

TORCH

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POVERTY—

35 Million in U.S. Are Its Victims

The crisis of the U.S. economy continues to wreak havoc on poor and working people.

Last month, the official unemployment rate rose to a 41-year high of 9.8 percent. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, nearly 11 million people who are actively seeking work can't find anything, and another one and a half million have become so discouraged that they've given up looking.

But this tells only part of the story. In July, the Census Bureau announced that the poverty rate for 1981 was the highest since 1967. Fourteen percent of the U.S. population—one person in every seven—had incomes below the government-defined threshold of \$9,287 for a family of four. This was an increase of 2.2 million people over 1980.

As usual, unemployment and poverty have hit oppressed groups and young people the hardest. Joblessness among Black workers is 18.5 percent, compared to 8.7 percent for whites. Latino unemployment rose steeply in July, reaching 13.9 percent. And nearly one of four teenagers—24.1 percent—is without a job, a figure that jumps to an incredible 50 percent for job-seeking Black youth.

Similarly, 34.2 percent of all Black people were living below the poverty line in 1981, as were 26.2 percent of the Latino population. Poverty among whites for 1981 was 11.1 percent. Meanwhile, the Census Bureau says that families headed by women alone make up half of those living in poverty.

What's more, all of this is getting worse. Many economists believe that the jobless rate will top 10 percent some time this year or early next year. And there is little relief in sight. Currently, 14.4 percent of so-called blue collar workers are without jobs, compared to a relatively small 4.9 percent of white collar workers. The U.S. Commissioner of Labor Statistics noted after the July figures were announced that industrial (blue collar) employment continues to be on the downswing, while the new jobs being created in the economy are largely in the service sector. Since the health of the economy rests in large part on the strength of its industrial base, the economic forecast is grim indeed.

Experts are predicting that four million more people will become impoverished this year. By the end of 1982, they say, the clock will have been turned back 20 years, with poverty as widespread as it was before the "Great Society" programs. □

Roots of Middle East Conflict

Why Zionism Serves Imperialism

The Israeli invasion of Lebanon has once again brought to the fore the issue of Zionist aggression in the Middle East. Since the June 6 invasion began, thousands of Palestinians and Lebanese have been slaughtered and the Zionists have destroyed Tyre, Sidon and much of Beirut. And, as we go to press, Israel appears to have all but succeeded in driving the PLO out of West Beirut, dealing a heavy blow to the Palestinian liberation struggle.

What are the roots of the conflict between Israel and Palestinian people? To answer this question, we reprint below an article from the November 1973 Torch, written by staff writer Paul Benjamin at the time of the 1973 Middle East war, explaining the reactionary nature of Zionism.

The roots of the latest war in the Middle East are deep ones. They lead down into the history of the Zionist movement itself and the very nature of the state of Israel.

Zionism grew out of the decay of world capitalism which set in during the late nineteenth century. It reflected both the growing anti-Semitism produced by a declining capitalism

and a refusal by Zionism's founders to attack capitalism itself.

As capitalism decayed, its ability to expand the frontiers of prosperity and freedom declined as well. Capitalist society began to come apart under the strain. The ruling classes of Europe desperately needed a scapegoat—a diversionary target—for the anger and resentment building up among the masses. They needed something that could be blamed for the people's suffering other than capitalism itself. They needed to prevent mass discontent from feeding into the growing social-

ist movement.

The Jews were the ideal target. In Western Europe, the partial democratic rights won by the Jews were openly threatened in these years. In capitalism's vassal states of Eastern Europe, the Jewish masses had never won the most elementary rights and now suffered under intensified attacks. A wave of anti-Semitism swept over the entire European continent in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Many among the Jewish masses turned to the international socialist movement, real-

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ESPAÑOL

Chicago: Black Community Organizes Against Racist Attacks

CHICAGO, August 9—Outrage is building among Black people in this city following a series of arrogantly racist acts by Mayor Jane Byrne. The mayor's most recent decision—to appoint three whites to the Board of the Chicago Housing Authority in a city where over 90 percent of the families living in CHA housing are Black—has led to a boycott of ChicagoFest, a \$6 million, 12-day food and entertainment festival heavily promoted by Byrne.

The boycott was called by Rev. Jesse Jackson, head of the Chicago-based Operation PUSH. It has gained the support of numerous Black leaders in this city and also has been joined by singer Stevie Wonder,

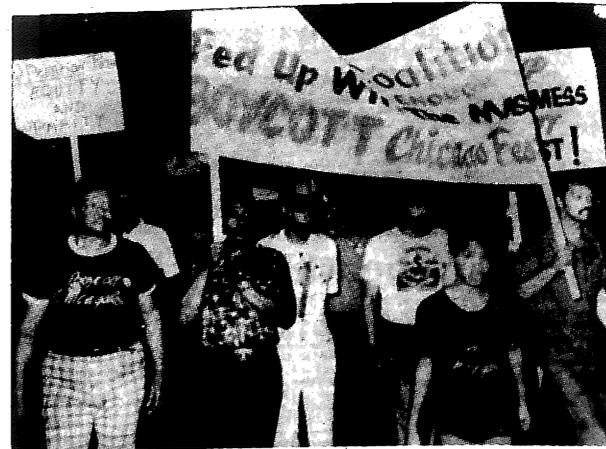
who canceled his scheduled appearance at the festival.

Several hundred people picketed ChicagoFest on August 4, its opening day. The press has carried varying estimates on the success of the boycott, but it appears that substantial numbers of Black people are staying away from the festival.

Mayor Byrne's appointments to the CHA were only the latest in a long list of snubs and insults to Black people. In 1980, she named a white political subordinate to be acting superintendent for Chicago's public school system, bypassing a respected deputy superintendent of schools who is Black. More recently, she nominated two whites to the School Board who

publicly opposed the Board's school desegregation efforts, replacing two Black members. This created a white majority on the Board—in a school system that is 80 percent Black. Byrne followed this action by waging a bitter campaign to defeat a Black alderman's bid for election because he had voted against confirming Byrne's nominations of the two whites to the School Board (the alderman, Allan Streeter, had originally been appointed by the mayor to fill a vacancy in the City Council). Streeter won the election anyway in spite of the mayor's efforts.

Byrne's anti-Black measures have served to embolden white racists in this, the nation's



Rev. Jesse Jackson (far right) leads picket line at ChicagoFest.

most heavily segregated city. Over the last several weeks the **Defender**, Chicago's major Black daily newspaper, has carried several stories about Black people run down in the streets by white motorists who simply "didn't like Black people being around." In addition, the **Defender** reported that three Black men were recently beaten severely by Cicero police. (Cicero is a virtually all-white suburb of Chicago.)

All this is stirring protests in Chicago's Black community. In addition to the boycott of ChicagoFest, an organization called WHIPP—Working Hard to Insure People's Protection—is initiating protests against Chicago's rampant police brutality. WHIPP, led by Wallace Davis,

is particularly focusing on the killing of Ricky Cunningham, a Black youth shot by the police in cold blood in front of several witnesses. As well, the Martin Luther King Jr. Movement has organized marches into Bridgeport, an all-white southside Chicago neighborhood where a Black person was run down.

These organizing efforts are only just beginning to take shape. But following a long period of relative quiet in this city, it is clear that large numbers of Black people are fed up with the blatant attacks on their lives, living standards and dignity. As racism in Chicago—and throughout the country—grows thicker and bolder, the struggle against it is beginning to grow. □

Funeral Protest Defies Apartheid Regime in Azania

On August 14 over 500 Black people in Azania (South Africa) defied the country's racist white minority rulers to mourn the death of a murdered Black freedom fighter. Ernest Maobi Dipale, a 21-year-old student, was found hanged in his cell in Johannesburg on August 8. He had been jailed on unspecified charges a week earlier. Police claimed that before his death Dipale made a "confession"—which they refused to release—implicating unnamed Black nationalist leaders in illegal activities.

Dipale was the second anti-apartheid militant to be murdered in prison by the racist regime this year. In February

Neil Aggett, a white lawyer who worked as an organizer for the growing Black trade union movement, was killed in the same detention center where Dipale died. Over 1,000 people marched in Aggett's funeral procession on February 13 in a major protest against apartheid rule.

After Aggett's funeral, Prime Minister Pieter Botha's government issued new security regulations limiting political protests at burial services. One day before Dipale's funeral, a Johannesburg court not only banned political speeches at the burial, but also prohibited "expressions of support for any organization or party through

prayer or song." At the funeral itself, police ordered foreign television crews to leave and warned they would be arrested if they tried to return. At first they even tried to turn away friends and sympathizers from the ceremony.

But hundreds of Black people at the funeral ignored the court order and the police to sing freedom songs and raise their arms in clenched-fist salutes. As we go to press a newly formed Black organization, the Detainees Aid Movement, is calling for a mass memorial service for Dipale in Soweto, the large Black township just outside Johannesburg.

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By W.

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Oklahoma Bank Failure Rocks Financial System

By W.E. SCHWEIZER

Tremors continue to shake the U.S. financial system following last month's collapse of the Penn Square Bank in Oklahoma City. As a result of the Penn Square bust:

- Two of the 10 biggest banks in the country reported quarterly losses due to bad oil and gas loans sold to them by Penn Square (more on this later). Third-largest Chase Manhattan, which already was staggering from a \$285 million loss following the speculative bust of Drysdale Government Securities in May, ended up with a total loss of \$16 million—the first quarterly loss in its history. Number six, Continental Illinois, dropped \$61 million in the quarter. Other large banks stuck with substantial losses from Penn Square loans include Michigan National, Seattle First National and Northern Trust of Chicago.

- Twenty savings and loan associations and 150 credit unions stand to lose at least \$20 million in uninsured deposits they held at Penn Square. These include Congress's own Wright Patman Credit Union, which will drop about \$180,000.

- Continental Illinois is now having trouble raising funds through selling jumbo certificates of deposit (CDs) for \$100,000 or more. CD dealers removed Continental paper from their top-rated category, and Continental was forced to hold a series of extraordinary briefings on its loan portfolio in order to calm jittery investors.

- The Federal Reserve Bank suddenly reversed course and began pumping funds into the money supply in order to prevent a full-scale banking panic. This action—in effect, “printing money”—may work for now, but will only lead to higher

inflation, even higher interest rates, and an even bigger chance of collapse in the future.

Riding the oil boom — to bust

The fallout from Penn Square shows how fragile the banking system has become, despite the Federal Reserve and all the regulatory “safeguards” enacted since the last financial collapse in 1933.

Penn Square got into trouble by riding—and crashing with—the spectacular oil and gas boom of the last few years. Founded in 1976 as a one-branch bank named for the shopping center it was in, Penn Square's deposits grew from \$30 million to \$465 million at the time it went under. Penn Square fueled this growth by aggressively lending to oil and gas operators at record-high interest rates; 80 percent of its loans were for oil and gas ventures, compared to 20-30 percent for other Oklahoma City banks. Its management became well known for its flamboyant easy lending. (Penn Square's executive vice-president in charge of oil and gas loans frequently “did deals” while wiggling the ears of his Mickey Mouse beanie or while wearing a hollowed-out duck decoy on his head.)

And when Penn Square found it couldn't handle a loan by itself, it sold it “upstream” to larger banks like Continental or Chase, which were eager to get in on the action.

In addition, Penn Square regularly violated regulations against insider dealings. Twenty percent of its loans were to companies controlled by Carl W. Swan—who also happened to sit on the bank's board of di-

rectors. (Swan's Longhorn Oil and Gas Co. now is the target of hundreds of lawsuits charging it with fraudulently inflating the value of its oil and gas reserves.)

All these shenanigans wouldn't matter so long as the economy was growing and could use lots of oil and gas, causing prices to rise. The operators and drillers could sell enough to pay off the loans, which in any case were secured by the ever-rising value of the oil and gas reserves and drilling equipment.

But when the world is awash in an overproduction of oil; when the price of gas in Oklahoma's booming Anadarko Basin plummets from as much as \$10 per thousand cubic feet to \$5 now; and when the number of active drilling rigs in the U.S. falls 40 percent in the first half of 1982, the wildcatters go bankrupt and can't repay their loans. Moreover, the value of the loan collateral evaporates, insuring a loss for the bank. This is exactly what happened to Penn Square and its eager big city partners. In the end, approximately \$40-50 million in Penn Square loans—about 15 percent of the total—were uncollectable.

269 banks on problem list

However, the problems go beyond the collapse in oil and gas. The entire capitalist system is in the midst of a severe crisis. The commercial bankruptcy rate is at the highest level since the depths of the Depression. Unemployment is at a 41-year high.

The economic crisis has resulted in 16 bank failures in the first half of this year. Another 269 banks are on the govern-

ment's “problem” list. At giant Continental Illinois, bank officers have admitted that 3.7 percent of its loans are “non-performing”—twice the normal rate. In a situation like this the collapse of even a medium-size bank, such as Penn Square, could bring down the entire system.

Many analysts try to deny the fragility of the financial system by portraying Penn Square as an isolated incident. They focus on the bank's reckless lending, poor management and possible fraud. Some also point to management failures at the larger banks as well.

Much of this, however, is designed to calm down a wholesale panic before it starts. The financial barons really know better. **“If you're not concerned about the banking system after all this, you would have to be unconscious,”** commented Lawrence R. Fuller, vice-president of the Drexel Burnham Lambert brokerage house. No matter how reckless or poorly managed Penn Square was, its man with the mouse ears found ready customers for his speculative loans at some of the largest, most prestigious banks in the world.

Is your money safe?

Small depositors are told over and over again that their money is safe because of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. (FDIC) and the Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corp. (FSLIC), which insure all deposits up to \$100,000. The government wants people to feel that their deposits are secure so they won't run to withdraw them from an already shaky bank, forcing it to fail.

But in fact there is no guarantee against a massive banking crisis. By limiting insurance to \$100,000, the FDIC and FSLIC leave open the possibility of runs by large uninsured depositors. This in fact happened at Penn Square when Robert L. Hefner III, a major stockholder, withdrew several million dollars at the beginning of July, thereby helping insure Penn Square's demise.

Such a run by the rich now is more likely since the FDIC closed Penn Square without paying off the uninsured deposits, as it has in the past through mergers. Continental's troubles selling jumbo CDs are just one sign of this. Altogether, commercial banks hold \$260 billion in CD money; a rush to withdraw this money would flatten the system.

In addition, the FDIC cannot possibly pay off even a fraction of the insured accounts in case of widespread bank failures. The FDIC has only \$11 billion to cover \$1.5 trillion in deposits, while the FSLIC holds only \$6.8 billion to cover \$500 billion. Moreover, the FDIC has been drawing down its reserves to subsidize the forced mergers of banks. For example, last spring it laid out \$452 million in order to merge the foundering New York Bank for Savings into a larger bank.

If the current banking tremors turn into a massive financial earthquake, the government will have only two serious options. It could either let thousands of banks fold and the FDIC run out of money, bankrupting millions of small and middle class savers. Or it could step in and in effect “print money” to “guarantee” the deposits. But such a course would wipe out the accounts anyway through an inflation such as this country has never seen before. □



In a scene reminiscent of nationwide bank panics of the Great Depression, depositors line up at bankrupt Penn Square, hoping to get their money out.



line at ChicagoFest.

particularly focusing on the of Ricky Cunningham, a youth shot by the police in blood in front of several buses. As well, the Martin Luther King Jr. Movement has organized marches into Bridgeport, an all-white southside neighborhood where a person was run down. These organizing efforts are just beginning to take off. But following a long period of relative quiet in this city it is clear that large numbers of Black people are fed up with the blatant attacks on lives, living standards and jobs. As racism in Chicago—throughout the country—has become thicker and bolder, the struggle against it is beginning now. □

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5,000 Demonstrate to Protect Women's Right to Abortion

By PAT NELSON

Close to 5,000 people turned out on the hottest day of the summer in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, for a march and rally in support of abortion rights. The July 17 demonstration was sponsored by the Reproductive Rights National Network (R2N2), National Organization for Women (NOW) and the National Women's Health Network and took place near the convention center for the National Right to Life Committee. Many women's and community organizations, union groups and political organizations, including the RSL, joined in actively working to build for the event.

Although the demonstration focused on the right to abortion, several of the speakers and many of the participants linked the issue to the wide-ranging offensive against women: attempts to restrict reproductive rights in general, cuts in funding for daycare, welfare and other social support services, attacks on lesbian rights, etc.

Women's right to abortion is particularly threatened by two

major bills now before Congress: Senator Jesse Helms' (R-NC) "Human Life Amendment," which would define life as beginning at the moment of conception, and Senator Orrin Hatch's (R-Utah) "Human Life Federalism Amendment," which would overturn the Supreme Court ruling granting women a constitutionally guaranteed right to seek abortion and would allow individual states to once again ban abortion. As we go to press, these two bills are scheduled to reach the Senate floor on August 16. The anti-abortion forces, apparently fearful that they will lose votes in the fall elections, want to try to pass some form of anti-abortion legislation before this session of Congress ends.

Supreme Court to rule on restrictions

Another major battle in the struggle for a woman's right to control her own body will probably be fought this fall in the Supreme Court. The court has agreed to review two differ-

ent federal appeals court rulings which struck down parts of legislation restricting abortion in Missouri and in Akron, Ohio.

The Akron law, the most restrictive passed to date, was based on a model drawn up by "right-to-life" activists. This law requires a 24-hour waiting period from the time a woman requests an abortion to when it can be performed and parental consent for women under 15; and it forces doctors to tell their patients that abortions could "result in severe emotional disturbances." Doctors would also be required to provide a detailed description of the appearance and characteristics of the fetus and inform the patient that "the unborn child is a human life from the moment of conception." All of these restrictions were struck down by the Ohio appeals court.

On July 29, the Reagan administration through the Justice Department actively joined the anti-abortion forces by filing a "friend of the court" brief urging the court to give "heavy deference" to legislation restricting abortion.

RSL contingent at July 17 Cherry Hill demonstration.

The main argument put forward by the Justice Department is that the court should leave regulation of abortion, and decisions as to whether that legislation imposes an undue burden on a woman's right to exercise her constitutional right to an abortion, to the state and local government. What this could amount to is legislatures passing local laws which, although they would not ban abortions outright, would make them nearly inaccessible for the vast majority of women.

One last attack worth noting is the July meeting of the Family Forum II. This gathering of the fundamentalist right-wing groups, such as the Moral Majority, was spent plotting a strategy for ending abortion rights, sex education, the "destruction of the family," etc. They plan, for example, to launch a major voter registration drive for this fall's election with a goal of gaining one million new (conservative) voters. Riding high on the defeat of the ERA, these forces are out to continue their drive to restrict individual freedom and force their brand of morality on the

entire population.

Women's groups planning actions

Pro-choice groups are gearing up for the fight that lies ahead. The R2N2, for example, is planning a series of local actions throughout the country on October 3 as a memorial to Rosie Jimenez, the first woman to die from an abortion after Medicaid funding was cut off.

January 22, 1983, marks 10 years since the Supreme Court ruling on abortion. As amazing as it may seem to many young women today, most of us can remember when trying to get an abortion for ourselves or a friend was a very risky business both physically and legally. It is equally amazing—and frightening—to realize that we stand a big chance of seeing the victory of 1973 wiped out entirely. We must rebuild the movement and once again fight for free, safe abortions on demand for all women and for the freedom to control our own bodies and our own lives. □

Videotape Shows Near-Meltdown at Three Mile Island

By RANDY CONRAD

On July 22, more than three years after the accident at the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant, a camera was lowered into the reactor core of the crippled plant to determine the extent of damage to the core itself.

The results were frightening. When the videotaping was over and the film was reviewed, it showed that damage to the reactor core had been extensive. The threat of a full-scale core meltdown at Three Mile Island was very real.

In a working power plant, the reactor core contains dozens of rods that are filled with uranium pellets. These uranium pellets are involved in the nuclear reactions that allow a power plant to operate. At Three Mile Island, the rods, which are made from zirconium, disintegrated from the heat



generated by the accident. As a result, the pellets fell out and now lie in a heap of rubble five feet high. All that was required for a full meltdown was enough heat, and pressure to begin to melt the uranium in the five foot high pile of rubble. Fortunately, at Three Mile Island, this did not occur.

But the damage that did result from the reactor accident was bad enough. It has taken

three years to clean up enough of the mess so that a videotape of the damage to the core could be taken. (Radiation levels inside the contaminated building were so high that it took seven teams of people to operate the video equipment in order to avoid the dangerous radiation exposure.) Moreover, clean-up of the core itself has not even begun; this will take additional years of difficult and dangerous

work.

As long as nuclear power plants exist and operate, the threat of another Three Mile Island exists. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has recently revised its estimates of the probability of a serious accident occurring at a power plant. Seven years ago, the Rasmussen report calculated the odds at one accident in 20,000 years of power plant operation (with 100 power plants this would take 200 years). The current NRC report calculates the probability at one in 1,000 years of operation, an increase of 20 times in the likelihood of accidents. By this estimate, it will take 13 and a half years (with the current 73 reactors in operation) for 1,000 years of operation to go by. There are 67 more reactors under construction and this will shorten the time-frame to less than 10 years. This means that the official

NRC estimate is one TMI-type accident every eight or nine years!

But this estimate does not adequately reflect the true danger. After all, the NRC favors nuclear power plants and is not likely to take full consideration of the risks involved. More than this, the NRC estimate is based on a review of the experiences of the last 10 years. In these years, the nuclear power plants were new. Now, however, these power plants suffer from corroding tubes carrying radioactive water, brittle reactor vessels that may shatter under pressure and other serious weaknesses that are only developing as the reactors age. The likelihood of reactor accidents can therefore only increase as these plants get older and new problems that are unexpected today develop. There is still time to shut them down—but that time is growing shorter. □

By W

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Workers Clash With National Guard in Nebraska Meatpacking Strike

By WILLIAM FALK

It was a welcome sight July 21 when the television news showed pictures of striking workers standing their ground and defending their picket lines against attacks by club-wielding police using tear gas. It was the kind of struggle there hasn't been much of in the last year—a year in which the number of strikes is at a 40-year low.

The striking workers are members of Local 222 of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) in Dakota City, Nebraska. They are battling a company whose hallmark is vicious anti-unionism: Iowa Beef Processors (IBP).

'No is a popular word'

In negotiations with Local 222 this May, IBP demanded that the Dakota City workers accept major concessions—a four-year wage freeze, an end to cost-of-living raises, automatic matching of any wage cuts won by IBP's competitors in the future, and a \$2-an-hour wage cut for new hires for the first two years they work.

The union was ready to go part way: It proposed a two-year wage freeze and a three-year suspension of cost-of-living increases. This offer was similar to agreements the union made this January with three old-line packinghouses covered



Police arrest striker outside the Iowa Beef Processing Co.'s plant in Dakota City, Nebraska.

by the union's master contract and also similar to separate agreements it made recently with several new-style "streamlined" packinghouses.

But what was good enough for the other companies wasn't good enough for Iowa Beef. "No is a popular word at IBP,"

boasts its president, Robert Peterson. "We're almost obsessed with the idea of being and remaining the low-cost producer in the industry," says IBP's official spokesman. Negotiations broke down and on June 7 the Dakota City workers went out on strike.

The plant, which normally employs 2,400 people, remained shut for the next six weeks. Then, on July 20, the company tried to reopen with scabs. They offered the scabs permanent jobs at a starting pay of \$6.97 an hour—exactly two dollars below starting pay in the expired IBP-UFCW contract.

The workers responded to this challenge. A mass picket line on Tuesday, July 20, showered the scabs' cars with rocks. Over 70 cars were damaged. The next day strikers again stoned the scabs. This time, however, nearly 100 Nebraska state troopers were there and they fired tear gas, broke up the picket line and arrested 15 people.

On Monday, July 26, over 200 workers attempted to block the entrance where steer go into the plant to be slaughtered. Again the police used tear gas to disperse strikers.

Tuesday, July 27, saw the biggest battle yet. Over 300 workers marched on the road in front of the plant just before the scabs' workday ended. As they passed the main gate, state troopers in full riot gear fired tear gas and charged. Over 20 strikers were arrested.

On Wednesday, July 28, the governor of Nebraska sent in the National Guard—200 troops, equipped with armored troop carriers and three helicopters. On the same day, a county judge issued an injunction barring the strikers from assembling within 1,500 feet of the plant. As of this writing, the

workers have not yet directly challenged this new repression.

Negotiations between Local 222 and IBP reopened August 5 under the auspices of Nebraska Governor Charles Thone. But, as the *Wall Street Journal* reports, "competitors and industry analysts don't expect Iowa Beef to give much ground." Judging from IBP's history, there is good reason for this conclusion.

Bust the unions, box the beef

Iowa Beef was formed only 20 years ago but is today the country's largest meat packer. About 25 percent of all fresh beef comes from IBP. Last year it showed \$58 million in profits and was bought by Occidental Petroleum.

When IBP entered the industry, most beef was shipped on the hoof to midwestern cities where it was slaughtered and cut into hanging carcasses. The beef was aged and shipped on hooks and cut up for consumers by local retail butchers. IBP located its plants closer to the feedlots and both slaughters the steer and cuts up the carcasses into large, already trimmed, pieces. These are put into plastic bags to age and shipped as "boxed beef." The local retail butcher simply slices boxed beef sections into the familiar cuts displayed in meat cases.

IBP's modernization saved
(Continued on page 13)

USWA Conference Votes Down Concessions

In an unexpected development, on July 31 over 400 United Steelworkers of America (USWA) local presidents gathered at the union's Basic Steel Industry Conference unanimously rejected demands by eight major steel corporations for a new contract that would include major givebacks by the union.

Although the current three-year steel pact is not due to expire until August 1, 1983, this June U.S. Steel, Bethlehem and six other companies insisted on renegotiating the agreement, claiming that union concessions were needed to end the depression conditions in the steel industry. Steel mills are operating at only 42 percent of capacity, the lowest rate since 1938. The major steel producers reported losing nearly \$700 million in the second quarter of 1982. And over the past year 114,000 steelworkers—over 30 percent of the total workforce in basic steel—have lost their jobs.

USWA President Lloyd McBride was more than willing to grant substantial

concessions to the companies. He offered them a new three-year contract that included a wage freeze, deferral of COLA payments and other giveaways adding up to about \$2 billion.

But this was not enough for the steel bosses. They demanded up to \$8 billion in giveaways, including a wage freeze, elimination of COLA payments for the first year of any new contract (and tight limits on payments the next two years), a \$3/hr. wage cut for newly hired workers, and the elimination of the 13-week vacations currently granted high seniority workers every five years.

At the conference itself, it quickly became clear that many local union presidents opposed not only the companies' extortionist demands, but also McBride's "reasonable" concessions. Their pressure forced McBride to temporarily abandon his accommodationist policy and recommend rejection of the corporations' proposal.

Opponents of concessions angrily

deny company claims that high union wages and low worker productivity are causing the U.S. steel industry to lose out to foreign competitors. They point out that the steel bosses themselves opened the door to overseas producers by shutting down nearly 400 mills over the past 22 years, while gradually diversifying their investments into more profitable industries.

For instance, U.S. Steel, which led the industry's fight to renegotiate the contract, shelled out \$6 billion to buy the Marathon Oil Company last year. Although U.S. Steel remains the largest U.S. steel producer, it has put 60 percent of its total assets into oil, gas and other non-steel industries. Because of such diversification efforts, local union leaders believe that any concessions they give up will not revive the steel industry or save steelworkers' jobs.

Above all, USWA leaders insist that rank and file steelworkers—who are barred by the USWA constitution from

voting on national steel contracts—would not stand for any givebacks. Michael Bilsik, president of USWA Local 1256 in Duquesne, Pennsylvania, said workers accused him of selling out when he publicly announced that the union must help the companies. He told reporters that even laid off workers in his local were opposed to concessions.

The steel bosses' wage offensive could end 24 years of labor peace in the industry following the 1959 national strike.

According to *Business Week*, "There was little doubt that the industry's strategy in turning down the \$2 billion union offer was based on a belief that it could win deeper cuts by forcing the union to choose between granting concessions and mounting a national strike when the current contracts expire next August."

While the conference vote was a victory for steelworkers, the real battle between the union and the steel companies has only just begun. □



Guards trash Mosque in New York prison

On July 23, members of the Sankore Mosque (Sunni Muslim Community) at Green Haven Prison in Stormville, New York, were once again the victims of an attack by prison guards.

The day's events began after the Muslims had gathered in their Mosque for a religious service. A guard locked the Mosque and left the area, leaving the Muslims trapped inside for an hour past the end of their service. Several of the Muslims had been officially assigned to kitchen duty in order to prepare a meal for a Muslim religious event the following day and, according to a report we received, the guard "indicated by inference and action that his intent was to frustrate plans for the religious affair."

When the Imam of the Mosque objected to the treatment the Muslims were receiving and threatened to report the guard for his actions, a scuffle broke out. Many Muslims were handcuffed and then beaten.

A short time later, while all the Muslims were away from the area, guards desecrated and trashed the Mosque. They damaged religious books, including the Qur'an, and the Mosque's Mimbar (pulpit). Rugs were torn from the walls, curtains were removed and a hole was kicked in a wall. File cabinets were emptied, papers were thrown all over and molasses was poured on the floor. This is the second time in the last few years the Mosque has been desecrated by guards.

Tennessee prisons 'unfit for human habitation'

Tennessee's prisons are "unfit for human habitation," says federal district Judge L. Clure Morton. On August 12 he ruled that confinement in the prison system constituted "cruel and unusual punishment" in violation of the constitution, and he gave the state six months to submit plans for changing conditions. Morton's ruling was the result of a suit filed by three prisoners in 1980.

The judge especially condemned double-celling at the Tennessee State Prison in Nashville. "Inmates are double-celled in tiny cages like so many animals in a zoo, with an average of about 23 square feet in which each man lives, sleeps, performs his bodily functions and spends a great portion of his day," Morton wrote.

Morton called Brushy Mountain prison near Oak Ridge "more of a dungeon than a civilized prison." Last February, seven white prisoners at Brushy Mountain went on a racist rampage, shooting five Black prisoners, killing two.

Kentucky is now the 33rd state to have at least one of its prisons under a federal court order mandating improved conditions. On July 29, one of the other states, Maryland, announced plans to release 3,000 prisoners over the next five months to relieve overcrowding. Meanwhile, in Texas, state prison officials have won a weakening of the ruling handed down in 1980 by Judge William Justice as a result of the Ruiz suit. This June, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit ruled that although Judge Justice was correct to call Texas prison conditions unconstitutional, he should not have ordered the state to eliminate all double-celling. This modification brings the 1980 decision in line with last year's Supreme Court ruling that if other conditions are improved, double-celling is okay.

Execution in Virginia

On August 10, Frank Coppola was executed in the electric chair in Richmond, Virginia. He was the fifth person to be executed since 1976. Coppola, like the four people put to death before him, is white, although most of the 1,038 prisoners on death rows are Black.

Coppola, who was convicted of murder, maintained to the end that he was innocent. Nevertheless, he opposed several last minute legal attempts to save his life made by opponents of the death penalty. In a statement on August 9 Coppola said, "For four years I fought as much as was in my control; through my attorneys I fought. But my family was suffering in the meantime and my human dignity was suffering in the meantime. . . . I can no longer subject myself to this and have any respect left for myself."

—WF

Government Indictments Continue— Draft Resistance Grows

Since Benjamin Sasway of San Diego, California, was indicted June 20 for failure to register for a possible draft, the government has indicted several other men around the country: David Wayte, Los Angeles; Enten Eller, Roanoke, Virginia; Russell Ford, Cleveland; and Mark Schmucker, New Haven, Connecticut. Trial dates have already been set for Eller (August 16), Sasway (August 24) and Wayte (September 28). Wayte's lawyer, Bill Smith, predicts that at least 12 more men will be indicted by the end of the summer.

Out of the more than half a million young men who haven't registered for the draft, there are more than a thousand who are public non-registrants—men who have said publicly that they will not register and will go to jail if necessary. Out of this thousand there are about one hundred who have written letters to the government stating their opposition to registration. It is from among these 100 that the government has singled out those to be indicted first. As David Wayte told the Torch:

"I am being prosecuted not for any crime I've committed, but for using my First Amendment rights to publicly announce my refusal to register. I'm being punished for expressing the political views I hold. I'm not dodging or evading the draft, but resisting it. . . . The only reason I've been singled out for prosecution is that I wrote to the Selective Service System stating my refusal to register. There's no other way they could have tracked me down."

The government wants to make an example of these men: It hopes to railroad them to jail so other non-registrants will fall into line and register for the draft. However, statistics released shortly after the first indictments show that the rate of non-compliance is in fact rising, not falling, as the Reagan administration had hoped.

Support growing for draft resisters

There has already been some response to the initial indictments. Within days of Sasway's indictment, there were demonstrations in over 100 cities around the country. A national



"Draft registration has nothing to do with national defense. It's simply a political ploy whose only practical use would be to facilitate the sending of troops to such places as El Salvador or Lebanon, to fight interventionist wars for the greed of a few."
—David Wayte, indicted draft resister.



network of draft resisters, anti-draft organizations and lawyers involved in defense work has been built. The Committee Against Registration and the Draft (CARD) has called for a nationwide week of resistance activities (August 14-21) and there are already plans for two August 14 demonstrations, one in San Diego for Sasway and one in Los Angeles for Wayte.

The attacks on public draft resisters are part of the government's broader attacks on working and oppressed people—cuts in social services, attacks on the right to abortion, union-busting, high unemployment, and the increase in racism, sexism and anti-gay bigotry.

These attacks at home go hand in hand with the step-up in U.S. militarism abroad, increased support to the terrorist regimes in El Salvador and South Africa and to the Israeli invasion of Lebanon.

"Draft registration has nothing to do with national defense. It is simply a political ploy whose only practical use would be to facilitate the delivery of troops to such places as El Salvador or Lebanon, to fight interventionist wars for the greed of a few. I refuse to be part of this. I don't want to kill people, and I don't want to die," says Wayte. He adds: "I believe we can live in peace. Wars will

cease to exist when young people like myself refuse to fight them. Resisting the draft is my way of paving the road for peace."

Anti-government forces must unite

The anti-draft movement needs to be part of building a democratic, united, multi-racial working class movement that fights against U.S. imperialism abroad and government attacks at home. We must reach out to the hundreds of thousands of non-registrants who are not yet actively involved in the movement. Large numbers are Black, Latin, Asian, Native American and white working class youth who are fed up with a society that offers them no future except unemployment, low-paying, meaningless jobs and the prospect of becoming cannon fodder in the next imperialist war.

"The government is attempting to subjugate the youth through threat and intimidation," Wayte told the Torch. "It will not work. The number of non-registrants is growing every day. This is the most unenforceable law since prohibition. There's no way they can put us all in prison." □

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Immigration Service Begins Releasing Imprisoned Haitian Refugees

Slowly and begrudgingly, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) has begun releasing some of the more than 2,000 Haitians currently imprisoned by the U.S. government. The Haitians are refugees who have fled the brutal, U.S.-supported dictatorship of Haiti's President-for-Life, Jean-Claude Duvalier. They are being released as the result of a June 29 order by U.S. District Court Judge Eugene Spellman.

"Liberté, Liberté," chanted supporters of the refugees outside the gates of the Krome Detention Center near Miami as the first Haitian to be free, Etienne François, 42, emerged. François, jailed since August 1981, told waiting reporters that he was "praying to God that everyone else will be free someday."

The U.S. government began locking up Haitian refugees on a mass scale in the summer of 1981. The move was an attempt to frustrate an earlier court ruling that directed the INS to grant Haitians requesting political asylum a proper hearing, with lawyers and translators present, and sufficient time for



Police drag away the body of one of the many Haitian refugees who drowned trying to reach the U.S. Those who escaped death were thrown into detention camps.



reasonable consideration of their request. (Prior to this ruling, the government had simply been shipping the refugees back to the murderous Duvalier regime after perfunctory, 10-minute hearings.) Normally, the INS routinely grants parole to refugees awaiting final determination of their claim, since the legal process can often take as many as five years to complete. But instead of paroling the Haitians, the government threw them into various jails around the country, where they now

have been held for over a year.

The court suit that resulted in the June 29 order to free the Haitians was filed in response to this action. It charged that the INS's "no parole" policy—which applied only to Haitians—was discriminatory. Haitians make up less than 0.7 percent of all refugees requesting political asylum, yet they alone have been held in jail while awaiting determination of their asylum requests. The suit argued that the Haitians were being singled out for such treatment because of their race and country of origin.

Judge Spellman rejected the main argument of the suit. However, he ruled that since the INS had failed to give notice and take public comment on its new procedures, the Haitians awaiting hearings had to be freed.

Numerous Haitian community organizations are now working to ensure that each eligible refugee successfully goes through the complicated procedures Judge Spellman specified as necessary for release. These organizations report that the INS is deliberately dragging its feet wherever it can and, as a result, by August 13—three weeks after Etienne François left the Krome Detention Center—only about 100 Haitians have gained their freedom.

There is ample evidence that the government is trying to obstruct the release process at every turn. A week after the first group of Haitians were let out of jail, government officials announced that this group had failed to make required weekly reports on their whereabouts. However, it later turned out that no procedures for reporting had ever been set up. Moreover, the INS has demanded that voluntary organizations sponsoring released Haitians promise that none of the refugees will apply for food stamps or other assistance—though they are legally entitled to apply for

"We didn't come with guns, we didn't come to fight, we came for freedom." It was a Saturday morning in early August and a group of Haitian men were speaking their thoughts. They had gathered in the cinderblock visiting room of the INS's Brooklyn Detention Center to discuss their situation with us.

The 24 Haitian men and 29 Haitian women now being held in the Brooklyn jail have been there for over a year. They are not covered by Judge Spellman's release order and have no immediate hope of liberty. With the help of an interpreter from the Association of Haitian Workers, we asked about their plight.

"The problem of the Tonton Macoutes is why we leave Haiti. They are in the provinces, in the cities, everywhere. So we must leave."

"We came here for freedom. We can't have it in Haiti but can in the U.S. Now we have problems with the government."

"If we had nothing to fear in Haiti, would we risk our lives? Would we spend 22 days in a small boat without seeing land?"

"We went to Cuba, and spent two months there. They said that after a year we would have to go to Russia."

"We didn't come for food stamps or welfare. We have

family in the U.S. Our family will take care of us. We are tired of being in jail."

Not surprisingly, the refugees in the Brooklyn jail are depressed. They were transferred to New York from Florida last summer. "At least in Miami we could see the sky, we had sports," one refugee said. "Here it's a real jail." The detention center is an old Navy brig, built to jail sailors for no more than 30 days.

The men we spoke with are not politically sophisticated. They have never been in the U.S. outside of jail. Several are from the Haitian countryside, which includes some of the most isolated human settlements in this hemisphere. They do not have a worked out analysis of why they have been jailed. They are simply Haitian people who, because of the repression, found it impossible to go on living in the old way. Without volunteering or deciding to be politically active at all, they have found themselves at the center of political events. Trying to make sense of it all they have figured out a few things.

"The U.S. has to change the situation. It has to stop supporting Duvalier."

"They are supporting him and that is why they have put us in jail."

—William Falk, Terry Walsh

these. In addition, the government has refused to make any commitment to the sponsoring agencies to help with funding for resettlement of the Haitians, as it did in the cases of the Cuban and Indochinese boat people.

On top of all this, Judge Spellman ruled on July 2 that the government could lock up

any Haitians who arrive over the next 90 days while the INS considers changes in its procedures. In effect, the INS can announce new changes, wait the required 30 days, take public comment—and continue its persecution of Haitians who flee the Duvalier dictatorship and seek refuge in the U.S. □

West Coast Factory Raids Temporarily Suspended

In mid-July, a court order briefly stopped the INS from carrying out its dreaded factory raids in California and eight other Western states. The halt came after the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the raids were unconstitutional. However, the INS quickly drew up new guidelines and "La Migra's" raids have resumed once again.

The July 15 court ruling was the result of a suit brought by the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU), which has been carrying out a campaign to organize undocumented workers. The court agreed with the ILGWU that the factory raids constituted "unreasonable search and seizure" and were therefore unconstitutional. It also ruled that, before entering a factory, the INS "must have a reasonable suspicion that each worker subject to... questioning is an alien illegally in this country." The court also specifically objected to

the practice of blocking factory exits with armed guards, arguing that this in effect put all the workers inside under arrest.

The INS claims the court's ruling "will seriously impact upon the ability of the INS to seek and remove aliens," and plans to appeal it to the Supreme Court.

But none of this has stopped La Migra from raiding factories. Leo Soto of the INS's San Pedro, California, office told the Torch/La Antorcha that department lawyers recently conducted classes for La Migra agents—and then sent them back out to conduct raids. "We told the agents not to stand at the doors," said Soto. "If aliens are getting away from us right and left," he added, "we'll have to come up with something else."

Eventually, according to Soto, the INS will write up a formal statement of new guidelines and forward it to the ILGWU "for comment."

ROWS



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anti-draft movement to be part of building a atic, united, multi-racial g class movement that against U.S. imperialism and government attacks e. We must reach out to dreds of thousands of istrants who are not yet involved in the move- arge numbers are Black, Asian, Native American ite working class youth fed up with a society fers them no future nemployment, low-pay- aningless jobs and the of becoming cannon in the next imperialist

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Why Zionism Serves Imperialism

(Continued from page 1)

izing that only by destroying capitalism could they protect and extend human dignity and freedom. Thousands of Jews joined the trade unions and political parties of the socialist movement. Outstanding revolutionary leaders from Jewish backgrounds, like Rosa Luxemburg and Leon Trotsky, were dedicated champions of proletarian internationalism. Lenin noted in 1913 that "the percentage of Jews in the democratic and proletarian movements is everywhere higher than the percentage of Jews among the population."

The Zionist movement arose in direct antagonism to this revolutionary movement. Marxism stood for internationalism, for the worldwide alliance of the working class against all capitalists and oppressors. The Zionists desired something very different. They planned to defend the Jews from persecution by turning to nationalism. Zionism is the strategy of building a specifically Jewish country in the Middle East, complete with an entire class structure (from Jewish workers to Jewish capitalists). Zionism seeks relief for the world's Jews by building "a state like any other state." Zionism and Marxism, therefore, were and could be nothing but deadly enemies.

To transform the Zionist program into a reality, three things were necessary. First, the Jewish youth had to be won away from Marxism. That is, they had to be diverted away from the class struggle against world capitalism.

A people

Second, the Zionists needed a people with which to populate their new state. Europe's Jews were persecuted, but they were also deeply attached to their European communities. Palestine, in addition, was mostly desert and was alien and unattractive to most European Jews. The Zionists did what they could to force them to Palestine nevertheless. Time and again, the Zionists worked hand in hand with the worst enemies of the Jews themselves in order to advance the Zionist program of mass emigration to Palestine.

In 1903, for an early example, Theodore Herzl (founder and leader of world Zionism) requested and received cooperation from V.K. Plehve, the rabidly anti-Semitic Russian Minister of the Interior. In a letter to Herzl, Plehve promised his "moral and material assistance with respect to the measures taken by the Zionist movement which would lead to

the diminution of the Jewish population in Russia."

In 1938, David Ben-Gurion told the Zionists that they had to deal skillfully with the Nazis' extermination of European Jews. At all costs, he warned, we must not allow this slaughter to separate the Zionist project in Palestine from the question of the Jews' salvation. If the Zionists should allow for any easing of persecution other than migration to the Middle East, the Zionist project would fail. As he wrote to the Zionist Executive in that year:

"If Jews have to choose between the refugees, saving Jews from concentration camps, and assisting a national museum in Palestine, mercy will have the upper hand... and the whole energy of the people will be channeled into saving Jews from public opinion. If we allow a separation between the refugee problem and the Palestine problem, we are risking the existence of Zionism."

Zionism went on to the infamous deals with the Nazis through which the "Zionist cadre" were preserved while millions went to their deaths. Thus in 1944 Rudolph Kaestner, Zionist Committee secretary in Budapest, coaxed 800,000 Jews onto the trains to Auschwitz in return for the lives of 1,000 of the wealthiest Hungarian Jews. After World War II, Zionists lobbied behind the scenes to keep the Western Hemisphere closed to Jewish immigration to force the concentration camps' survivors to Palestine. The Jewish masses could be and were sacrificed on the altar of Zionism.

Territory

The third ingredient of Zionism's recipe is territory. Palestine was dictated from the beginning by religious traditions. The complication was that Palestine already had a population, an Arab population. To build a definitely and permanently Jewish state in Palestine required the mass expulsion of the region's Arab inhabitants.

This was a project to which the Arab masses themselves, of course, would never agree. It had to be accomplished through deals with the oppressors of the Arab masses—namely, with the imperialist powers which controlled the Middle East and with the oppressive semi-feudal regimes which exploited the masses in league with imperialism.

According to Max Nordau, Herzl's deputy, "Our aspirations point to Palestine as a compass points to the North. Therefore we must orient our-



Israeli soldiers attack Lebanese and Palestinian civilians in Sidon, Lebanon.

selves towards those powers under whose influence it happens to be." Zionism went in turn to Turkey, to Germany, to Britain and then to the U.S. in its search, for an imperialist patron. The sales pitch was always the same.

Theodore Herzl wrote in his pamphlet *The Jewish State*, when Palestine was still part of the Ottoman Empire (under Turkish rule), "If his Majesty the Sultan were to give us Palestine, we could undertake the complete management of the finances of Turkey. We would form there a part of the wall of defense of Europe in Asia, an outpost of civilization against barbarism. We would, as a neutral state, remain in contact with all Europe, which would have to guarantee our existence."

Ben-Gurion put the same deal much more briskly when addressing the Zionist Congress in 1935 although the favored imperialist power had changed: "Whoever betrays Great Britain betrays Zionism."

And an Israeli newspaper commented in 1951, "Israel has been given a role not unlike a watchdog. One need not fear that it will exercise an aggressive policy towards the Arab states if this will contradict the interests of the U.S.A. and Britain. But should the West prefer for one reason or another to close its eyes, one can rely on Israel to punish severely those of the neighboring states whose lack of manners towards the West has exceeded the proper limits."

Since gaining independence, the Zionist state has steadily ex-

tended this policy to every aspect of its foreign policy. Israel supported the U.S. in the Korean War. It sent its own officers to give advice to the U.S. military machine in Vietnam. It supported the efforts of the French government and the terrorist Secret Army Organization to crush the Algerian independence movement. Today Israel works with the CIA in Africa, acting as a funnel for foreign aid and military training.

'Left' Zionism

Naturally, this record, this program, is not one which is easy to sell to anyone but outright reactionaries and imperialists. So Zionism has consistently tried to dress itself up as something other than what it is. Its supporters point to its *kibbutzim* (cooperative farms)—which in fact play the tiniest role in the Israeli economy—as proof that Israel is a socialist state. Especially in trying to project a pleasing image abroad, Israel pushed forward a "left" face, particularly through the various "Labor Zionist" and "Left Zionist" parties and personalities.

But the inevitable implications of Zionism make the "left sell" very difficult. The problem was squarely presented by David Hacoheh, now a leader of Israel's Mapai "Labor" Party, as he described his discussions as a socialist student in Britain:

"Even here, in these intimate

surroundings, I had to fight my friends on the issue of Jewish socialism, to defend the fact that I would not accept Arabs in my trade union, the Histadrut; to defend preaching to housewives that they not buy at Arab stores; to defend the fact that we stood guard at orchards to prevent Arab workers from getting jobs there... to pour kerosene on Arab tomatoes; to attack Jewish housewives in the markets and smash the Arab eggs they had bought; to praise to the skies the Jewish Fund that sent Hankin to Beirut to buy land from absentee landlords and to throw the peasants off the land. To buy dozens of dunams [a land measurement] from an Arab is permitted, but to sell, God forbid, one Jewish dunam to an Arab is prohibited; to take Rothschild, the incarnation of capitalism, as a socialist and to name him the benefactor—to do all that was not easy."

The brutal policies of Zionism and Israel grow inevitably out of their own essence. Israel remains what it has always been, what it has to be: junior partner of world imperialism. The Zionist state is neither economically nor militarily self-supporting; imperialism is its very lifeblood.

Contradictions

The contradictions inherent in such a state have caused three strike waves in the last 11 years. The internal fabric of the state is torn by conflict within the Jewish population itself, between Oriental and European Jews, between workers and capitalists. The Jewish population is held together only by a fear which is maintained by the Zionist regime through constant propaganda and military adventurism.

The regime itself is moving steadily to the right. The pressures of a large captive Arab population—a result of Zionist expansion in the 1967 war—have increased the role of the militarists in the government. General Dayan is now a "respectable" politician; his role as an independent military lobbyist is now assumed by General Sharon, Israeli "hero" of the latest war. Both Dayan and Sharon played major roles in developing Israel's policy of mass reprisals against civilians in retaliation for Palestinian guerrilla raids.

Israel's Zionist character dictates its international as well as its domestic policy. Imperialism, chauvinism, racism, militarism—these are all unavoidable products of Zionism, of the construction of an alien state forced onto the Arab masses

By PAUL BENJAMIN

While world attention on the continuing crisis, a series of events has been taking almost unnoticed in America. In recent weeks Reagan administration right-wing rulers of Ecuador, Honduras and Guatemala have stepped up their attacks on the liberation movements in Central America and the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua. Taken together, these events add up to the internationalization of the Reagan civil war and other conflicts in the area.

Salvadorean government launches offensive

In El Salvador, government offensives against the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) in Morazan and Chalatenango provinces in June provoked the heaviest fighting of the war. Over 6,000 government troops—one-third of the Salvadoran army—joined the fighting, including a battalion that recently returned from special anti-guerrilla training in the U.S.

The Salvadoran war escalated sharply on June 27 up to 3,000 Honduran troops entered the country to join the offensive against the FMLN. While Honduran troops, by U.S. and Argentine "advisers," have previously cooperated with the FMLN along the Salvador-Honduras border, this marked the first time the Honduran army actually entered the country. The FMLN retaliation

and maintained against the will. Not long ago, Meron Ben-Gurion (a right-wing Israeli politician) was asked about the problem of the Palestinian people, a young Israeli member of the Kibbutz Ein Hahoresht. He replied angrily:

"My friend," said Ben-Gurion, "take care. When you demolish the concept of Palestine, you demolish your right in Ein Hahoresht. If this is the case, then you are conquerors, not tillers of the land. You invaders. If this is the case, then it belongs to the people who lived here before you. Only if it is the Land of Israel do you have a right to live in Hahoresht..."

Central America: U.S. Widens War Against Liberation Struggles

By PAUL BENJAMIN

While world attention focuses on the continuing Lebanese crisis, a series of dramatic events has been taking place almost unnoticed in Central America. In recent weeks the Reagan administration and the right-wing rulers of El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala have stepped up their attacks on the liberation movements of Central America and the radical Sandinista regime in Nicaragua. Taken together, the recent events add up to the increasing regionalization of the Salvadorean civil war and other local conflicts in the area.

Salvadorean government launches offensive

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The Salvadorean war escalated sharply on June 27 when up to 3,000 Honduran troops entered the country to join the offensive against the FMLN. While Honduran troops, aided by U.S. and Argentine "advisers," have previously clashed with the FMLN along the El Salvador-Honduras border, this marked the first time they have actually entered the country in force. The FMLN retaliated on



U.S. army trains Salvadorean troops at its Army School of the Americas in Fort Gulick, Panama.

July 4 by blowing up power stations in Tegucigalpa, the Honduran capital.

By sending troops into El Salvador, Honduran President Roberto Suazo Córdova was not only aiding the Salvadorean rulers but also protecting the long-term interests of the Honduran ruling class. Although the leftist opposition movement in Honduras is weak today, the country's rulers fear that a successful popular revolt in El Salvador, coming on the heels of the Nicaraguan revolution, could inspire Honduran workers and peasants to take up arms against their own oppression.

Suazo is also taking advantage of the Salvadorean civil war to press Honduran territorial claims along the two countries' border. Some of the FMLN's main bases in Morazán province are located in a previously demilitarized zone that was set up following a war between El Salvador and Honduras in 1969. The Honduran

troops who entered El Salvador have now occupied this territory. One Honduran officer declared: "We don't forget 1969. We decided it was the opportunity to get what belonged to us."

But even with the help of Honduran troops, the Salvadorean government's campaign against the FMLN ended in failure. On July 6 the offensive was halted, with the government acknowledging that it had been unable to dislodge the guerrillas from their strongholds. The military's announced losses in the Morazán fighting—46 dead, 80 wounded, and 50 missing or captured, including Deputy Defense Minister Francisco Adolfo Castillo—were the heaviest suffered in any single operation since the civil war began. But the losses may have been even more severe; on July 16 the FMLN claimed that guerrilla forces killed, wounded or captured over 1,000 government troops during the fighting.

The failure of the Salvadorean government in the offensive is leading U.S. imperialism to step up its intervention in the conflict. On July 27 the Reagan administration certified that the Salvadorean butchers were achieving "human rights progress." This was a necessary

pre-condition under U.S. law for continuing military and economic assistance to El Salvador's right-wing regime. Reagan is now asking Congress to authorize over \$225 million in aid to El Salvador. At the same time, the U.S. military is considering an expanded role for U.S. "advisers" to the Salvadorean military. In particular, it wants to effectively supervise day-to-day operations against the FMLN by creating a network of "advisers" at various brigade headquarters, where most anti-guerrilla campaigns are planned and carried out.

Nicaraguan regime under siege

Meanwhile, the leftist Sandinista regime in Nicaragua is also coming under heavy military and diplomatic pressure from U.S. imperialism and its Central American allies. In July, members of former Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza Debayle's National Guard—known as Somocistas—carried out a series of raids into the country from their sanctuaries in Honduras. For example, on July 24 they killed at least 35 people in San Francisco del Norte, a town in western Nicaragua close to the Honduras border. Earlier they attacked towns in North Zelaya province in eastern Nicaragua.

Nicaraguan officials say the Somocista raids are reaching a new stage, involving "large units organized in an almost regular military fashion." On July 26, Interior Minister Tomás Borge Martínez announced that there was "a real state of war" along the Nicaraguan-Honduran border.

As in El Salvador, the Honduran government is playing a leading role in the anti-Sandinista campaign. On July 14, Honduran troops briefly crossed into Nicaragua, in pursuit of Nicaraguan forces that

had allegedly entered Honduras. And in late July, U.S. and Honduran troops began joint maneuvers reportedly aimed at setting up a major military base at Durzuna, just 25 miles north of the Nicaraguan border.

According to one Honduran business leader, a "warlike mentality" is growing among the country's rulers, while some soldiers are warning that war with Nicaragua could break out before November.

In addition to these attacks, the U.S. government is coordinating a diplomatic and propaganda campaign against the Nicaraguan government. The Reagan administration is promoting Edén Pastora Gómez who, as "Commander Zero," was a leader of the 1979 Nicaraguan revolution against Somoza and a prominent member of the Sandinist government for nearly two years.

In April of this year Pastora, who left Nicaragua in 1981, publicly denounced the Sandinista leaders for "betraying the Nicaraguan revolution." He specifically called for the expulsion of Cuban and Russian military advisers from Nicaragua, while attacking the Sandinistas' close ties to the state-capitalist Russian and Cuban governments. While Pastora insists he is equally opposed to the Somocistas, the U.S. is hoping to turn him into a figurehead for extremist right-wing Nicaraguan counter-revolutionary forces.

More broadly, on July 8 the foreign ministers of El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and Costa Rica issued a joint statement condemning the military build-up in Nicaragua and warning the Sandinista government against "meddling" in Central American affairs.

Honduras—proxy for U.S. imperialism

As the recent events in Central America make clear, the Honduran government is becoming a major proxy for U.S. imperialism in the region. Since Honduras shares common borders with El Salvador, Nicaragua and Guatemala, it is an ideal staging ground for U.S. intervention in Central America.

The Reagan administration pressured Honduras' former military rulers into holding elections—won by Roberto Suazo Córdova in November 1981—in order to provide a "democratic" cover for building up the Honduran army. In 1982 it

(Continued on page 13)



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me itself is moving he right. The pres- large captive Arab -a result of Zionist in the 1967 war— sed the role of the in the government. ryan is now a "re- politician; his role as dent military lobby- assumed by General aeli "hero" of the Both Dayan and eyed major roles in Israel's policy of als against civilians on for Palestinian ids.

Zionist character dic- ernational as well as ic policy. Imperial- nism, racism, mili- ese are all unavoid- ts of Zionism, of the on of an alien state to the Arab masses

and maintained against their will. Not long ago, Menachem Begin (a right-wing Israeli politician) was asked about "the problem of the Palestinians" by a young Israeli member of the Ein Hahoresh kibbutz. Begin's angry reply strikes to the heart of the matter:

"My friend," said Begin, "take care. When you recognize the concept of 'Palestine' you demolish your right to live in Ein Hahoresh. If this is Palestine and not the land of Israel, then you are conquerors and not tillers of the land. You are invaders. If this is Palestine, then it belongs to the people who lived here before you came. Only if it is the Land of Israel do you have a right to live in Ein Hahoresh...."

No group or party which refuses to attack Zionism as such can combat the domestic or foreign policies of the Israeli state. There is only one solution to the Middle East "question." For the Israeli working class, Israel itself is a prison, the largest self-constructed and self-policed concentration camp in the world. For the Arab masses, Israel is an imperialist intrusion and an imperialist oppressor which props up the most backward, reactionary forces within Arab society itself. Only the campaign for a Socialist United States of the Middle East as part of a worldwide proletarian revolution points to a way out of continuous misery, oppression, and slaughter for Jew and Arab alike. □

1917: the n est

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... out the tasks the bourgeoisie
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... sion of his theory repeatedly in
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... ly convinced of the bourgeois
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... and organized proletariat—to
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... le Toward the Peasant Move-
... n, Collected Works, Vol. 9, pp.

... two-sided character of Lenin's
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suggestion that the revolution would ultimately result in the bourgeoisie itself taking power, leading to an extended period of bourgeois rule and traditional capitalist development. This is clearly not what happened.

On the other hand, if Lenin's theory is looked at in its more "radical" interpretation, it came considerably closer to foreseeing the actual course of events. There is a sense in which the events of 1917 and afterward can be viewed as a democratic (bourgeois) revolution "growing over" into a socialist revolution. One can, for example, consider the period between February and October to be the democratic stage, with the period from October onward representing the socialist stage. Or, one can view February and October as different phases of a bourgeois democratic stage, with the socialist stage coming in mid-1918, when the peasant representatives (the Left Social-Revolutionaries or Left SRs) broke with the Bolsheviks and/or when, as the civil war got underway, the Bolsheviks organized the workers and poorer peasants to seize grain from the wealthier peasants to feed the towns, thus breaking the alliance with the peasantry as a whole. (As we shall see next month, the SWP leadership adopts such an interpretation of the revolution to support its polemic against Trotsky's theory.)

There is also a sense in which the government established by the October Revolution was not, narrowly speaking, a proletarian government. Insofar as the soviets had a strong peasant component and insofar as the Left SRs supported and actually joined, for a time, the government itself, the government could be considered a workers' and peasants' government (and in that sense a "revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry") which only later became a more narrowly proletarian dictatorship.

Lenin himself interpreted the revolution in these and other similar ways during and after 1917. While we would argue that all these interpretations have their shortcomings (primarily in their attempt to cram the course of the revolution into distinct and discrete stages), it is certainly possible to come up with a credible interpretation of the revolution within the framework of the more radical version of Lenin's theory. We emphasize this point because one need not deny that Lenin's theory had considerable validity in order to argue, as we do later in this article, that Trotsky's theory proved to be more correct.

No distinct stages

Despite the many aspects of Lenin's theory that did prove accurate, however, there were a number of important weaknesses with his conception.

First, there really was no bourgeois democratic "stage" of the Russian Revolution, clearly and distinctly set off from a proletarian socialist "stage." As it turned out, these aspects of the revolution proved to be thoroughly intertwined. Almost from the moment the Tsar was overthrown, the workers' struggles went beyond the bounds of bourgeois democracy. Throughout the entire period from February to October, for example, workers were occupying and, to a degree, actually running the factories, hardly a bourgeois democratic task. Similarly, central bourgeois democratic tasks of the revolution, such as the peasants' seizure of the land, did not really get underway until late in the summer of 1917—again blurring the line between any clearly demarcated stages. In these and many other respects, the bourgeois democratic tasks and the proletarian socialist tasks were thoroughly interconnected, not neatly separated into distinct periods.

Additionally, it would be stretching the point more than a bit to argue that during the period the Bolsheviks were supported and/or joined by the Left SRs in the government, the government was actually a dictatorship of both the proletariat and the peasantry. The Left SRs, who had only recently split from the mainstream of the Social-Revolutionary Party (the Right SRs), never had much power or influence over the government established by the October insurrection. For good or for bad, for all practical purposes the government was a Bolshevik government, supported by the soviets.

Indeed, it is not quite accurate to say that the Left SRs represented the peasants. The SRs as a whole had the support of the majority of the peasantry until the fall of 1917, when the SRs split. But it is doubtful that most peasants even heard about the split until long after it occurred, much less took sides. In any event, the Left SRs had virtually no organizational apparatus and were barely an organized party in any meaningful sense of the term. It would be far more accurate to view the Left SRs as reflecting the peasants' growing radicalism, including their seizure of the land and their increasing hostility to the Provisional Government, throughout 1917.

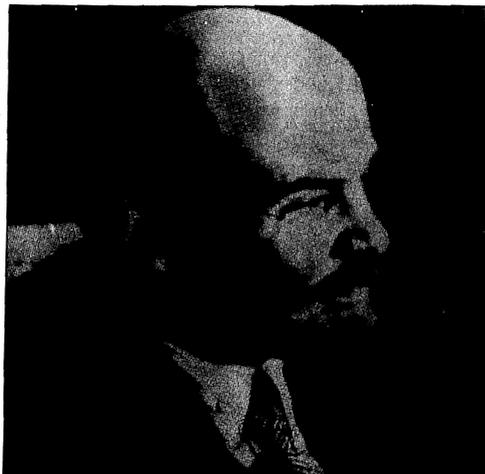
Thus, the participation of the Left SRs in the government for a limited period after October hardly established the post-October government as a dictatorship of the

proletariat and the peasantry. The Bolsheviks' chief base of support was among the workers, and the government formed after the October Revolution was basically a workers' government, supported but not actually joined by the peasantry.

In sum, though a credible interpretation of the revolution can be made within the framework of Lenin's theory of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, this can only be done by stretching either the theory or the facts somewhat to make things fit.

Trotsky's predictions largely confirmed

We now turn to Trotsky's theory of Permanent Revolution. As we saw last month, there was much in common between this theory and the more radical version of Lenin's theory. Trotsky, like Lenin, predicted that the peasant struggle would be a major component of the revolution; Trotsky, in common with Lenin, also recognized that the bourgeois liberals would obstruct rather than lead the revolution and that the revolution would therefore have to be carried out by an alliance between the peasants and the workers against the Tsar, the landlords and the capitalists.



V.I. Lenin.

On the other hand, Trotsky did not believe the peasantry would be capable of playing an independent political role in the revolution. Though he agreed with Lenin that the peasant struggle, particularly for land, would play a major role in undermining the old regime, he predicted that the peasants would follow one or another of the two main urban classes, the bourgeoisie or the working class. Trotsky also doubted that the peasants would form a stable party that would represent their interests and fight for them consistently. As a result, he predicted that the alliance between the workers and the peasants in the revolution would not be an alliance of political equals, but rather that the peasants would be politically subordinate to the workers. Similarly, Trotsky thought that the future revolutionary government would not be a dictatorship of the workers and the peasants, but a workers' government, a proletarian dictatorship, supported by the peasants.

Trotsky's predictions on these points were largely confirmed by the actual course of the revolution. During 1917, the peasants did first follow the bourgeoisie, then the working class. Concretely, through much of 1917 they tended to support the bourgeois Provisional Government (and in fact gave the government its majority in the soviets through their support of the SR Party, which in its majority backed the Provisional Government). Eventually, however, as the government refused to take steps the peasants increasingly saw as vital—pulling Russia out of the war, solving the land question, calling a constituent assembly, etc.—the peasants turned against it. By the end of the summer, millions of peasants were seizing the land and setting fire to the landlords' estates, while those peasants who were soldiers (the vast majority of the army) rebelled against the slaughter taking place on the war front, deserted their posts en masse and returned home to join in the struggle for land. Increasingly, the peasants turned to the working class. This was particularly reflected in the soviets by the support given by the peasants' representatives to the Bolshevik Party's resolutions to do away with the Provisional Government and establish a purely soviet government.

Trotsky's theory also accurately predicted that the government established by the October Revolution would not really be a dictatorship of the proletariat and the

peasantry, but would instead be a workers' government, a proletarian dictatorship, supported by the peasants. Even if the limited participation of the Left SRs in the post-October government had meant that peasants played an equal role, the fact that the government soon lost that participation (and indeed only stabilized following the Left SRs' withdrawal) unquestionably meant that the revolutionary government had rapidly become an exclusively proletarian government, essentially confirming Trotsky's predictions.

Finally, and most importantly, Trotsky repeatedly argued that the democratic tasks and the socialist tasks of the revolution were intertwined and that they would only—and could only—be carried out by the workers taking power themselves and establishing a socialist government, i.e., the permanent revolution. In our view, this is basically what happened: The revolution was "permanent" in the sense that it did not stop, or even pause, at a bourgeois democratic stage; instead, it went over directly to a socialist revolution in which the bourgeois democratic tasks were carried out by a workers' government, not a "revolutionary-democratic" government.

In all these respects, then, Trotsky's theory of Permanent Revolution proved more accurate than either the Mensheviks' theory or Lenin's in describing the course of events and actual outcome of the Russian Revolution.

The April crisis

The problems of Lenin's theory were not of a purely abstract or theoretical character; they had a concrete impact, in practice, on the strategy of the Bolshevik Party during the revolutionary upheavals of 1917.

We are specifically referring to the disorientation that took place within the Bolshevik Party during the period between the February Revolution and Lenin's return to Russia from exile in early April. We are going to examine this critical period in some detail for two reasons: First, in our view, the fact that the on-the-scene leaders of the Bolshevik Party—despite years of preparation—proved incapable of working out a consistent revolutionary strategy following the February Revolution is the sharpest illustration of the ambiguities and weaknesses in Lenin's theory; second, as we will see in our next article, the SWP leadership thoroughly distorts this period precisely to deny the weaknesses in Lenin's theory.

The February Revolution was a more or less spontaneous mass uprising. Militants of the various political parties and groups certainly were involved, but the revolution was not led by them.

The revolution posed a myriad of questions that forced the different left-wing tendencies to work out their respective strategies in the period following the Tsar's abdication.

The Mensheviks and the SR Party immediately supported the new Provisional Government, which they would eventually join. These two parties held a strong majority in the Petrograd Soviet (which played a crucial role throughout the revolution, since Petrograd was then the capital and political center of Russia). They used this influence to win support for the Provisional Government from the Soviet itself. This was essential because the Soviet had the allegiance of the revolutionary workers and was in a position to overthrow the weak, newly formed Provisional Government, had it chosen to.

The reaction of the Mensheviks to the February events was fully consistent with their view that the task of the workers was to help the liberals gain power and then to pressure them into carrying out various reforms.

The Bolsheviks, however, had great difficulty in working out their own approach to the new situation. At the time of the February Revolution, Lenin was in exile in Switzerland and other key Bolshevik leaders were in exile in Siberia. Lenin did not arrive back in Russia until April 3 and, until he returned and asserted his influence, the party did not follow either a consistent or a truly revolutionary course.

In the days immediately following the Tsar's overthrow, the party was led by Vyacheslav Molotov, Aleksandr Shlyapnikov and Pyotr Zalutsky, all less experienced and, in the case of Molotov and Zalutsky, younger leaders of the Bolsheviks. Together, they constituted what was known as the "Russian Bureau" of the Bolshevik Party's Central Committee. On March 5, these leaders resumed publication of *Pravda*, the Bolshevik newspaper that had been suppressed at the beginning of World War I. In *Pravda*, they correctly denounced the Provisional Government as a government of the landlords and the capitalists. In its place, they argued, the workers and revolutionary soldiers should convene a constituent assembly and establish a democratic republic. This call for a democratic republic, to be set up by the workers and peasants, was, as we have seen, consistent with the Bol-

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sheviks' theory and program.

However, this position proved to be too far to the left for other Bolshevik leaders, including the majority of the members of the newly revived Petrograd Committee of the party. On March 5, the Petrograd Committee moved the Bolshevik Party toward a position of supporting the Provisional Government, by asserting that the Bolsheviks would not oppose the government as long as "its actions correspond to the interests of the proletariat and of the broad democratic masses of people."

Eight days later, on March 13, Joseph Stalin, Lev Kamenev and M.K. Muranov, three leading Bolsheviks, arrived from exile in Siberia and took over the reins from Shlyapnikov, Molotov and Zalutsky. The Bolshevik policy lurched even further to the right. Along with an announcement of the change in leadership, the March 15 issue of Pravda carried a proclamation from the Petrograd Soviet calling for "defense of the Russian revolution" (and hence of the Provisional Government) from the "German aggressors." In a signed article, Kamenev wholeheartedly endorsed the viewpoint of the Petrograd Soviet, throwing overboard the Bolsheviks' uncompromising opposition to all sides in the inter-imperialist world war. (It is notable that the new position provoked an outcry from Bolshevik factory workers, forcing the party leaders to retreat to a vaguer, still less-than-revolutionary, stance.)

At a Bolshevik Party conference held March 29 to April 4 to discuss the party's attitude toward the All-Russian Conference of Soviets, then in progress, Stalin proposed to "support the Provisional Government in its activity only in so far as it moves along the path of satisfying the working class and the peasantry." This position turned out to be virtually identical to that adopted by the Menshevik majority at the Soviet conference itself. To make matters worse, the Bolshevik leaders were seriously considering a proposal to unify their party with sections of the Mensheviks who claimed to be against national defensism. Moreover, while Pravda had ceased arguing openly for "national defense" (due to the above-mentioned protests of the Bolshevik factory workers), it did not attack the Provisional Government and its policy on the war.

The political vacillation and, ultimately, the political opportunism of the Bolshevik leaders during this period was not primarily a question of the personal character traits of the individual leaders, although these certainly may have played their part. Rather, their disorientation and opportunism expressed the very real contradictions in the Bolshevik Party's political outlook at this time.

E.H. Carr, the author of a detailed and generally scrupulously honest study of the Bolshevik Revolution, describes the situation this way:

"Sympathy may be felt with those who sought to hammer out a consistent Bolshevik policy in Petrograd in the March days of 1917. Nobody had yet contested the view that the Russian revolution was not, and could not be, other than a bourgeois revolution. This was the solid and accepted framework of doctrine into which policy had to fit. Yet it was difficult to discover within this framework any cogent reason to reject out of hand the Provisional Government, which was indubitably bourgeois, or to demand a transfer of power to the Soviets, which were essentially proletarian, or—at least of all—to denounce the quest for a 'democratic' peace and preach civil war and national defeat. The circle could not be squared. It was left to Lenin, before the eyes of his astonished followers, to smash the framework." (Carr, *The Bolshevik Revolution*, Vol. 1, p. 88.)

Lenin's return from exile

This, then, was the situation when Lenin arrived in Petrograd on April 3. He came with a policy that was radically different from any put forward by the Bolshevik leaders on the scene. Not surprisingly, a major struggle broke out within the party.

Lenin wasted no time in putting forward his view of the revolution. Addressing a crowd of workers, soldiers, sailors and others who had gathered at the Finland Station to greet him on his return to Russia, Lenin declared that the "robber imperialist war" was the beginning of civil war all over Europe and concluded:

"Any day, if not today or tomorrow, the crash of the whole of European imperialism may come. The Russian revolution, made by you, has begun it and opened a new epoch. Hail the worldwide socialist revolution."

Later on the same evening, Lenin spoke for two hours to a Bolshevik audience at the party headquarters. He began with his view that the worldwide socialist revolution was about to break out as a result of the imperialist war and that the crisis of the imperialist system could only be resolved by socialism. He then denounced the "peace policy" of the

Soviet and, by implication, the policy of the leaders of his own party who were promoting a similar view. And he declared:

"We don't need a parliamentary republic, we don't need any Government except the Soviet of Workers', Soldiers' and Farm-labourers' deputies!"

The Bolsheviks had not expected to hear anything like this. According to N.N. Sukhanov, a left-wing Menshevik who was present at this meeting and who has left valuable memoirs on the events of 1917: "But Lenin's [proposal] was a bolt from the blue not only for me. Up to then no one listening... had ever had any inkling of anything like it. And of course every listener with any experience in political theory took Lenin's formula, fired off without any commentaries, for a purely anarchist schema." (Sukhanov, *The Russian Revolution 1917*, Vol. 1, p. 282.)

The next day, Lenin spoke at the Bolshevik conference that had been in progress since March 29, and read a set of theses he had just written summarizing his point of view. In reference to Stalin's position on the Provisional Government, he declared: "You, comrades, have confidence in the government. If that's your position, our way part. I prefer to be in the minority." Both by the content and the form of his speech, Lenin proceeded to effectively bury any idea of Bolshevik unification with the Mensheviks. Later in the day Lenin spoke at a gathering of Bolsheviks, Mensheviks and independents, called to discuss the unification of the different parties. Here too Lenin read his theses.

Lenin's now-famous "April Theses" consisted of 10 short declarations. Here, we only have the space to summarize the points most essential to our immediate



Revolutionaries distribute literature during February 1917 revolution in Russia.

discussion. (All quotations are from Lenin's *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, pp. 21-24.)

Lenin's first thesis opposed any support to the Provisional Government in the war:

"In our attitude towards the war, which under the new government of Lvov and Co. unquestionably remains on Russia's part a predatory imperialist war owing to the capitalist nature of that government, not the slightest concession to 'revolutionary defensism' is possible."

His second thesis declared:

"The specific feature of the present situation in Russia is that the country is passing from the first stage of the revolution—which owing to the insufficient class-consciousness and organization of the proletariat, placed power in the hands of the bourgeoisie—to its second stage, which must place power in the hands of the proletariat and the poorest sections of the peasants."

This point is key to our discussion, for here Lenin is arguing that the level of consciousness and organization of the proletariat—not some historically predetermined and fixed stage—would determine the outcome of the revolution.

Lenin's third thesis spelled out his position of "No support for the Provisional Government," while the fourth thesis argued that the Bolsheviks' main task, as a minority in the soviets, was to patiently and systematically explain to the masses "the necessity of transferring the entire state power to the Soviets of Workers' Deputies..." The remaining theses were largely an elaboration of Bolshevik program and strategy in the context of these points.

Lenin fights to win over the party

Lenin's "April Theses" were published in Pravda on April 7, 1917, under the title *The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution*. The next day, Pravda carried an editorial note by Kamenev stating that Lenin's theses represented only

Lenin's "personal opinion." The editorial concluded with what was probably the main objection of the other Bolshevik leaders to Lenin's ideas:

"In so far as concerns Lenin's general scheme it appears to us unacceptable, since it starts with the assumption that the bourgeois revolution is finished and counts on the immediate transformation of this revolution into a socialist revolution." (Cited in Carr, *The Bolshevik Revolution*, Vol. 1, p. 91.)

On the day this editorial appeared in Pravda, the Bolshevik Petrograd Committee discussed Lenin's theses and voted them down by 13 votes to two, with one abstention.

This was a critical point for the Bolshevik Party. With the country in the throes of a deep revolutionary crisis, political and social events previously counted by the months and even years could now be measured in days. The Bolsheviks had little time left to steer a revolutionary course.

For three stormy weeks, Lenin battled to win the party to his point of view. He was aided by the rank and file workers of the party, who were more radical than many of the party leaders. With this solid base of support, Lenin steadily won ever-wider sections of the party to his point of view. His final victory came at the All-Russian Conference of the Bolshevik Party, which opened on April 24. Lenin's perspective was expressed in the main conference resolutions, which were subsequently adopted. To quote Carr again:

"The main resolutions were passed by an overwhelming majority of the 150 delegates. With only seven abstentions, the conference declared that the advent of the Provisional Government 'did not change and could not change' the imperialist character of Russia's participation in the war, and undertook to assist 'the transfer of all state power in all belligerent countries into the hands of the revolutionary proletariat.' This was followed by a resolution, carried with only three dissentients and eight abstentions, condemning the Provisional Government for its 'open collaboration' with the 'bourgeois and land-owners' counterrevolution, and demanding active preparations among the 'proletarians of town and country' to bring about 'the rapid transfer of all state power into the hands of the Soviets of workers' and soldiers' deputies or of other organs directly expressing the will of the majority of people (organs of local self-government, constituent assembly, etc.)." (Carr, *The Bolshevik Revolution*, Vol. 1, p. 94.)

Despite the triumph of Lenin's revolutionary perspective, the Bolshevik moderates, led by Kamenev, had not been totally vanquished. According to Alexander Rabinowitch, an authority on the Russian Revolution and the author of a recent work on the October insurrection:

"Still, at the April Conference the Kamenev faction argued long and hard for its position, not without significant results. The influence of the moderates is reflected in the fact that five of their number were elected to the nine-man Central Committee, insuring the moderation of that body from late April through July. The moderate point of view was also evident in the major conference resolutions." (Rabinowitch, *The Bolsheviks Come to Power*, Introduction, p. xxiv.)

We are not arguing that in putting forward his "April Theses" Lenin was explicitly abandoning the theory of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry and accepting Trotsky's theory of Permanent Revolution. What we are saying is the following:

- Before Lenin arrived from exile, the Bolshevik Party was politically disoriented and wound up virtually supporting the Provisional Government and moving to an outright defensist position on the war.

- Lenin came back to Russia with a different perspective, one far more radical than the party was following; this new strategy struck nearly all the Bolshevik leaders as heretical, even anarchistic, and was at first strenuously opposed by them.

- It took the unchallenged leader of the Bolshevik Party three full weeks—in the middle of the revolution it had long prepared for—to win the party to his point of view, and he continued to face strong opposition from senior Bolshevik leaders.

The obvious question posed here is: Why did all this take place? To ascribe the severe disorientation of the party to the political (or personal) weaknesses of individual Bolshevik leaders begs the question.

In our view, the cause can be found in the fact that the Bolshevik outlook and strategy—Lenin's theory of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry—did not adequately prepare the party for what was actually to happen in 1917. Despite Lenin's occasional indications that the Russian revolution could, under certain circumstances, go beyond the bourgeois democratic stage, what had been hammered into the heads of his followers was that the revolution would be and must be bourgeois democratic.

The very idea of going beyond the bourgeois democratic revolution and carrying out a socialist revolution simply did not fit with the outlook of the "Old Bolsheviks."

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Costa Rican government I military build-

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Central America

(Continued from page 9)

increased military aid to Honduras by over 100 percent—to \$10.5 million—and sharply increased the number of U.S. military "advisers" in the country. Then on July 14 Reagan met with Suazo and promised him another \$14.5 million in military assistance for 1983, as well as \$64 million in economic aid. In addition, the administration is asking Congress for \$21 million to expand three Honduran airfields so that they can handle U.S. transport planes and jet fighters.

The U.S. government has tried to apply similar tactics in Guatemala, but with less success. As reported in earlier issues of the *Torch/La Antorcha*, the Guatemalan national elections held in March were marked by blatant fraud and followed by a military coup. Efraín Ríos Montt, a retired general who claims that divine prophecy ordained his coming to power, unexpectedly emerged as head of the new government.

On July 1, in a move directed against the growing popular resistance movement, Ríos Montt imposed a state of siege in Guatemala, banning political parties, trade unions, and private meetings not approved by the government. Meanwhile, Ríos Montt has ordered the Guatemalan army to carry out a "Fusiles y Frijoles" campaign against the country's oppressed Indian population, which in recent months has played a leading role in the armed struggle against military rule. Army commanders are now warning the Indians that, "If you're with us, we'll feed you, if you're against, we'll kill you." Over 4,000 Indians have reportedly been slaughtered by the army since Ríos Montt took power.

The Reagan administration is asking Congress for \$11 million in military assistance to Guatemala as part of its Caribbean Basin aid plan. So far, however, congressional leaders are insisting on maintaining the ban on aid to Guatemala imposed by former president Jimmy Carter due to "human rights violations." But the administration hopes that aid will be resumed in 1983, including providing training for Guatemalan officers in the U.S.

Costa Rican government begins military build-up

Finally, Costa Rican President Luis Alberto Monge is moving his country into U.S. imperialism's military bloc in Central America. For years

Costa Rica has been ruled by a series of relatively liberal governments. The country has not had a standing army since 1948. On the international front, the Costa Rican government backed the Sandinista struggle against Somoza, and at first supported the radical Nicaraguan government that took power after Somoza was overthrown in 1979.

But after years of relative stability, the Costa Rican economy is now approaching collapse. The annual inflation rate is pushing 90 percent, real wages have fallen by 33 percent over the past two years, and the country owes \$2.6 billion in foreign debts. Monge, who was elected president in February, is implementing an austerity program that will drive down the living standards of Costa Rican workers and farmers even further.

Consequently, the Costa Rican rulers fear that the workers' and peasants' struggles that have swept Central America may soon erupt in Costa Rica. As a result, they are moving to a more open pro-U.S. stance. In June Monge came to the U.S. and asked Reagan for "security assistance"—against alleged threats from Nicaragua. His government has also joined rightist Central American regimes in attacking the Sandinista government. And in July, it recalled Costa Rica's ambassador to Nicaragua.

U.S. imperialism escalates Central American crisis

All these recent events add up to a significant escalation of the crisis in Central America. The growing regionalization of the various local conflicts in the area is largely the work of U.S. imperialism, not the result of any "plots" by the state-capitalist Cuban government or the Sandinista regime as claimed by the Reagan administration. Even major U.S. capitalist newspapers acknowledge that far from seeking to provoke a confrontation in the region, both the Cuban and Nicaraguan governments are urging the FMLN to accept a negotiated settlement in El Salvador.

But neither these pleas nor the efforts of the Reagan administration and its Central American allies have been able to control the spreading popular revolts in Central America. Consequently, the U.S. imperialists are drawing together landlords, capitalists and military leaders throughout Central America in a regional counter-revolutionary alliance. The Reagan administration and the right-wing rulers in Central America are preparing the ground for a coordinated, all-out effort to maintain their rule in Central America if and when they decide that drastic action is necessary. □

IBP

(Continued from page 5)

costs, particularly in transportation, but it was not really the key to the company's success. Iowa Beef's most significant savings by far have been in labor costs which, according to *Business Week*, are "as much as 40 percent below some of its competitors." *Business Week* added: "The company has managed to keep unions out of 5 of its 10 plants. Although many competitors in recent years have adopted some of Iowa Beef's methods and closed down or modernized old plants, all are still tied to the master contracts with the United Food and Commercial Workers Union."

Even where IBP workers have unionized, as in Dakota City (one of their largest and most important plants), the company has been successful in forcing wages and benefits significantly below the master contract. IBP has never signed a contract without a strike. In November 1978 the Dakota City workers returned—defeated—after a 14-month strike for less than the final offer they had previously rejected.

IBP has also worked to break the butchers' union on the retail level. Currier Holman, the founder of the company, was convicted in 1977 of conspiracy to commit bribery for his role in overcoming resistance of the New York City butchers' union to boxed beef. The company was widely reported to have worked closely with the Mafia in its efforts which, in the end, were successful.

Strike center of industry attention

The current strike is being watched closely by both workers and management throughout the meat packing industry. If IBP is able to get production going with \$6.97-an-hour scabs it will set a new low standard, leading to a round of wage cuts at other plants. Contracts for 10,000 workers at John Morrell,

Swift and Oscar Meyer expire at the end of August. In recognition of what's at stake at IBP, workers at a John Morrell plant in nearby Sioux City, members of Local 3048 of the UFCW, are contributing \$2 each a week to Local 222's strike fund.

Shutting the plant is the key to winning the strike, and the workers in Dakota City have shown they are keenly aware of that. But it is unlikely that they can do it by themselves. If the UFCW (which is the largest union in the AFL-CIO) would mobilize the thousands of meat

packing workers in Nebraska, Iowa and South Dakota to Dakota City for mass picket lines, that would be one bold step toward victory. Such rallies would also help bring the support of thousands of other workers beyond the meat packing industry itself. If the Dakota City IBP strike fails, the workers there have every right to be bitter. They have shown through their own militancy how the strike should be waged. It remains only for their union leaders to follow their example. □

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