Proletarian Politics
K-8 Nensy Colony
Express Highway
Borivli (East)
Bombay 400.066

Ceylonese bourgeoisie moves toward dictatorial rules in response to IMF pressure

The Sri Lankan government is instigating a massive wave of repression against all opposition forces in the country. Not only is this directed against the Tamil nationalists, who have been a consistent target of repression, but against worker and peasant activists, and even members of the Buddhist and Christian clergy.

This repression is exercised under the provisions of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, (PTA), and the Emergency

The present attempt to concentrate power in the hands of Jawardene, the president of Sri Lanka, which is the reason for the present repression, is linked to the failure of the government's economic policy.

When the present government, of the United National Party, came to power in 1977, their policy was to open the economy of the country to the multi-nationals and foreign capital. At first there was a great deal of euphoria about the economic growth. But now the situation is very grim.

In May 1982 a sub-committee of the World Bank presented a special report to a meeting of the aid donors to Sri Lanka in Tokyo.

This report makes it quite clear that the situation has deteriorated, and that the government has not been revealing the facts. For example, the government announced that the inflation rate in 1981 had been 17 per cent, whereas this report showed that it had been 32 per cent. The country's reserves have fallen to a dangerously low level. In 1982 they equalled the cost of four weeks' imports. In 1983 they will be nil. Unless, of course, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) helps out with further loans.

This report illustrates that the government's policies had been responsible for the enormous growth in the money supply — the massive printing of new bank notes. Unless the government takes drastic new measures the situation will get worse.

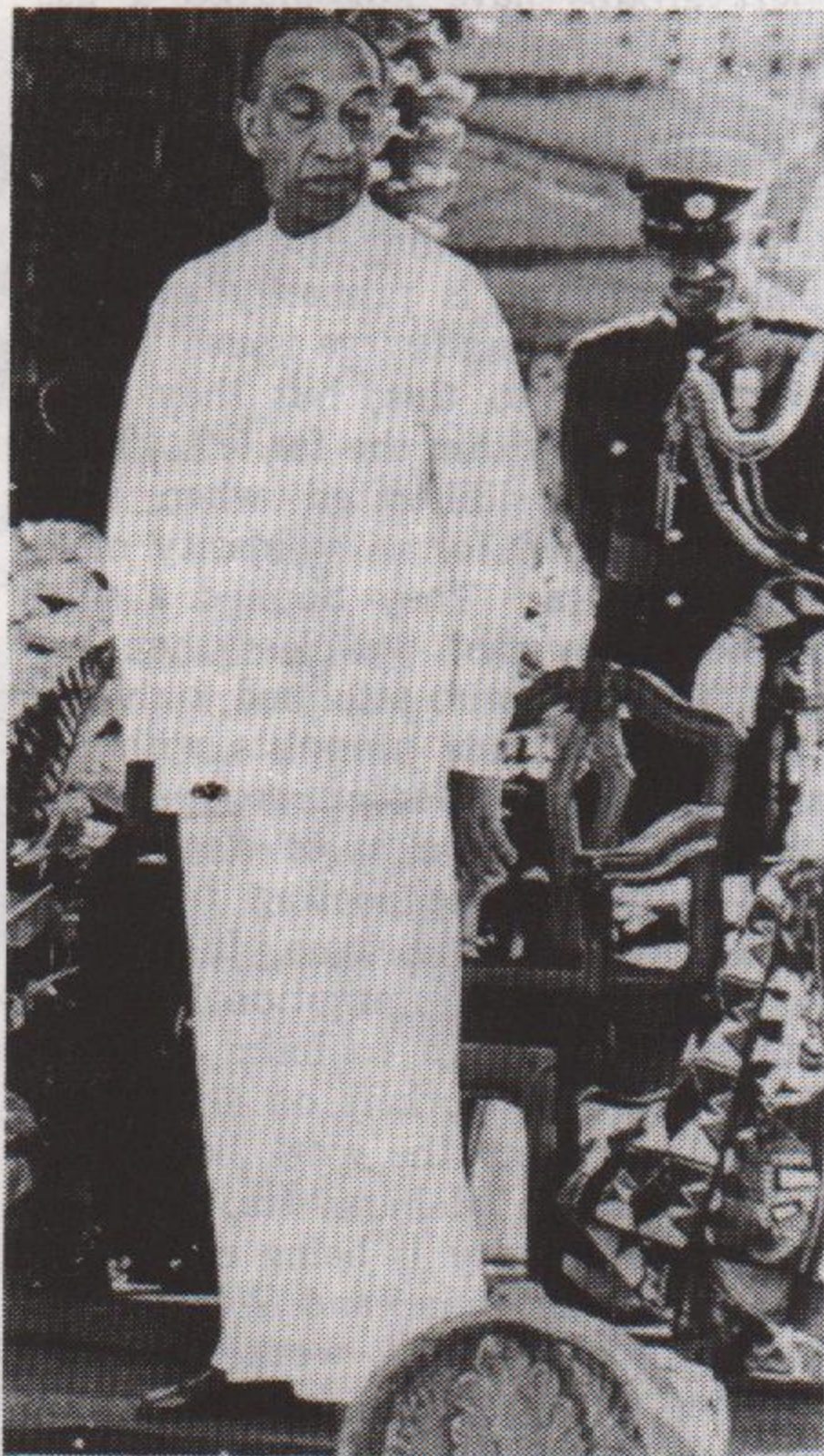
The steps the World Bank report recommended were firstly, to have a 'realistic exchange rate'. This is just a euphemism for devaluation. This government has already devalued the rupee by 100 per cent when it first came to power, and then allowed the rupee to 'float', leading to a further 25 per cent devaluation. Secondly, to stop all new building projects. And thirdly, to reduce subsidies. The transport subsidy has already been reduced from 400 rupees to zero. The food subsidy has been reduced from

2,000 m to 200 million. Any further reductions would mean that the almost free education system and the free health service, already deteriorating, would have to go. Such measures would provoke wide opposition. In 1981 the government attempted to introduce fee-paying education but had to abandon it.

So, their present measures are to try and ensure there is no opposition to their carrying out the World Bank's dictates.

CENTRALISING POWER IN THE PRESIDENT'S HANDS

The first thing the government did was to secure the position of Jawardene as



President Jawardene (DR)

president. Using their overwhelming majority in Parliament they changed the constitution to bring forward the presi-

Provisions that were brought into effect on October 20, 1982, allegedly to stop 'post-election violence' after the presidential elections.

International Viewpoint correspondent Mikael Ernwik asked Upali Cooray, member of the Revolutionary Marxist Party, Ceylonese section of the Fourth International, and presently active in the 'Campaign for Release of Political Prisoners in Sri Lanka' in Britain to explain the context in which the government is carrying out this brutal repression of democratic rights.

dential election scheduled for 1984 to October 1982.

They did this at a time when the major opposition party, the bourgeois Sri Lankan Freedom Party, (SLFP), was in a state of disarray. And they made a deal with the bourgeois leadership of the Tamil United Liberation Front to ensure that they stayed neutral.

But of course it is not enough just to secure the position of the president. Now they are trying to extend the life of the present parliament for a further six years by referendum rather than holding an election.

It is quite clear why. In the presidential election they won a majority of 52 per cent, but the Tamil population was not voting as the Tamil ULF called for a boycott. Had they voted the government would have lost, the only place the government was defeated was in the Northern, Tamil area.

If they get this through they will use a provision of the 1978 constitution that they introduced to allow the president to appoint new MPs. Every MP of the UNP has already had to sign an undated resignation letter so that Jawardene can replace them at will — he does not just want complete control over the opposition but over his own party as well.

These proposals have already caused some friction between the government and the judiciary that they appointed in 1977. The Supreme Court only approved the referendum by a majority of 4 to 3.

So, with the slenderest of majorities in the country they want to keep the five-sixths majority in parliament.

REPRESSION INCREASES

The government extended the 'emergency powers' they introduced as the presidential elections ended for no reason at all.

They have used these powers and the PTA to arrest the secretary and 22 district secretaries of the SLFP — thus paralyzing this party. Many others, how

many is not known, have also been arrested. Detainees can be held anywhere, and are not allowed contact with anyone.

The government is also preventing the opposition from campaigning by shutting down printing presses which print anti-government material. The Communist Party daily newspaper *Attha* has been closed down and the CP offices shut. Other presses have been shut down, including one which published an appeal by 82 clergy, 50 Buddhist and 32 Christian, calling for a 'no' vote in the referendum.

At the same time the government is flagrantly breaking its own election regulations. These forbid putting up posters calling for a 'yes' or 'no' vote in the referendum. Yet they have put posters on every lamp post and in every bus and train — and anyone putting up a poster for a 'no' vote has been arrested!

Arrests have been widespread, including of a large number of clergy. Human rights activists, teachers, students, and workers have also suffered. But there has been a mass response to this repression, which has been concentrated in the north. On November 30 there was a huge demonstration of opposition. Schools have been boycotted and picketed by their students at every level including primary schools. There have been fasts and hungerstrikes in temples and churches. The government has not succeeded in frightening the Tamil population and the opposition has spread to other Tamil areas, such as Eastern province.

CLAMPDOWN ON TRADE-UNION ORGANISATION

This response has not led the government to ease up at all. Their objective goes further than winning the referendum, they are also trying to get rid of the opposition trade unions, particularly in government departments. This campaign has been particularly effective in the transport unions. Where the workers have resisted the government has come down hard.

In one key industrial area the workers in 24 factories organised a solidarity co-ordinating committee. This has had confrontations with the government, which have resulted in one factory first in the dismissal of several trade-union militants, and now in the arrest of a number of trade-union and solidarity activists, including three members of the RMP.

So the government is trying to get total control over the workplaces, and I think it may become impossible for the independent trade-unions to function. And this is an attempt to impose conditions which will allow them to meet the demands made by the World Bank.

INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

The extent of the repression, directed not only against Tamil nationalists, but workers and peasants, including Sinhalese, should make it possible to unite all

those opposed to the Prevention of Terrorism Act and violation of human rights.

The most urgent task is to save the lives of the young Tamil militants Kuttimani and Jegan (*International Viewpoint*, No17 November 15, 1982).

Solidarity activity is particularly important in those countries from whom the Sri Lankan government is hoping to get aid. For example there are both British and Swedish companies building dams financed by loans from their respective countries. Here it would be good to make propaganda explaining how the British and Swedish governments were aiding this repressive regime.

The sorts of things that should be done are to send protest letters and telegrams demanding the restoration of democratic rights, a stop to the hangings, and for the release of all the detainees held without trial.

Trade unions and members of parli-

ament should be asked to give their support, and exert what pressure they can. Financial aid for legal expenses and the families of detainees is urgently required. And in different countries committees should be formed to link up with the committee in London to form an international campaign. ■

Send protest letters to:

J.R. Jawardene
Colombo
Sri Lanka

For further information contact:

Campaign for the Release of Political Prisoners in Sri Lanka
9 Grays Inn Buildings
Rosebery Avenue
London EC1
Great Britain

Local Communist Party unit joins Swedish section of the Fourth International

BUILDING THE
WORLD PARTY OF
SOCIALISTS

"The fact that I have changed parties doesn't mean that I have changed the political line that I'm fighting for. It means that I now have a party behind me that really supports that line."

This is the way that Greger Sagerstrom explained his decision to break with the Swedish Communist Party and joined the Socialist Party, Swedish section of the Fourth International. He and a dozen or so others who left the Skara branch of the CP along with him formed a unit of the Socialist Party in this fair-sized industrial town in southwest Sweden.

Sagerstrom had been the chairman of the Skara CP branch and was elected to the city council. He decided to retain his seat on the council, becoming the SP's first elected representative. He told *Internationalen*, the weekly paper of the SP:

"It is a natural thing for me to stay on the council. Our CP section fought the election on the basis of the ideas we still hold and which led us to change parties. ...We have made our opinions very clear through leaflets, letters to the editor in the local press, and through our own newspaper. Those who voted for us knew very well what they were voting for. Besides we are well known here,

and we personally know at least half of those who voted for us."

The new SP branch began immediately selling *Internationalen* and publicizing their decision to join the Fourth International organization: "It's good to be able to sell a paper that we really believe in," members told an *Internationalen* reporter after their first sale.

The Skara branch began moving toward the SP after the military crackdown in Poland. They were not satisfied with the Eurocommunist CP's weak protest. Their criticisms of this became combined with their criticism of the CP's tail-endist line toward the Social Democratic Party and its complicity with the Social Democrats' class collaborationism, especially in view of the Social Democratic government's harsh austerity program.

Once they found themselves in opposition in the CP, they discovered that the possibilities for political discussion were limited. When they found a political organization they agreed with, the SP, they decided to break altogether with the CP. They are confident that other groups in the CP will follow their example as class struggle sharpens in Sweden in the years to come. ■

Overwhelming support for Trotskyist shop chairman

Just before Christmas, Gote Kilden, a leading member of the Socialist Party, Swedish section of the Fourth International, was reelected chairman of his shop committee at the Volvo plant in Goteborg by a vote of more than two to one, despite a heavy-handed campaign by the Social Democratic Party union leadership to get him out.

The Social Democrats, who control the Swedish labor movement from top to bottom, had refused for example to allow Kilden to participate in the negotiations over a reconstruction project, although all those employed in it had asked in writing that he be included in the talks.

The Social Democrat union leaders argued that Kilden did not represent the views of the workers when he opposed a junket to Portugal by the local leadership, opposed the workers paying into the company funds, and when he demanded that the local contract should make up for what the workers lost in the national one.

"So, the vote became a referendum on these questions," Kilden told *Internationalen*, the weekly paper of the Socialist Party. The election clearly aroused a special interest, because the participation was 70%, as opposed to the normal 50%.



Gote Kilden (DR)

The Social Democrats tried to force a straight party vote. But that backfired this time, Kilden said, because the austerity policies of the new Social Democratic government are very unpopular in the workplaces.

He commented: "I think that the result shows that the Socialist Party did not isolate itself by putting up its own candidates in last year's general election (against the Social Democrats). To the contrary, this vote reflected an appreciation of the fact that we have followed a consistent political line."

Kilden offered an alternative for workers who have been becoming disgusted with the corruption of the local Social Democrat bureaucrats as well. *Internationalen* noted:

"As the Social Democrats were handing out their ballots in the hall, the tone was set by an older worker who has voted Social Democrat many years. He had gotten fed up with the local leadership's junkets and complacency. 'No, we're not electing the travel bureau this year.'"

The vote was 228 for Kilden, and 100 for his Social Democratic opponents.

In this election, the Maoist KPML(r), which customarily boycotts union votes, called on its supporters to cast their ballots for Kilden.

The result of the vote was widely commented on in the big press as marking the growth of a radical mood among workers.

Subscribe to International Viewpoint

This issue of *International Viewpoint* centres on the campaign against placing US nuclear missiles — Cruise and Pershing II — in Europe, and the development of the peace movement in general.

Every indication is that this will continue to be the major political question in Europe. *IV* will be continuing to cover the developments in this movement throughout the year. As we explain in this issue this is important not just for the European workers movement, but is a central part of the worldwide response to the imperialist offensive, along with the developing revolutions in Central America.

Make sure that you follow what is going on by subscribing or resubscribing to *IV* rightaway!

Subscription rates are given below, and the subscription form is printed on the back cover.

Please if possible pay in bank drafts or postal orders in French Francs. Make out cheques and postal orders to PEC, and mail them to: International Viewpoint, 2 Rue Richard Lenoir, 93108 Montreuil, France. Postal cheques to: PEC, CCP account no. 2 322 42T Paris. Bank transfers to: PEC, Robespierre branch of BNP, Account no. 230179/90, 153 Rue de Paris, 93100 Paris, France.

FF95	£ 9	US Dol. 16	Can Dol. 19
FF105	£10	US Dol. 19	Can Dol. 21
FF130	£12	US Dol. 22	Can Dol. 26
FF145	£14	US Dol. 25	Can Dol. 29
FF175	£16	US Dol. 31	Can Dol. 37
FF195	£18	US Dol. 37	Can Dol. 40
FF240	£22	US Dol. 42	Can Dol. 49
FF270	£25	US Dol. 47	Can Dol. 55

Countries	1 Year	
	Surface mail	Air mail
Europe	175 FF	195 FF
Asia	175 FF	270 FF
Middle East	175 FF	195 FF
Africa	175 FF	240 FF
North Africa (Algeria, Morocco, Egypt, Lybia....)	175 FF	195 FF
The Americas	175 FF	240 FF
Countries	6 months	
	Surface mail	Air mail
Europe	95 FF	105 FF
Asia	95 FF	145 FF
Middle East	95 FF	105 FF
Africa	95 FF	130 FF
North Africa (Algeria, Morocco, Egypt, Lybia. . .)	95 FF	105 FF
The Americas	95 FF	130 FF

INTERNATIONAL VIEWPOINT

ISSUE No 21

ISSN: 0294-2925

10 January 1983

Fortnightly Review of News and Analysis Published Under the Auspices
of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.

War Threat Overshadows Holiday in Nicaragua by <i>Rolf Bergkvist and Maria Sundvall</i>	3
Storm Warnings in Argentina by <i>Gerry Foley</i>	5
The Stakes in the Anti-missiles Movement by <i>John Ross</i>	7
Reagan's 'Zero Option' Fraud by <i>John Ross</i>	11
The Course of the Anti-missiles Movement by <i>John Ross</i>	13
Interview with Leader of Hungarian Peace Movement From <i>Gegenstimmen</i>	16
East German Women Oppose Military Service <i>Document</i>	17
Dutch Anti-missiles Movement Big Steps Forward by <i>Robert Went</i>	18
Rearming Against the Colonial Revolution <i>International Viewpoint</i>	19
The Stakes in Bombay Strike by <i>Amar Jesani and Kunal Chattopadhyay</i>	20
Ceylon Bourgeoisie Tries to Impose IMF Demands Interview with <i>Upali Cooray</i>	24
Building the World Party of Socialists	26

News closing date 3 January 1983

Signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of the editors.

BLOCK LETTERS PLEASE

LAST NAME FIRST NAME

ADDRESS

CITY COUNTRY CODE

RENEWAL

SUBSCRIPTION