

EL SALVADOR:

Military Victory to Left-Wing Insurgents!

Imperialist "Doves" Enemies of Revolution

El Salvador, a Central American Vietnam? The Reagan administration, throwing down the gauntlet to the Soviet Union, is bent on making a demonstration of American power in a way that hasn't been possible since its humiliating defeat by the workers and peasants of Southeast Asia half a decade ago. With rhetoric harking back to the Eisenhower/Dulles era of American nuclear blackmail, it vows to "draw the line" against "Communist subversion" well south of the Rio Grande. Liberals, to whom "Vietnam" meant above all a losing war for U.S. imperialism, worry about the "light at the end of the tunnel" and introduce legislation in Congress to cut off military aid to the murderous Salvadoran junta. And around the country in recent weeks a protest movement has sprung up recalling, though on a far smaller scale, the Vietnam antiwar movement.

Once again it is the coalition between Democratic Party "doves" and reformist leftists which dominated the Vietnam antiwar movement with their liberal politics of pressuring Washington rather than *defeating* imperialism. Meanwhile, Nicaraguan Sandinistas and Salvadoran left-wing leaders lock the insurgent masses, intended victims of the U.S.' Cold War onslaught, in the same popular-front trap. They are now seeking not a battlefield victory, much less workers revolution, but a "political solution" with a section of the Christian Democratic/military junta, arranged through international pressure. But Reagan has no intention of negotiating any such deals. Intent on sending a bloody message to the Kremlin, as we have pointed out before, the only solution he has in mind for Central American leftists is a "final solution."

Because they seek to avoid challenging the vital interests of imperialism, liberal/radical misleaders must ignore the real target of Reagan and his four-star secretary of state Haig: the USSR and the other bureaucratically deformed workers states of the Soviet bloc, particularly Cuba. But administration spokesmen have repeatedly stressed that the uproar over El Salvador is an integral part of their anti-Soviet war drive. Testifying in Congress, the general accused Russia of having a "hit list for the ultimate takeover of Central



7,000 protest U.S. support to El Salvador junta in Boston, March 21. Spartacist contingent fights illusions in liberal imperialism.

America." Accusing Cuba of supplying arms to Salvadoran rebels, Haig threatened that "a military option should not be excluded." And National Security Council official Richard Pipes blurted out Reagan's real policy when he told Reuters the Soviets face a choice of "changing their Communist system in the direction of the West or going to war. There is no alternative." As the Spartacist League has underlined, "Defense of Cuba and the Soviet Union Begins in El Salvador!"

And it's not just a question of "wolf

Nicaragua on the Razor's Edge.....6

howls," as Cuban defense minister Raúl Castro called them. Green Berets have been dispatched to El Salvador, and the *New York Times* now admits what has been known for some time: former National Guardsmen of the Somoza dictatorship are training with Cuban gusanos inside the U.S. preparing to overthrow the left-wing Sandinista regime in Nicaragua. Shades of the Bay of Pigs! As for large-scale intervention, Pentagon officials trying to jack up their war budget say they can't make a show of force without withdrawing an aircraft carrier from the Indian Ocean or the Mediterranean (*New York Times*, 15 March). Yet at the moment the U.S. is conducting a large-scale naval war maneuver (Readex 1-81) involving 41 ships in the Caribbean, and the nuclear carrier *Nimitz* has been stationed off Cuba (UPI dispatch, 3 March)! No one should doubt, then, that Reagan is prepared to stage some sort of military provocation if he figures the Soviets won't react.

In his Congressional testimony Haig claimed that "Phase One [of a Soviet 'four-phase operation' in Central America] has been completed—the seizure of Nicaragua." But even though Reagan writes them off, for the FSLN hopes of a

modus vivendi with Yankee imperialism seem to spring eternal. After the Washington *diktat* denouncing the Sandinistas for supplying arms to Salvadoran leftists, the response from Managua has been to slash the already meager flow of guns. Though American leftists are silent on this betrayal, the numerous reports cannot be doubted: not only calls by FSLN "hard" Borge for a "political solution" in El Salvador, but information from American intelligence indicating a sharp cutback in arms coming through Nicaragua. As for leftists in El Salvador, following their failed January "final offensive" a leader of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation front (FMLN), Ana Guadalupe Martínez, announced: "Our main task is rather to organize a bloc of states that will oppose an intervention in El Salvador."

In the United States, meanwhile, El Salvador protests have mushroomed: teach-ins coast to coast, 5,000 marching in the Bay Area in mid-January, 7,000 in Boston March 21 and major demonstrations against U.S. intervention scheduled for Washington, D.C. in early May. Their political axis is unambiguously that of the imperialist "doves."

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SL/ANZ Conference Marks Rapid Growth

ADAPTED FROM
AUSTRALASIAN SPARTACIST,
MARCH 1981

The Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand (SL), Australian section of the international Spartacist tendency, held its 12th National Conference in January. The central task posed was the consolidation of the gains of the preceding year of rapid growth (one-third of the comrades attending the conference were new recruits since January 1980): the integration of the new comrades as cadres through Marxist education and involvement in struggle and the deepening of the organization's roots through the forging of new industrial and campus fractions.

The conference stressed the opportunities for continued growth. The national report noted that while all sections of the international tendency confront "Cold War II" and the heightened danger of nuclear world war, on the domestic front "it's not the Reagan years in Australia," as indicated by the growing unpopularity of Malcolm Fraser's arrogantly anti-working-class Tory government and the general public disdain for his backing of Jimmy Carter's anti-Soviet Olympic boycott (a hit record in Australia was the "anthem" of the Moscow Olympics, sung in German and English by a West German disco group).

The new comrades were won from a variety of political backgrounds. The most sizable success story was a wave of recruits out of a non-party extended-family collective in Melbourne around Joan Bray and her husband, trade unionists and ex-members of the Communist Party of Australia (CPA). Over the course of years, Joan Bray had moved left from the CPA orbit in a generally feminist/New Leftist direction. Although not a Trotskyist, she encouraged her entourage to "check out" the Spartacist League, and they marched with our contingent on May Day 1980 under our slogan of "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan—Extend Social Gains of October Revolution to Afghan Peoples!" Joan Bray died of cancer last year, but several young workers from this heterogeneous, fuzziy pro-communist milieu were won to our program on women's liberation, the picket line, the "Russian question." Their recruitment shows the power of our Trotskyist program as a class-struggle break from the craft-unionist, social-chauvinist backwardness of the Australian Laborite leadership.

Other new recruits this year came from the Socialist Workers Party, the stillborn centrist "Trotskyist Study Group" and elsewhere. They were won to Trotskyism on key questions of the international class struggle, in particu-

lar our Trotskyist defense of the USSR against imperialism, which sets us off sharply from the social-patriotic left. One comrade joining the SL at the conference noted:

"I first came into contact with the SL because of the 'Victory to the Red Army' headline in the February/March [1980] issue [of *Australasian Spartacist*]. Due to my uninformed, Stalinist, anti-Trotskyist upbringing, I was under the impression that Trotskyism meant anti-Soviet Union. I had some doubts about the USSR.... The SL's line on the USSR made me quite excited. At last I could criticize the Soviet Union from the left. The SL calls for the defense of the gains of the October Revolution, i.e. collectivized property and planned economy, but calls for political revolution to oust the parasitic bureaucrats who are hindering the advance of Bolshevism both in the USSR and throughout the world...."

The SL's intervention into a "Stop the Carter/Fraser War Drive" campaign briefly waged by a lash-up between the so-called Trotskyist Study Group in Sydney and the clique around Paul



Australasian Spartacist

May Day 1980 in Sydney.

White in Melbourne exposed the bloc's contradictions over Afghanistan, laying the basis for a struggle within the Melbourne group over the SL's angular "Hail Red Army" slogan. Four new comrades were won to the SL through this aggressive polemical work.

New supporters were also won

through the SL's interventions into the Socialist Workers Party-sponsored Australian tour by "chador socialist" Fatima Fallahi of the Iranian HKE last July. In Melbourne a militant picket of 50 people denounced Fallahi's kowtowing to Khomeini's anti-communist, anti-Kurd, anti-woman regime. At LaTrobe and Sydney University campuses, our comrades intervened to expose Fallahi's apologies for the enforced veiling of women, stoning of homosexuals and "adulterers," genocidal campaigns against national minorities, etc. in Iran.

More recently, the Polish events have provided new opportunities to regroup subjectively revolutionary militants to the Trotskyist program. When the Polish crisis broke last August, most of the left rushed to uncritically acclaim the nationalist Solidarity union leadership, cynically ignoring its ties to the Catholic church whose capitalist-restorationist appetites make it the rallying point for potential social

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SWP Welcomes KKK, Excludes Trotskyists

BERKELEY—"We'd let the Klan in, but we're not going to let *you* in," blustered Young Socialist Alliance (YSA) spokesman Bill Baker to supporters of the Spartacist League, as he barred their way to a workshop of the SWP/YSA's "Socialist Education Conference" here March 14. If the all-too-real Ku Klux Klan from nearby Contra Costa County ever took up this offer, the SWP could get its own supporters *wasted* with "socialist education" like this!

This obscene statement, repeated and defended by Baker, is the logical application of the SWP's position for "free speech" for fascists while excluding the revolutionary communists of the SL. Spartacists were again excluded from a forum that same evening by SWP national chairman Barry Sheppard on their "socialist Watersuit," showing that in order to seal their own supporters off from political criticism, they are even willing to risk alienating the liberal/ACLU milieu they are courting.

In spite of this cowardly exclusion, and lest anyone mistake the SWP for

revolutionary Trotskyists, the SL/SYL kept up an aggressive political presence throughout the two-day conference. Our comrades passed out a leaflet titled, "Does the SWP Have Anything in Common with Marxism? Nope! Not For a Long Time!" which explained in part, "The SWP like the ACLU wants 'free speech for fascists.' But the fascists don't talk—they shoot! Like in Greensboro, North Carolina. The SWP actually boasts about its 'debate' on television with California KKK leader Tom Metzger."

In San Francisco the night before, 15 SWPers blocked four SL supporters at the entrance to their forum on Central America trying to justify their cowardly action by slandering the Spartacist League as "disrupters." Black supporters of the SL confronted SWP leader Tony Thomas for excluding them and opposing a program to fight the Klan. One comrade told Thomas that with politics like these, "you're either dumb, or you don't care, or you're cowards." Tony Thomas grinned, held up three fingers, and

said, "All three!" This is the same Tony Thomas who at a meeting last December 13 of the Contra Costa Coalition (formed on an explicit basis of reliance on the cops against KKK terror and opposed to labor/black defense of the black homes under attack) opined that physical defense of the black families under siege was "not the issue!"

What is it that the SWP doesn't want people to hear at their forums? *Trotskyist politics. They would like to avoid a repeat of the embarrassing moment at a Laney College forum on El Salvador two weeks earlier where hissing and booing YSAers were forced to shut up when the mainly Latin and minority audience of over 100 students cheered the SL's call for "military victory to the left-wing insurgents." While the SWP refuses to take sides in the civil war in El Salvador, supports the capitalist program of the popular-front FDR and won't defend the USSR, the Spartacists got an enthusiastic response to our call for workers revolution in El Salvador.*

NYC Doc Strike

Koch's Cuts Kill Patients

NEW YORK CITY—Two thousand five hundred doctors in the Committee of Interns and Residents (CIR) walked picket lines for a week at seven NYC public and two private hospitals in a protest strike against the atrocious conditions in the city's hospital system. Demanding that patient care standards be written into their contract, the CIR denounced NYC mayor Koch's closing of Harlem's Sydenham Hospital and Reagan's slated drastic cuts in Medicaid benefits. The doctors charged that city cutbacks, causing drastic shortages of personnel, vital life-saving equipment and even sheets and blankets, have made public hospitals houses of horror for their largely poor and minority patients.

From Harlem to the South Bronx to Brooklyn's Crown Heights, NYC's hard-pressed ghetto residents backed

the CIR strike against racist Koch's cutbacks. But Koch tried to break the CIR with a barrage of threats: CIR head Dr. Jonathan House was fired after he announced strike plans. 2,000 CIR members were threatened with firings. A judge ordered \$100,000 a day fines against the CIR and threatened further penalties under New York's notorious anti-strike Taylor Law.

Faced with the threat of losing their medical certification, CIR doctors returned to work at city hospitals March 23. The walkout was broken because the city labor movement did not actively support it (hospital workers in District 1199 and AFSCME Local 420 were even told to cross picket lines). It will take a powerful working-class offensive to win the battle against Koch's killer cuts and Reagan's reactionary budget ax-murders. ■



WV Photo

NYC interns and residents defy Taylor Law, March 13.

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Cops Are Racist Killers, Not Protectors

Black Anger from Atlanta to Harlem

Some 20,000 people marched through the streets of Harlem Friday evening March 13 to protest the succession of grisly murders and unexplained disappearances of black children in Atlanta. In a candlelight vigil the procession moved up Adam Clayton Powell Boulevard, then listened to speeches from two mothers of the murdered children and joined local religious leaders in prayer. "Wear a ribbon, light a candle and march for the lives of our children" was the evening's ceremonial theme. In Atlanta that same weekend 3,000 marched in a "Moratorium on Murder—Save the Youth" demonstration which culminated in a rally at Morehouse College.

The number of murdered black ghetto children—their bodies found mutilated in overgrown fields outside of town—now numbers 20 since July of 1979. And given the climate of racist America, no wonder they are perceived as racially motivated killings of blacks by whites. Speculations about the murderers range from racist crazies to Ku Klux Klan plots to theories that the killers are within the police force itself. Across the country the wearing of green ribbons has been called for as a "show of concern" for the terrorized Atlanta black population. It began with Philadelphia grandmother Georgia Dean, who said, "Everybody was putting out yellow ribbons in honor of the hostages [but] the missing children in Atlanta... can't come home." The protests over the Atlanta children have become a focus for the anger and suffering of black people all over Reagan's America.

Nationwide, blacks are the targets of mounting race terror and government policy which says that ghetto populations are expendable. Social programs killed by Reagan's budget ax, across-the-board attacks on every limited gain of the civil rights movement. Who can estimate the rise in infant mortality rates due to slashing of such programs as prenatal care, food stamps, school lunches? The black masses in Reagan's America feel themselves under the gun in the most literal sense. And these



20,000 hold candlelight march in Harlem, March 13, to protest Atlanta child killings.

vicious attacks will not be stopped with liberal concern and green ribbons, but hard class struggle.

The large protests that have sprung up around the Atlanta murders, however, do not confront the threat of growing racism in the U.S. *politically*. That is precisely why Atlanta is such a popular cause with the liberals, the black misleaders and the reformists who tail them. They channel deeply felt outrage and fear into harmless apolitical activity that challenges not one brick or pillar of the racist status quo. *Ironically, the Atlanta killings have become a focus of mass protest because they have the least political content.* A movement organized to integrate schools, for instance, immediately engages the racist forces of segregation. A fight against the killer cops—who have murdered and terrorized far, far more blacks than have been victimized in Atlanta—must confront the armed thugs of the capitalist state. A struggle to stop the KKK/Nazi race terrorists—a real threat to blacks now and in the future—must pose necessary political and military questions for the defense of blacks from fascist attack. But who can be against a "show of concern" for the tragedy of

Atlanta? Well, who can be for the murder of Atlanta schoolchildren? Not even the KKK wants to take "credit" for these acts. Ronald Reagan can "show concern" for the dead children of Atlanta even as he closes the school cafeterias for the living. Even Frank Sinatra and Sammy Davis, Jr. tried to clean up their acts with an Atlanta fundraiser.

To the extent that the Atlanta protests raise any demands at all, they are for more police protection, for a federal investigation... and ultimately a call for federal troops or marshals. But the balance sheet of the black struggle—from the murder of Black Panther leader Fred Hampton, to the murder of civil rights worker Viola Liuzzo—has shown that the cops, G-men, FBI and federal troops are no protectors of black people, but their *racist killers!* And when Atlanta blacks took steps to organize black patrols in the housing projects they were arrested.

Meanwhile the reformist left steps forward once more to preach reliance on the bourgeois state as the "protectors" of the black masses. Socialist Workers Party (SWP) Atlanta mayoral candidate Andre Khalmorgan calls for blacks

to "force the government at all levels to fulfill its stated purposes of protecting all citizens." The SWP newspaper the *Militant* devotes endless pages to the calls of Atlanta moms for more police activity. Yet the *Militant* (6 March) banner headline asks, "Atlanta: Are Cops Covering For Child Killers?" These hustlers do everything to suggest that the cops are the killers, then demand... more cops! The Communist Party has a front-page editorial box in the 19 March *Daily World* proclaiming "The federal government must play a more aggressive role in halting these murders." So now they must be celebrating as Reagan has fulfilled their program—announcing he will send \$1.5 million to Atlanta for the investigation. But blacks from Atlanta to Harlem have nothing to celebrate.

Ronald Reagan has declared war on black America. There are even serious moves now afoot to repeal the 1965 Voting Rights Act. On March 11 the California courts upheld Proposition 1 and ordered the dismantling of the Los Angeles busing program. Thus they hammered in the last nails in the coffin of school integration, already killed half a decade ago when the Democrats buckled under racist pressure in the streets of Boston. And while the Reagan administration can't do anything much about the economy, it will make black people the scapegoats for the failures of this racist capitalist system. But there is a basis for struggle, and not just by blacks alone. Miners facing cuts of "Black Lung" benefits are threatened; hundreds of thousands of laid-off auto workers have been cut off unemployment insurance. But a vague "sense of concern" won't do it. Appealing to bourgeois congressmen on either side of the aisle won't do it—far from opposing Reagan's \$30 million in budget cuts, the Democrats have actually been speeding them through Congress. What is needed is a workers party, to unite all the victims of Reagan's killer cuts into a struggle for socialist revolution, which for the first time will make America safe for black people. ■

Klan Gets Bloody Nose

On March 21 a pack of KKK fascists who tried to hold a race-hate provocation in Meriden, Connecticut were driven off the streets by approximately 200 outraged demonstrators. The Klan had come to city hall to support the killer cops who last month shot two blacks, murdering one. After hiding in the city hall for over an hour, the white-sheeted scum tried to escape out the back door with the help of local cops in riot gear. But they were met by a barrage of rocks and sticks. According to press reports, eight Klansmen and 19 cops were bloodied. The cops charged the crowd with nightsticks and arrested two protesters. Now the leading race terrorist in the U.S., "Imperial Wizard" Bill Wilkinson, is calling for the help of the federal Justice Department, claiming his "civil rights have been violated." Charges against these anti-Klan demonstrators must be dropped at once!

We are glad to see these KKK thugs get a taste of justice for their murderous terror attacks on blacks, leftists, Jews and other minorities. But the tactics of the International Committee Against Racism (InCAR) which organized the anti-Klan confrontation can be no model for fighting the fascists successfully. InCAR is a creature of the

Progressive Labor Party (PL), known for its wild gyrations between liberal reformism and adventurism. Their strategy depends on the cops' failing to crush their protests. But even as PL chanted "Cops and Klan work hand-in-hand," 100 state police were waiting a few blocks away, according to the *Boston Globe*. Later the president of the state police union apologized for not sending in his cops to bash the demonstrators.

This time PL was lucky. But a strategy to stop the fascists which banks on the supposed incompetence of the state—or worse, the illusion that it would protect anti-fascist protests—is suicidal. Last time PL/InCAR rallied in Scotland, Connecticut to protest a cross-burning they nearly got shot and the totally unprepared demonstrators took to the fields in confusion. What is needed to drive the fascists back into their holes is neither liberal/reformist reliance on the government to "ban the Klan" nor the substitutionist adventures of PL/InCAR. What's needed is the social power of the union movement, backed by black and other minority organizations. The SL says: For labor/black mobilization to stop fascist terror attacks!



KKK runs for cop protection in Meriden, Connecticut.



Diana Coleman Young Spartacus

SL vs. Feminism on International Women's Day

"Women's Liberation through Socialist Revolution"



Diane Gilpen

WV Photo

The Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth League celebrated International Women's Day, March 8, this year with a series of forums around the country. Topics ranged from feminism and reaction in the U.S. to women in Khomeini's Islamic dictatorship to how the Bolshevik Revolution liberated women. The clash between the SL/SYL's proletarian defense of democratic rights and petty-bourgeois feminists' turn toward "pro-family" reaction was most heated over the anti-porn crusade. D.L. Reissner's talk, "From Bra-Burning to Book-Burning: Feminists Join 'Moral Majority' Anti-Pornography Campaign," drew large audiences and heated polemics on several campuses. (*Young Spartacus* No. 89, March 1981, reprints extensive parts of her forum.) Against the reactionary feminist campaign and the despairing reformism of most of the left, the Spartacist League counterposed our fight for women's liberation through socialist revolution. We print below brief excerpts from several of the talks:

SAN FRANCISCO

DIANA COLEMAN, Spartacist Party-endorsed candidate for SF Board of Supervisors last fall, spoke at UC Extension and UC Berkeley.

Feminists view the future with

pessimism. At best they want to ward off the things which they see coming down on them. At worst they are in a bloc with the right wing. Someone from the Freedom Socialist Party [a "feminist-socialist" group] said, "We don't want the government to censor pornography. We want a mass movement to do it." And we said, well, there is a mass movement doing it. It's called the Moral Majority. So they can join right up.

BERKELEY

DIANE GILPEN, laid-off auto worker, spoke at an SYL noon rally at the University of California's Sproul Plaza.

I'd like to share with you a lesson I learned from a strike at the General Motors plant in Fremont four years ago. . . . A woman was injured on the job and was being harassed by a foreman, who was trying to force her to do a job she physically could not do any more. The woman called the union for help, and in the process of defending her, the union steward was brutally abused and physically thrown out of the office by this racist foreman. The union leadership supported a walkout which stopped production and shut down the plant of 7,000 workers for a whole week, costing GM over \$5,000 a minute. The woman was awarded an easier job and the union members were given back the jobs that

they had lost during the dispute.

I learned from this that the man next to me on the assembly line is not my natural enemy; he is my natural ally, and together we, the working class, have the power to fight against women's oppression and racial discrimination. . . . I don't know of any feminist consciousness-raising group that could close down a plant of 7,000 workers and produce the gains that have been won by organized class struggle.

CHICAGO

D.L. REISSNER, a member of the editorial board of *Women and Revolution*, the journal of the Women's Commission of the SL, spoke at the radical club Cross Currents.

At the height of Khomeini's popularity in Iran, the Spartacist League stood alone on the left in calling for his downfall, explaining that his program meant the enforced brutalization and slavery of women. In the fighting over Afghanistan, fighting which broke out specifically over the question of women's liberation, the Spartacist League again stood alone, and stands alone, hailing the victory of the Red Army over the reactionary rule of the mullahs. The feminists were so worried that women might be photographed in black garter belts, but they had nothing to say about women who are forced to spend their

SL/ANZ...

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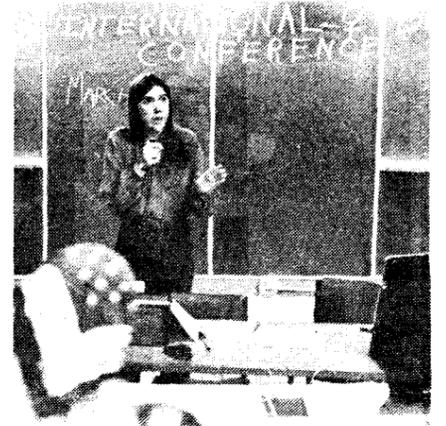
counterrevolution in Poland. (The pro-Moscow Socialist Party, of course, remained apologists for the Polish Stalinist bureaucracy, which has disorganized the economy, demoralized the workers and alienated every section of Polish society from "Communism.") Only the SL stood for the Trotskyist program of internationalist solidarity with the Russian proletariat and defense of Poland's socialized means of production through workers' political revolution.

Side by side with our polemical work for revolutionary regroupments has been our activism in the Australian class struggle. Rejecting the fake-"mass" work cynicism of our opponents, the SL has aggressively pursued opportunities for exemplary trade-union work. For example, at the Redfern Mail Exchange, SL supporters stood out, in the words of one militant won to our politics, as "the only people to say what



D.L. Reissner

WV Photo



Mary Jo McAllister

WV Photo

whole lives suffocating under black chadors, veils.

NEW YORK

MARY JO McALLISTER, a spokesman for the SYL, participated in a panel discussion on "Feminism and Marxism" at the Old Westbury campus of SUNY.

For us the Russian Revolution was a model. It opened up the greatest possibilities for human liberation at any time in history, promising freedom for women, an end to women's subjugation to the family and real integration in terms of work. . . . What's needed now is a political revolution, to put power back in the hands of the Soviet working people. But as part of that, one has to defend the gains of that revolution against the drive of the U.S. capitalists to roll that back.

Women must be organized as part of a revolutionary party that is rooted in the working class, and not an "autonomous" women's movement or a separate gay liberation movement. The liberation of women is going to be a historical act, not a mental act. You're not going to get it through alternative lifestyles; you're not going to get it through consciousness-raising; you're not going to get it through single-issue reform movements. You've got to take it all on. And that's why ultimately the liberation of women has to come through socialist revolution. ■

was really needed—an indefinite statewide [work] stoppage to smash the bosses' union-busting plans." And at Fairfax printing plant in Sydney, SL supporters fought to uphold the basic principle that "picket lines mean don't cross." PKIU member Ron Rees refused to go to work during a three-month strike by metal workers, who later helped him beat back management's attempts to sack him for his principled solidarity with their struggle.

Our membership growth, the expansion of our press and the re-establishment of effective presence in Melbourne are elements in our continuing struggle to transform the SL into the nucleus of a bolshevist vanguard party of the working class, section of a reformed Fourth International. Our communist class-struggle line, the Leninist alternative to social-chauvinist Laborite reformism and cringing centrist opportunism, must become rooted in the consciousness of the working class in order for our class to take state power and transform society. If you agree with us, join us: we have a world to win. ■

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Support for Sitdown at Ford's River Rouge

"Not a Nickel, Not a Layoff!"

DETROIT, March 21—Big Three auto workers are locked in a battle for their jobs where defeat means disaster. The ink was barely dry on the Chrysler "bail-out" contract when Ford Motor Company opened up its drive for wage concessions from the United Auto Workers (UAW): 5,000 workers at Ford's steel plant at the giant Rouge auto complex were told to accept a 20 percent cut (averaging 84 cents per hour) in their incentive pay or lose 3,200 jobs by mid-year. With the union leadership parroting company threats, the steel workers reluctantly voted to accept the cuts, although some 2,000 didn't cast a ballot and a quarter voted "no." Meanwhile GM is dropping hints that it too will demand concessions to remain "competitive." UAW president Doug Fraser has opened a breach in the industrywide union contract, a historic union gain, and now the breach is turning into a flood of takeaways. Auto workers must prepare for the kind of militant action that built this union into a labor powerhouse. Their livelihoods and the whole future of the UAW are at stake!

The opening shot in Ford's attack actually was at the Dearborn Assembly Plant (DAP) in February with the layoff of 551 workers. This came on the heels of the announced future closing of the Michigan Casting Center, another unit covered by the giant UAW Local 600. The class-struggle Rouge Militant Caucus (RMC) put forward the only realistic workers' defense—sit-down strikes against the layoffs and pay cuts, and for jobs for all. As the steel workers voted, the conservative *Detroit News* (12 March) quoted an RMC leaflet as the main opposition to Ford:

"'Not one nickel, not one layoff,' said one leaflet. 'The UAW's surrender at Chrysler (where workers have ratified more than \$1 billion in contract concessions to keep the company alive) shows that 'pay cuts or layoffs' always means pay cuts and layoffs.'"

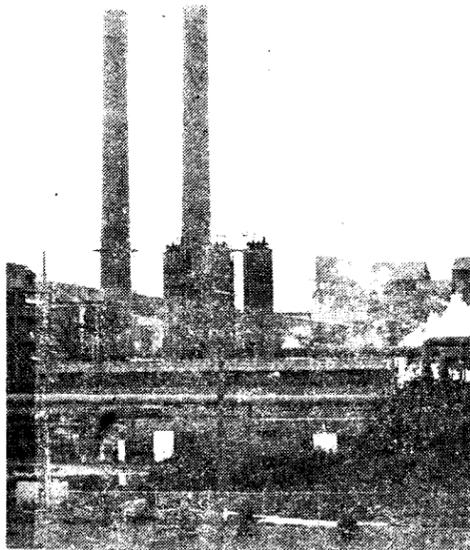
Of course, the newspaper carefully cut out the leaflet headline which read, "FOR SITDOWN STRIKES TO FIGHT FOR OUR JOBS!" At DAP, the RMC had circulated a petition signed by over 600 workers demanding that the union leaders hold an in-plant meeting before the layoffs so that Local 600 could act. RMC spokesman Frank Hicks explained the sit-down perspective in an interview with *WV*:

"We know that with parking lots full of cars all over Detroit, a regular strike isn't going to work—that's obvious. What we have fought for and what we have gotten a good reception for in the plant is the conception that when Ford says we are going to throw another five, ten thousand workers out on the street—from steel, assembly, from stamping, any of these buildings out here at Rouge—that what has to be done is that people say no, our sweat and blood built the plants, people died for the gains we have in our contract and we're not going. And the idea of a sitdown would be enormously powerful in the auto industry."

Another RMCer reported that "all over the plant people were arguing and talking about the question of a sit-down strike. People were coming up and asking caucus members about what really did happen in Flint... What is a plant occupation?... What do you do about the cops?" The sitdown was becoming the issue of the day.

Treachery at the Top

Just three weeks before the steel division concessions were announced, Local 600 president Mike Rinaldi ran a half-page headline in the local's newspaper, *Ford Facts*, proclaiming "NO



Militant Frank Hicks at UAW Local 600 hall calls for sit-down strike against pay cut for workers at River Rouge steel plant (above).

CONTRACT REOPENING CONCESSIONS!" Yet it was Rinaldi himself who proposed the 20 percent cut in incentive pay after negotiating the issue behind workers' backs for over a year! Typically, the local bureaucracy closed ranks to sell it to the membership, giving them only a week's notice before the vote. On March 11, steel workers packed Local 600 meeting rooms throughout the day for "informational" meetings where they were told that each one who voted against the concessions would be personally responsible for the layoffs. Nick Nestico, chairman of the Rolling Mills unit, personally vowed to ensure the layoff of one unionist if he voted against the pay cuts!

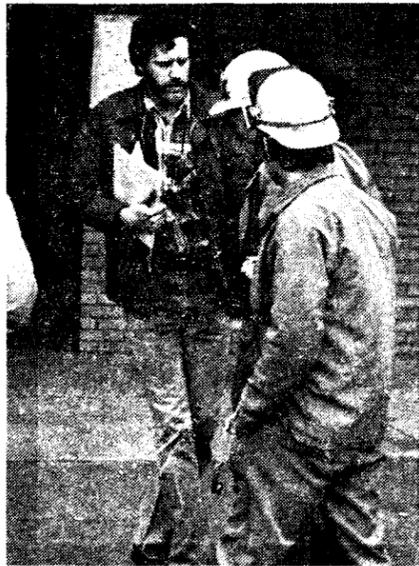
The chairman of the Coke Ovens/Blast Furnace (COBF) unit, Rick Martin, specifically attacked the RMC's sit-down proposal in his own leaflet, trying to exacerbate the divisions in the union by baiting one RMCer as an outsider from "another unit" of the Rouge complex! Other Rouge workers, he claimed, would not fight for the higher paid steel workers. But the RMC leaflet noted that, although "piece work and incentive are designed to divide and weaken the union" and are racially discriminatory, to move forward workers must defend what has already been won while fighting to "roll the incentive into the base rate, with a pay boost and more equal wages for all workers." Martin was not really looking for a fighting strategy, of course, so he called for giving up by voting "yes." Nevertheless, in the COBF meeting a few independent militants did try to call for a sitdown from the floor, indicating that there was a will to fight.

At DAP unit president "Big" Johnny Vawters refused even to receive the petition demanding a union meeting before the layoff and instead called an "informational" meeting on the day after the layoff. In an arrogant leaflet, Vawters claimed the sole right to call meetings and baited the militants:

"Membership meetings are held to inform the membership about what has happened and to collect complaints... and not just because some outside organization wants to use our union halls to complain about nothing on a monthly basis."

Vawters outrageously claimed to have "saved" jobs because the original layoff plan was for much more than the 551 actually laid off! And at the union meeting, he told the membership what "has happened" to fight layoffs—nothing.

The UAW Ford and GM councils, meeting this week in Washington, took



WV Photos

a vote against reopening the national contracts, but this vote was as worthless as Mike Rinaldi's "No Concessions" headline in *Ford Facts*. As Doug Fraser cynically noted to a reporter, this is the time for local union officer elections and have you "ever heard of a Congressman running for reelection on a platform that said, 'If you vote for me, I'll lower your standard of living'" (*Detroit Free Press*, 20 March). Even lower-level executive board "oppositionists" like William Brown and Larry Bronson in Local 600 are already preparing to capitulate—Bronson only stated that he was against concessions until they received "assurances" from Ford that there would be no layoffs.

Fake Oppositionists Only Sit Down at Home

Even more adamant than the bureaucracy in opposition to a sit-down strike were the fake oppositionists in the plants. Liz Ziers, who is running on the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) ticket for Congress against the fascist Gerald Carlson, smugly told the RMC that "I only do my sitting down at home." Even after her home was firebombed by Klan/Nazis, Ziers went to Coldwater to debate her pro-Nazi opponent! Seeking to be the "left" advisers for the union bureaucracy, the SWP opposes any class-struggle action. In contrast, the RMC has been in the forefront in pushing for union/black defense guards to defeat fascist terror.

The cringing Committee for a Militant and Democratic UAW (CMDUAW), supported by a cult group that currently calls itself the Revolutionary Workers League, are horrified by militant action, whether it be a sit-down strike or a simple picket line—so they joined the bureaucrats' chorus labeling the sitdown as a "gimmick... just a wildcat in out of the blue" ("Local 600 Fighter," 5 March). Instead, CMDUAW defended Vawter's bureaucratic move for a union meeting after the layoffs had taken place, and then they submitted a motion for an elected strike committee! In reaction to the steel division concessions, CMDUAW made a lash-up with the workerist Jim Rothe, publisher of the "Organizer" newsletter, to call for a sitdown... authorized by the International. So they oppose any action without the approval of Doug Fraser—which means never! The real politics behind the CMDUAW were clearly revealed when they repeated to workers in the assembly plant that an in-plant union meeting and a sit-down strike

would only finger militants to management. (They even complained that 1,000 unionists occupying the plant would still be an "unauthorized strike"!)

This argument is not new: their guru Peter Sollenberger used the same argument to justify scabbing on an AFSCME workers strike in Ann Arbor in 1977! These cowards who still defend that scabbing deserve nothing but contempt from auto workers.

Not Protectionism But Class Struggle!

U.S. auto makers lost more than \$4 billion last year. As a leading spokesman for the American companies noted, "It's World War III in the auto industry." This was not merely a turn of phrase—Fraser and his social-democratic friends are beating the drums for anti-Japanese protectionism with a virulence reminiscent of World War II. But Fraser's appeal to the capitalist government for "help" has only backfired against the workers—U.S. Transportation Secretary Drew Lewis wants the Reagan government to move to cut Japanese imports, but emphasizes "there has got to be certain concessions" by the UAW—meaning pay cuts and layoffs. The only real solution for American and Japanese auto workers is international class struggle against all the auto barons—not chauvinist protectionism!

Mass sit-down strikes were the key to organizing the auto industry at the height of the Great Depression. As recently as 1973, workers at Chrysler's Jefferson Avenue plant got rid of a hated, racist foreman through a sit-down. With a class-struggle leadership, a sit-down strike could be a powerful tactic to break through Fraser's stranglehold and launch a real counter-offensive against the bosses. The only alternative to class struggle is the agonizing decay of the working class. Eight thousand have already been laid off in the Rouge complex, there are 200,000 jobless auto workers in Detroit alone, and according to the Michigan Manufacturing Association 600,000 are out of work in the industry when suppliers are included. Meanwhile, the SUB funds at Chrysler and Ford are just about on empty, and Reagan's cutbacks to unemployment insurance and TRA benefits will force many thousands onto the welfare rolls, or worse. Last week suburban police shot a former Rouge worker in the back of the head for allegedly attempting to steal a steak from a supermarket!

It's time to face facts: there are no clever compromises here. Sharp class struggle is the only answer, culminating in a workers government to junk the whole damn capitalist system. Replace the murderous boom-bust cycle of production for Henry Ford's profits with socialist planning for human use! ■

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Sandinistas' "Middle Way" a Dead End

Nicaragua on the Razor's Edge



Chauvel/Sygma

Social Revolution or Bloody Counterrevolution

We print below an expanded and edited version of the second half of a speech by Jan Norden, editor of Workers Vanguard and member of the Spartacist League Central Committee, recently delivered in Boston and New York under the title, "For Workers Revolution in Central America." The first half was printed in our last issue (WV No. 276, 13 March).

In Nicaragua, the Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional, the FSLN, took power in July 1979 by overthrowing the dictator Anastasio Somoza. And if El Salvador is the classic oligarchy-run country, Nicaragua was a classic puppet regime. It sounds like left-wing rhetoric, perhaps, but Somoza No. 1 was put in by Franklin Roosevelt—it was the product of his so-called "Good Neighbor" policy, by the way. You recall that FDR's secretary of state Cordell Hull made the famous comment that Somoza may be a son of a bitch, "but he's our son of a bitch." And when Jimmy Carter began talking about "human rights" and let it be known that the U.S. was not going to intervene,

Somoza No. 3 was gone. It took only a few months and he was out. So he was a genuine puppet and the puppeteer is Washington. And it wasn't just the Somozas. The Salvadoran bourgeoisie is proud of the fact that they've never called on the Marines to aid them. But since 1855 Nicaragua has been invaded four times by U.S. forces. Somoza III was just the last in a long line.

He was also a bloodsucking dictator, in an almost literal sense. After the 1972 earthquake in Managua, Somoza decided that this was his big opportunity to get one up on the traditional Nicaraguan bourgeoisie. So he expropriated all the U.S. humanitarian aid and instead forced them to buy up Somoza-owned properties around the cities, for the purpose of reconstruction. And by every other means he sought to enrich his clan at the expense not only of the working class but of the landowners, factory owners and the like. One of his enterprises was a company called Plasmaférisis, which was going to solve Nicaragua's foreign exchange problem by adding an additional export to their coffee and cotton, and that was blood.

So he started mass exports of blood to the United States. Then there was Howard Hughes, who spent his last years on the top floor of the Managua Intercontinental Hotel, his fingernails growing ever longer. The U.S. ambassador would have been more accurately described as a proconsul. Nixon's appointee, a friend of Bebe Rebozo, was Shelton Turner. He got to be such good buddies with Somoza that the tyrant put Turner's picture on their \$3 bill. So if you want a place that's a classic U.S. puppet, bloodsucking dictatorship, phony as a three-dollar bill, Somoza's Nicaragua was it.

The Sandinistas got in power by mobilizing a genuine national uprising, including virtually the entire bourgeoisie outside of the Somoza family and its own private army, the National Guard. But the real power in this insurrection was in the hands of the petty-bourgeois FSLN, the Sandinista National Liberation Front, a movement which in its broad outlines is similar to Fidel Castro's July 26th Movement. That is to say, it is a bonapartist force, a guerrilla army in power, but it is not firmly wed to any particular property forms. As Marxism teaches, capitalism is based on the private ownership of the means of production, and the working class can only rule on the basis of collectivized property. But the petty bourgeoisie does not have a characteristic mode of production. As a result, when they get into power they frequently either don't

know where to go or are quickly driven out. As an intermediate class without a clear class interest, the highly contradictory and disorganized petty bourgeoisie is usually prevented from being a leading force in political struggles. It usually comes down to the working class or bourgeois forces.

However, in certain exceptional circumstances, the petty bourgeoisie can come to power at the head of radical-democratic movements. In this case there was the weakness of the local bourgeoisie, the absence of the proletariat as an independent factor, and the combination of hostility and abstention on the part of imperialism. But what happens then is not predetermined; it can go in one of two directions. For example, we have the Algerian case where a petty-bourgeois-led national independence movement took power. Here the former colonial metropole sought to buy them off. De Gaulle offered to pay off all of the former *colon* landlords, to buy up all of Algeria's wine, setting long-term contracts for Algerian gas and oil. And at the end of it all, Algeria was a French neo-colony. At first they had a left-talking government under Ben Bella, but after a few years he was replaced by the more pliant Boumediene. So that's one route it can go.

There's also the Cuban road, where it went forward to the expropriation of the bourgeoisie, laying the basis for a deformed workers state. That is to say, since late 1960 Cuba has the property forms of a workers state, but atop this sits a ruling stratum, a ruling "caste," analogous to the Stalinist bureaucracy in the Soviet Union which politically expropriated the Russian workers while resting on the social-economic conquests of the October Revolution. And in this case, U.S. imperialism took a different, less accommodating tack. It forced Castro to the wall, made him choose between self-destruction, on the one hand, or the revolutionary obliteration of the Cuban capitalist class and not just of those people who were most compromised by the Batista dictatorship. So that is a second road. It is certainly not the road Castro is counseling to the Sandinistas: remember his statement right after the FSLN took power that Nicaragua would not be a "second Cuba." It isn't the only alternative, either. There is a very real possibility of imperialist-sponsored counterrevolution to put back a pliant puppet regime. And there is our road, not of a bureaucratic overturn of capitalist property relations but a genuine workers revolution led by a Trotskyist party.

Reagan has said that Nicaragua is already "lost to Marxism." If he tries to pull an Eisenhower, it could force the petty-bourgeois Sandinista leadership to go further than they intended and expropriate the bourgeoisie. It could also lead to a split in the FSLN. The dominant faction at the time of their victory, the so-called *terceristas* [Third Roaders] were for a strategic alliance with the "anti-Somoza bourgeoisie." But why would the Reagan administration do this, why don't they conciliate? Well, clearly they don't intend to give up any territory to proletarian revolution. They evidently intend to deal with the Sandinistas militarily, in the aftermath of smashing the more radical left-wing and worker-peasant forces in El Salvador. And if in the case of Cuba there was a certain element of bourgeois miscalculation involved, in this case Washington has embarked on a large-scale and globally conceived campaign aimed at its main target—Russia. So don't think it can't happen here. It's not impossible by any means that a CIA-backed invasion force could come barreling through there. And the only real preparation to meet it is revolutionary mobilization.

Sandinista/Bourgeois "Government"

Nicaragua, then, is set in a context where it's similar to the Cuban situation beginning in 1959, but it's not clear

necessarily where it's going to end up. So I'd like to go over the history of the last year and a half, since July 19, 1979, to see what the Sandinista Liberation Front has attempted to do. First of all, in the period just before the overthrow of Somoza, in early July 1979, there was an agreement that was worked out in San José, Costa Rica with the anti-Somoza bourgeoisie. It was essentially a program to preserve capitalism without Somoza, so that it included a Council of State with a bourgeois majority on it and it included an agreement that the army would be maintained in some form. Specifically, that "honest" officers and soldiers of the National Guard who had not engaged in any kind of massacres would be integrated into the new army. And finally it included provisions for a "mixed" economy, that is, guarantees for the preservation of private ownership of the means of production. Only the properties of the dictator and his henchmen were to be nationalized.

That was the agreement that they had as they were on the verge of taking power. However, in the aftermath there was one important and immediate modification. The National Guard disintegrated as soon as Somoza left the country. They did a very simple calculation: 50,000 people died in this war, and there were only 5,000 in the army. That means for every National Guardsman there were ten widows or mothers who wanted to see him dead. So they high-tailed it across the border into Honduras. That was the first, and fundamental, thing that happened: from that point on the effective power was in the hands of the Sandinista army, and the agreement with the bourgeoisie was not kept at that level.

However, there was from the very beginning a coalition at the level of the junta and the Government of National Reconstruction. So that the junta has five members, of whom two are bourgeois and not members of the Sandinista Liberation Front. Originally, one of these two was Alfonso Robelo, who is the cooking oil king of Nicaragua, and the other was Violeta Chamorro, the widow of the publisher of an anti-Somoza bourgeois newspaper, *La Prensa*. Pedro Joaquín Chamorro was assassinated in early 1978, by gusano killers trained by the CIA and in the pay of Somoza. In addition there are a number of bourgeois forces in the government itself. There are no less than nine priests who are members of the government. Ernesto Cardenal, for example, is minister of culture, and Miguel D'Escoto, a Maryknoll priest, is the foreign minister. In addition there are a number of bourgeois technicians of one sort or another, particularly in the economic ministries. So that at the level of the government, in the implementation of policy, we have referred to this as a Sandinista/bourgeois government.

However, there is no real bourgeois state in Nicaragua at this moment, in the

Marxist sense—that is, a class formation committed to the protection of private property. There is a petty-bourgeois regime, which is essentially the Sandinista army, and you almost have to use the term "government" in quotes because it doesn't have the real power. But it does represent a commitment by the Sandinistas to attempt to follow what they see as a "middle road." So this was the situation as it stood in August 1979, and it continued in this way essentially up until May of last year. At that point the bourgeois forces threatened a walkout from the Council of State. As I said, this council was to have a bourgeois majority, but in the meantime the Sandinistas had redefined the rules of the game and now it had a majority of FSLN-led or -dominated organizations plus most of the independent unions and so on. As a result the two bourgeois members of the Junta, Chamorro and Robelo, resigned and the capitalist representatives threatened to walk out of the first meeting of the Council of State.

There was a fairly tense period at that time in which the regime was essentially reduced to its core, a Sandinista government. But the response of the FSLN was to choose two more bourgeois figures, Arturo Cruz and Rafael Córdoba. Cruz was director of the Central Bank and a former official of the U.S.' Inter-American Development Bank; Córdoba was a member of the Supreme Court. And both are members of the Democratic Conservative Party, a spokesman for landowner interests whose symbol is a triangle with the inscription "God-Order-Fatherland." So at the political level the FSLN has tried to maintain the same situation that they had before. Then last November the bourgeois forces actually walked out from the Council of State (but not Cruz and Córdoba). Their ostensible reason for the boycott was that the government had announced (in August) that elections would be postponed until 1985. Meanwhile, the capitalist parties were calling for immediate elections to a constituent assembly, as a way of dislodging the Sandinistas from power.

There were more ominous aspects, as well. The boycott was linked with a large anti-government meeting planned by the Nicaraguan Democratic Movement, or MDN, of Robelo, who always checks first with the State Department before making a move. And it came in conjunction with conspiracies inside the country, focusing on the Sandinista army, and armed attacks from across the Honduran border. Two days before the MDN rally, the vice president of the employers association, COSEP, Jorge Salazar, was killed while resisting arrest by government forces on charges of counterrevolutionary plotting. At the same time, ex-Somoza Guardsmen staged a raid on a Nicaraguan border post. About a month before, in early October, there had been reactionary-led mass protests of more than a thousand people that for several days para-



Sandinista minister, Jaime Wheelock.

lyzed Bluefields, the largest town of the English-speaking, overwhelmingly black and Indian Caribbean coastal region of Nicaragua. The demonstrators were led by a local separatist movement and protested the presence of several score Cuban teachers and doctors.

No Middle Way!

So politically the FSLN is still trying to strike a balance, but at the same time the bourgeoisie has been pulling away from it, leading to a precarious situation where the Sandinistas' hand may be forced. Meanwhile Nicaragua's economy is overwhelmingly in private hands. The figures that are given are that 60 to 70 percent of the economy is in the private capitalist domain, while in key sectors it is even higher: 75 percent in manufacturing and 80 percent in agriculture. That was in 1980, the "Year of Economic Reactivation," when the argument was you had to get the economy moving again even by reinforcing the capitalists. This is supposed to be the "Year of Production and Defense," as Nicaragua gears up to resist a possible counterrevolutionary invasion. And yet, in a recent report on the economy, agriculture minister Comandante Jaime Wheelock says straight out that the basic ownership of the means of production will stay the same in '81.

Wheelock called this in his speech "national unity of a new type." This is the axis of the FSLN's policies. There's a sense of "we're all patriotic Nicaraguans, we all fought against Somoza," right? One example which I think catches the quality of the "new Nicaragua" at present is that of the newspapers. There are three dailies in the country. *La Prensa* is the organ of the bourgeois opposition; its director is another Pedro Chamorro. Then there is *El Nuevo Diario*, which gives critical support to the Sandinista regime; its director is Xavier Chamorro. And finally we have the FSLN paper, *Barricada*, whose director is... Carlos Chamorro. It's sort of "all in the family." But not for long.

Now, economically in the past year Nicaragua did extremely well. Unemployment dropped from one-third of the entire working population to 17 percent. Output grew by 19 percent. The plan was 99 percent fulfilled—pretty good for a country just climbing back from the devastation of a civil war. In agriculture, both coffee and cotton exports were in the neighborhood of the planned goals, and as for the production of basic foodstuffs it was the biggest harvest in the country's history. That's quite remarkable. How come? Well, the reason that the Nicaraguan government has been able to maintain itself, economically, over the last period is that they have gotten a tremendous amount of foreign aid. While Washington was

turning on and off its \$75 million, Cuba, the Soviet Union and European countries like Germany and Sweden brought the total up to almost \$500 million last year. And they had "friendly" bankers. Last September a 13-bank cartel renegotiated more than half a billion dollars of Nicaragua's foreign debt, granting low interest rates and a five-year moratorium as long as Managua agreed to repay on a commercial basis the loans contracted by the corrupt Somoza dictatorship.

Conclusion: while Reagan has taken a hard line toward the Sandinistas, not only the Carter administration, the Soviets and pro-"détente" social democrats but also the multinationals and big imperialist banks have been pointing down the Algerian road. This is, of course, what the FSLN leaders were counting on, the basis for their hoped-for "middle road." But if anything it only shows what a thin thread their hopes are hanging on. Such an unambiguously capitalist economy is, of course, a tremendous weapon in the hands of the imperialists, despite all the Sandinistas' talk about "national unity." For in a showdown, the domestic bourgeoisie cannot resist the pressures from its Yankee masters, and it will obey a common capitalist class interest. You see, that's what's wrong with the Stalinist myth of revolution by stages—in this epoch there's no such thing as an "anti-imperialist national bourgeoisie," as the FSLN will soon discover, so there can't be an "anti-imperialist stage." And by leaving the economic power of the bourgeoisie intact, the Sandinistas have been helping the prospects of eventually restabilizing capitalist rule.

Furthermore, they're not only maintaining the capitalist "mixed economy," they're defending it against any challenge from the left. Here's what Jaime Wheelock, the FSLN leader, said speaking to a mass rally of 100,000 at the Sandino Plaza in Managua at the time of the attempted right-wing pressure attack last November:

"If we wanted to demonstrate to them how popular the idea of Sandinismo and of the revolution is, it would be very simple to say to the workers and peasants, 'From this day on, the haciendas and the factories of this country are yours. Put them to work.' And you will know how to put them to work with your hands, with your experience and your patriotic fervor."

Good idea, huh? That's what the audience thought, because a Chilean journalist writing in the *Manchester Guardian Weekly* [1 February] reported, "At that point he was interrupted by a tremendous ovation, and he had to add hastily:

"But that is not the position of a revolutionary leader who has to understand things from the national point of view, above and beyond party banners and maneuvers."

—*El futuro es del pueblo, La burguesía reaccionaria jamás retornará al poder,* 19 November 1980

So in the interests of "national unity" and the *patria*, they are *not* going to take over all of the factories and the haciendas and put them in the hands of the workers. They're very conscious about this policy.

Workers Against Sandinistas

So this has led to a number of incidents over the last couple of years. One occurred immediately after the Sandinistas took over, and this was the clash with the so-called Simón Bolívar Brigade, which was led by a pseudo-Trotskyist named Nahuel Moreno. We've named him the Cantinflas of the Trotskyist movement because he's always changing his disguises. You know, sometimes he appears as a Peronist, and sometimes he's a Maoist and so on, and in this particular case he tried to pass himself off as a Sandinista. Actually, it was a sort of combination adventurist maneuver and reformist pressure tactic, but they organized

continued on page 9



July 19, 1979: Celebrating the overthrow of butcher Somoza in Managua.

The Spectre of Trotskyism in Nicaragua

Trotskyism stands for permanent revolution, for workers and peasants governments instead of popular-front class collaboration, for independent Bolshevik-Leninist parties as the indispensable vanguard of proletarian revolution. But that is *not* the program of many people who are passing themselves off as Trotskyists over Nicaragua. The biggest outfit, the so-called United Secretariat (USec), swears on a stack of Second Declarations of Havana that they are nothing but true-blue, red-and-black Sandinistas. According to the majority resolution of their 11th World Congress, USec supporters "will defend their program by working loyally to build this party," that is, the FSLN. A year later it repeated: "The recognized vanguard of the Nicaraguan revolution has been forged in the Sandinista Front" (*Intercontinental Press*, 24 November 1980). So if that's true, who needs Trotskyists?

It's hardly an abstract question. When the FSLN arrested the Simón Bolívar Brigade, whose ostensibly Trotskyist leaders were then part of the United Secretariat, a delegation of USec spokesmen formally told the Sandinista government that they approved of this expulsion of their own "comrades"! And recall the letter from USec dissidents in Nicaragua who accused American SWP honcho Peter Camejo of instructing the United Secretariat's delegate there to turn in the Bolívar brigadistas to the FSLN police. We published this letter (*WV* No. 242, 26 November 1979), and neither Camejo nor the SWP has ever denied it, so we have to assume their charge is true. So that's where opportunist tailism leads to. The Trotskyist movement has had to fight against capitulators who bow to the pressure of the bourgeoisie or the Stalinist bureaucracies. *But these people aren't capitulators, they're stoolpigeons!*

As usual with the dis-United Secretariat, there were differences between the majority around Ernest Mandel—we used to call him Comandante Ernesto because he was such a gung-ho Guevarist in the early '70s—and a minority led by the SWP. Thus the SWP resolution at the USec world congress called the Sandinista/bourgeois "government" of Nicaragua a workers and peasants government, a term first used by the Communist International as a popular designation for the dictatorship of the proletariat. Some proletarian dictatorship, where bankers and landowner representatives sit in the ruling junta and key government ministries! But the Mandelites also wanted to tail after the

Sandinistas—they just weren't as shameless as the Peter Camejos and Jack Barnes. And in their latest resolution the USec majority says that since May 1980 Nicaragua has been run by a workers and peasants government. They were just looking for an excuse.

There's also the Nahuel Moreno grouping and its Bolívar Brigade. Hardly a revolutionary opposition, they tried to wrap themselves in the Sandinista colors just like the USec. But they claimed to be pushing things to the left. Internationally they're part of a lash-up with the French OCI of Pierre Lambert, and they just changed their name from

turned on the Russian degenerated workers state of Stalin and his heirs. But what can one expect from a pseudo-Fourth International which took until 1979 to discover that Cuba is what they call a "bureaucratized workers state." Now, to excuse their tardiness, the Morenoites and Lambertists claim that no one knew what to make of the Cuban question when it first arose. Yet the Spartacist tendency, from our inception as the Revolutionary Tendency of the SWP, has held since 1961 that Castro's Cuba had become a deformed workers state. So the impostors are also liars. And today they raise a demand which

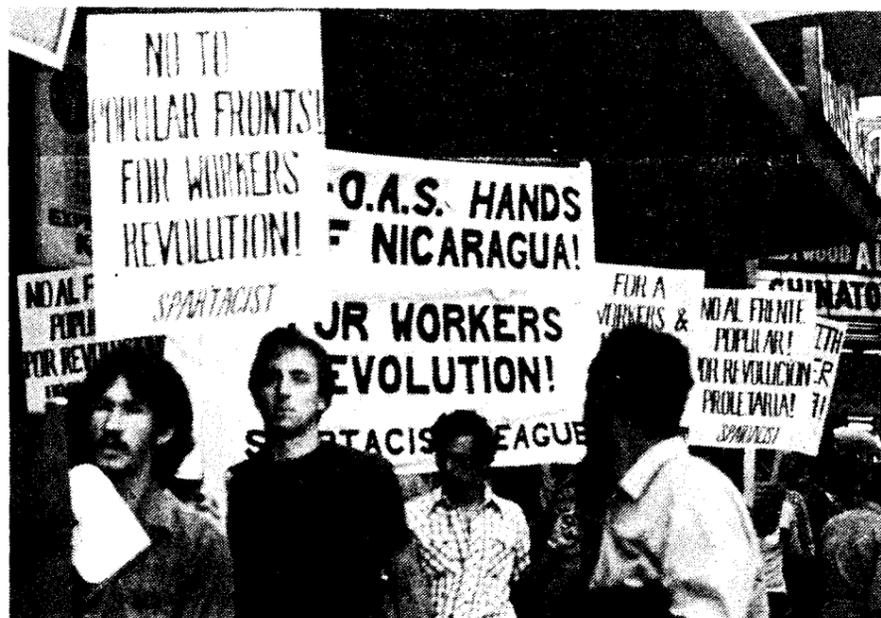
good idea of what it is and start foaming at the mouth whenever they see the slightest hint of it.

According to an SWP internal bulletin: "There have been occasional reports of attacks on Trotskyism by FSLN leaders. Recently, right here in New York, Commander Victor Tirado of the FSLN National Directorate—when egged on by a questioner from one of the sectarian outfits—referred to Trotskyism in derogatory terms at a news conference" ([SWP] *International Internal Information Bulletin*, September 1980). What they don't say is that Tirado's tirade was directed against the Spartacist League. And what set the *comandante* off was our question, "How do you justify jailing militants and leftists who are trying to extend the revolution in Nicaragua?"

Back in Managua, on March 6 of last year a demonstration of several thousands led by the Sandinista Labor Federation (CST) was called to protest CIA "destabilization." But instead of marching on the U.S. embassy as originally planned, the demonstration headed to the offices of CAUS, the labor group of the dissident pro-Kremlin PCN. The union offices were sacked, documents burned and the occupants driven out. The SWP's *Intercontinental Press* reported that the demonstrators chanted "Death to the CIA!" It didn't report the CST's other major slogan, however, which was "Death to Trotskyism!"

Now the heterodox Brezhnevites of the PCN are not Trotskyists any more than is the pro-Albanian *Frente Obrero*. But in the strikes during January and February 1980 at Managua construction sites, textile factories and sugar mills it was not just a fight over higher wages. A slogan that was frequently reported was "Workers and Peasants to Power! Down with the Bourgeoisie!" And regardless of who raised them, Sandinista leaders know full well that such slogans aren't part of the "national-democratic" or "anti-imperialist revolution." Only the Trotskyists have a coherent program which would give meaning to demands for a break with the bourgeoisie and a workers and peasants government. Only the Trotskyists, and not the SWP impostors who denounce such demands as "deliberately provok[ing] a premature confrontation with the bourgeoisie" (SWP resolution on Nicaragua at the USec 1979 world congress).

And the FSLN's Stalinist fellow-traveler cheerleaders also see the threat clearly. Last summer the rad-lib *Guardian* (18 June 1980) published an article entitled "Nicaragua's Delicate Alliance Holds," justifying the refusal to take over the three-quarters of the economy in private capitalist hands: "Bourgeois participation has given rise to criticism from left and ultra-'left' forces both inside and outside Nicaragua. The Nicaraguan Workers' Front [the FO] and small sects such as the Spartacus Youth League in the U.S. have condemned what they call the 'bourgeois Sandinista government.' They charge the Sandinistas are helping to revitalize Nicaraguan capitalism. Such criticism, Sandinista sources reply, fails to comprehend that national liberation and social liberation are not the same thing, although they are clearly intimately related." What such criticism comprehends is that there will be no national liberation without proletarian revolution. That is what all the brands of Stalinism and nationalism ignore, and the result can be fatal. ■



Los Angeles, July 1979: SL-initiated demonstration called for "U.S. Hands Off Nicaragua."

the Parity Committee to the "Fourth International (International Committee)." Their quotation marks, by the way. They have a tiny nucleus in Nicaragua called the LMR, which the little clot called Sandinistas for Socialism in Los Angeles linked up with when their international battalion flew into Managua the day after the FSLN victory. (We call them "day-late Sandinistas.") Up until recently the Parity Committee had another group in Nicaragua as well, the GRS, whose mentor was one Fausto Amador, a deserter from the FSLN who went on Somoza's TV urging the guerrillas to give up. But after first exiting from the USec, Amador now decided to part company with Lambert and Moreno.

The Parity Committee put out a declaration last spring saying it had always fought for "an FSLN government without representatives of the bourgeoisie" (*Informations Ouvrières*, 3 May 1980). What would such a Sandinista-only government mean? It's like calling for a government of the July 26th Movement in the early days of the Cuban Revolution. And there was one, beginning in August 1959 after the resignation of President Urrutia and the flight of air force commander Díaz Lanz, Castro's erstwhile bourgeois allies. But it didn't mean the overthrow of capitalism, which didn't come until the summer and fall of 1960 when the bulk of the capitalist properties were taken over. Moreover, such a regime could still lead back to direct capitalist rule. Remember that Castro is telling the Sandinistas to avoid his "mistakes," not to be in a hurry to break with the Yankees or the "business sector."

Even if under Reagan's pressure, the FSLN proceeds along the "Cuban path," what would result is not a Bolshevik internationalist regime but another nationalist bureaucracy pat-

amounts to political confidence in the Sandinistas.

But even this isn't the worst. The heart of the Moreno/Lambert program for Nicaragua is their call for a "democratic and sovereign constituent assembly." Now immediately following Somoza's ouster the call for a constituent assembly was in order, as a means of mobilizing the revolutionary aspirations of the masses for freedom from the reactionary tyranny which had oppressed them for decades. But the capitalist elements of the anti-Somoza coalition were just as opposed to this demand as the Sandinista guerrilla army was. They feared that in the midst of a revolutionary upheaval any kind of democratically elected body might "get out of hand" and start demanding immediate trial and execution of Somoza's torturers, or expropriation of all the large estates, and so on. But as the FSLN consolidated its power, bourgeois forces began calling for elections to a constituent assembly. *Under these circumstances this can only be a call for a capitalist parliamentary power to carry out a "democratic" counterrevolution.* So due to their visceral Stalinophobia, Moreno/Lambert's program amounts to classical social democracy. Genuine Trotskyists call instead for organs of workers democracy, namely soviets.

Sandinistas Against Trotskyism

So what goes under the name of the Fourth International in Nicaragua is pretty pathetic: a "Parody" Committee that crawls after the bourgeois opposition, and a not-very-United Secretariat which wants to be the caboose on the Sandinista Express. In fact, they go against everything Trotsky ever stood for. Yet there's a highly revealing fact: that despite this perversion of Trotskyism, the FSLN leaders have a pretty

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Nicaragua...

(continued from page 7)

several thousand workers in the Managua area to come down to the FSLN headquarters with big signs saying "Power to the Proletariat." And the fact that something like that could happen is significant. The response by the Sandinistas was to arrest the people, to interrogate them and ship them off to Panama where they were beat up by the bourgeois police of General Torrijos. So this was the first response by the Sandinistas to left-wing opposition to them.

At about the same time they briefly shut down a paper run by an ex-Maoist group called Frente Obrero [Workers Front (FO)]. The newspaper was called *El Pueblo*, and it was shut down for calling for land occupations. Then they allowed it to reopen, but that fall [of 1979] the editor of *El Pueblo* was arrested, as well as members of a small Nicaraguan group which claimed to be Trotskyist. The Spartacist League in this country protested these arrests. After a few weeks in jail they were released, and then again in January the leadership of Frente Obrero and the editor of *El Pueblo* were again arrested, the newspaper shut down, this time seemingly for good. The charges were "unauthorized possession of arms" and "sabotaging production." Now what does that really mean? Frente Obrero participated in the fighting against Somoza. Besides, if they had no guns they would be about the only people in the country who didn't. "Disrupting production"—well, you know what that is, *strikes*. So four leaders of Frente Obrero were sentenced to some years at hard labor by the FSLN's so-called "revolutionary" justice.

In February 1980 the FO led a strike at the San Antonio sugar mill, which is the main sugar mill in all Nicaragua—it produces 70 percent of all the sugar in the country. The government's response was to break the strike and arrest several of the FO leaders, although they were eventually let go. The apologists for the FSLN then went around tooting about how the conflict had been "peacefully resolved." However, this same San Antonio sugar mill went on strike again in November, over the same issues, only this time it was led by the Christian Democratic trade union. And again the strike was broken by the so-called revolutionaries of the FSLN.

Then there's another group, the Communist Party of Nicaragua, or PCN, and their trade-union group, which is called CAUS [Center for Trade Union Action and Unity]. They are a split-off from the Socialist Party of Nicaragua, the PSN, which is the main pro-Moscow group. The PCN for a while was leaning toward Mao, but basically they have been sort of a dissident pro-Moscow group. They had the leadership of several textile unions in the capital. Meanwhile the PSN, the Moscow mainliners, controlled the construction workers through its trade-union group, the CGT-i, the General Confederation of Labor-Independent. And in January 1980 both the construction workers in Managua and 18 textile mills went on strike against the government.

The FSLN's response was to arrest the leaders of the PCN and CAUS and to break the strike. They were held for several months, and eventually most of them were let go although some of them received one-year sentences. The PSN fared better, perhaps because it joined a coalition to support the government, called the National Patriotic Front.

The point I want to make is there's been a considerable amount of unrest in the working class in Nicaragua. They don't have that much of a working class but, such as it is, many of its most active elements don't seem to be under the control of the Sandinista movement. This is not accidental, moreover. While

in Cuba the fighting against Batista's mercenary army was confined largely to the hills and eastern provinces, and the one attempt at a general strike failed, in Nicaragua there were repeated general work stoppages and insurrections, not entirely under Sandinista control. The plebeian masses played a key role in the final offensive by launching street battles in Managua and other towns while the FSLN regulars were bottled up in the south. It's not so easy to keep them down when they played an active role in overthrowing the dictator.

But while workers and urban poor were present in the fighting, it was as auxiliaries to the petty-bourgeois Sandinista guerrillas and their alliance with the "anti-Somoza bourgeoisie," not as an independent working-class force. As it becomes ever more obvious that the FSLN's program of "national unity" is a dead-end, the key element for a workers revolution is still missing. What you need is above all a proletarian, Leninist-Trotskyist party, like in October 1917. It's not inconceivable that elements of the Sandinista movement could break away and come over to the workers side of the barricades in a sharp class polarization. But they are not going to lead that polarization and, as we just saw, these bonapartists have shown themselves hostile to any form of working-class organization outside their control.

Moreover, by maintaining this capitalist economy they provide a tremendous lever for bourgeois and imperialist reaction to use. So last year they were successful at the economic level. The problem is, that increases the power of the bourgeoisie, because to the extent that they regain an economic hold they will have that much more political power over the masses. If you want to see an example of where this kind of economic pressure has been used, just look at Chile. What Nixon said to his ambassador there was "make the economy scream." That was what they called "Track I." You may recall those terms. And they were successful. There was, for instance, in late 1972 and again in 1973 the mobilization by the petty truck owners to stop all deliveries, so that essentially you starve out the population. And as soon as they started cutting off the mass transport, as soon as you couldn't buy rice in the stores, as soon as inflation hit 300 percent, then the petty bourgeois got very desperate.

So then comes "Track II." As we know from Germany and Italy, desperate petty bourgeois are sitting ducks for reaction. And you better believe Reagan already has a "Track II" under way for Nicaragua. The country is living from hand to mouth, and if the United States decides to they can make that economy scream bloody murder. For example, the main thing Reagan did in the last couple weeks was not to cut off the aid—which the Sandinistas weren't figuring they would get anyway—they simply cut off all shipments of wheat to Nicaragua. Period. That means starting in March no one in Nicaragua is going to eat bread. You can imagine what kind of an impact that will have on "national unity."

For Permanent Revolution!

So by trying to carve out a middle road in Nicaragua, the Sandinistas just leave the way open for imperialist subversion to cut the throats of the workers and peasants with bloody white terror. Just as in El Salvador, the program in Nicaragua must be to break with the bourgeoisie, to mobilize the workers on a class program, to expropriate all the exploiters. That is to say, to take on not only the "democratic" tasks of ousting the tyrant Somoza and so on, but break the ties of imperialism and sweep away all the latifundistas and factory owners, who condemn the masses to a life of poverty, whether through wage slavery or land hunger. That requires a proletarian communist leadership, a Trotskyist party which



NACLA

Sandinista leaders march down utopian and suicidal path of "the middle way."

fights for permanent revolution, for workers and peasants governments throughout the region and a socialist federation of Mexico and Central America.

Can we be more specific about some of the concrete transitional demands which Trotskyists would raise at this time in Nicaragua pointing in this direction? Well, one element would certainly be support of the working masses' struggles against their exploiters, instead of trying to repress them or conciliate with the anti-Somoza bourgeoisie as the Sandinistas have been doing. A communist opposition to the present petty-bourgeois regime would simultaneously attempt to broaden these struggles into a full-scale offensive against capitalist power, demanding workers control everywhere leading to the expropriation of the capitalists as a class by a workers and peasants government.

Okay, what else? Well, keep in mind that we are dealing with the unfolding Nicaraguan situation at a distance. One thing is clear, however, namely that there has been a big development of mass organizations of the working people. At first it was the Sandinista Defense Committees. These are neighborhood groups modeled on the Cuban Committees to Defend the Revolution. And in the last month or so the FSLN leaders have been expanding the militias based on these mass organizations. There's also, of course, the various unions, both the Sandinistas' CST federation and the others we have been talking about. So one key demand would be to unite the mass organizations in a representative council—a national workers assembly or soviet—free from government tutelage and assuring workers democracy for all but directly counterrevolutionary forces. Additionally, Trotskyists call for breaking with the representatives of the bourgeoisie, for a workers and peasants government based on soviet organs of proletarian rule.

I'm sure there are many other demands a Nicaraguan Trotskyist group would raise: against the capitalist austerity program of bogus "national unity" of the exploiters and exploited; or for the complete arming of workers and peasants militias, for example. But the important thing is the basic framework and goal: independent Bolshevik-Leninist party of intransigent opposition, workers and peasants to power, proletarian revolution the only road.

Nicaragua, Cuba, Soviet Union

So matters are coming to a head in Central America, particularly with regards to Nicaragua. A little vignette which sort of captures it was last January on the anniversary of the death of Pedro Joaquín Chamorro, the publisher of *La Prensa* who was assassinated by Somoza's thugs. There were two demonstrations this time. One was on the side of the FSLN, which had as a main slogan, "Nicaragua Won, El Salvador Will Win." And there was a counterdemonstration on the part of the bourgeois opposition which had as its

main slogan, "Jamaica Won, Nicaragua Will Win." Now in Jamaica the left-wing populist government of Michael Manley was defeated in elections last October partly because, as a bourgeois government, it couldn't provide jobs for the masses of unemployed. But it was also due to destabilization of the economy by the International Monetary Fund in Washington which refused to refinance Jamaica's debt and thus cut off further imports. It was effectively a U.S. economic blockade. So Manley was thrown out and replaced by Edward Seaga, who's known in Jamaica as CIAga. In other words, the bourgeois demonstrators were raising a directly counterrevolutionary slogan.

Thus the Sandinista leaders stand before a fork in the road, and the question of which way forward is sharply posed in Nicaragua today. One issue over which it is particularly acute is the question of support to the left-wing insurgents in El Salvador. It's not just a strategic question, moreover, because the Salvadorans made a major contribution by financing (with the millions they made off their kidnappings) a lot of the guns which made the FSLN's overthrow of Somoza possible. So it's also a revolutionary debt. But the Sandinistas are still nationalists at bottom, and their attitude toward revolution next door has been—well, I guess "contradictory" is the best you can say for it. You know, the Nicaraguan government *hailed* the "human rights junta" installed by Jimmy Carter in El Salvador in October 1979. And they didn't break with the junta or allow aid to the guerrillas until after the assassination of Archbishop Romero last March. There are even reports that they prevented Nicaraguan leftists from joining the Salvadoran guerrillas. Halted them at the border and sent them home!

Now lately there has been a big blast of Cold War propaganda coming from Washington warning the Nicaraguan government to cut off guns to the El Salvador leftists or else. So what has been the response in Managua? The other day on CBS-TV one of the

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Nicaragua...

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bourgeois members of the Nicaraguan junta, Arturo Cruz, said they did not want to support any kind of activity which aided the Soviet Union in Central America. It sounded like General Haig. So he was stating that for those bourgeois figures still willing to work with the Sandinistas, aid to the Salvadoran guerrillas is a split issue—this is where they draw the line. But it isn't just the liberals. There have been persistent reports of tensions within the FSLN over the question, which we have no way of verifying. However, when the *New York Times* [15 February] asked a "senior" Sandinista official, the response was: "Washington's message has been received loud and clear. There is a recognition of the very high political cost to Nicaragua of involvement in El Salvador." No doubt there is a high political cost. But if they don't help revolution to spread throughout the region it could be slitting their own throats.

So what will the Sandinistas do? When it comes to military questions they tend to be more realistic than when they're talking about "national unity" and the "mixed economy." Their first response to the new Reagan administration has been to greatly augment the militias and begin training tens of thousands in the use of arms. And they have said that they expect an imperialist-backed attack in the next few months. Politically they have suggested that under pressure they may drop the bourgeois members of the Junta of National Reconstruction and then have a Sandinista-only government. However the basis on which that government would rest is the same capitalist economy they have at present, which would be open to the same kind of imperialist pressure that it has been in the past. In other words, it would be the same highly unstable situation as existed in Cuba from the summer of 1959 to the summer of 1960.

Extend the revolution to El Salvador, expropriate the bourgeoisie—these steps are indispensable simply to defend what has already been won. But even that is not enough. An isolated workers state in one slice of the inter-American isthmus will never be viable for more than a historical blink of the eye. All of Central America must go up in flames if revolution is to succeed anywhere in the region. And it's far from impossible. Guerrillas in Guatemala have for the first time won support from the Indian majority, and have long-standing working-class support. Moreover, in recent months there have been large-scale strikes by banana workers in both Honduras and Costa Rica. (By the way, in January Nicaragua finally expropriated the banana plantations linked to the Standard Fruit Company, part of the Castle & Cooke conglomerate, I guess making it the first Central American state to cease to be a "banana republic." But unless this conquest is extended, they will soon find it a hollow victory, since the multinationals still control the marketing.)

Such an offensive would set off rumblings throughout Latin America. Pinochet-style dictatorships would be threatened; there would be political strikes, huge mass demonstrations, and so on. And in the United States as well, where we have called for a labor boycott of military goods to right-wing dictatorships of Central America. Interestingly, while nothing of the sort occurred in the U.S. during the Vietnam War, in the last days of the Carter administration the West Coast ILWU dock union decreed such a boycott, at least on paper. Class-struggle militants in the unions will certainly struggle to see that it becomes a reality, and that could pose some sharp clashes with the government and possibly the union bureaucracy. Another key element will be militant solidarity

from the Mexican labor movement, including aid in arming the Salvadoran rebels. López Portillo may call Fidel "mi comandante" [my commander], but the workers and peasants struggling against a bloodthirsty dictatorship armed by U.S. imperialism need more concrete help than that. And just as the capitalists fear, the repercussions from Central America could set off an explosive radicalization of the Mexican working class, one of the most powerful in all Latin America. What it needs is Trotskyist leadership which calls not for "détente," but for rip-roaring internationalist class struggle.

And this brings us to Cuba and the Soviet Union. Now in answer to the Reagan administration's charges, both Castro and Brezhnev have denied aiding the El Salvador rebels. On February 26 a Soviet central committee spokesman, Zamyatin, said that "the Soviet Union did not deliver arms and is not delivering any arms to El Salvador." From all evidence, the State Department's "White Paper" notwithstanding, this seems to be true. Don't we wish that it weren't so, but this is the counterrevolutionary logic of "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism. Meanwhile, of course, the U.S. is pouring dollars and helicopters and military "advisers" into El Salvador like crazy, while crying "thief" at Moscow. Castro, for his part, is directly under the gun, facing threats of naval blockade and who-knows-what-else, and has adopted a tougher tone toward Washington. But in Central America, all reports agree that Cuba has joined with the European social democrats and Latin American liberals in urging the Salvadoran leftists to go for a "political settlement" with elements of the murder junta. Which just means that the cycle of coups would begin all over again.

Our slogan, "Defense of Cuba and the USSR Begins in El Salvador," is meant to underline the fact that Reagan is playing Cold War dominos here. If he can mop up El Salvador it will be on to Managua, and from there to Havana, and so on. It's a battle on a worldwide scale. And as General Haig keeps pointing out, the place where Washington would really like to apply the pressure is in Russia's front yard—Poland. Thus ultimately it is the proletarian property forms won by the October Revolution of Lenin and Trotsky that are targeted. So we can say, quite concretely, if you're worried about the threat to the collectivized economy in Poland, let Reagan grind Central America under his boot and it's just going to increase the imperialist pressure in Central Europe. The U.S.' intention, as influential Reaganite columnist William Safire put it, is not merely to "break the Communist winning streak" but to "turn the global tide."

So we find ourselves in the position of warning that "the Americans are coming, the Americans are coming!" And what they're bringing ain't "human rights." The bastards in the Pentagon are looking to get even for the humiliation they suffered in Vietnam, so the mass murder they're planning to unleash will indeed make Somoza look like a "moderately repressive autocrat" by comparison—that's what the new American ambassador to the UN calls him, an "MRA." Safire asked himself what "winning" means: "Is it supporting a military junta that kills the opposition but by its repressive nature produces more opposition that becomes necessary to kill?" His answer: "If need be, yes." Remember what Rosa Luxemburg said, that the choice was socialism or barbarism? Well, meet Mr. Barbarism of 1981. Therefore, if you want to avoid holocaust in Central America, if you want to avoid the big bang over Berlin, you better stop the Reagan desperados in El Salvador. For workers revolution in America's "backyard" will certainly bring the day a lot closer when a socialist future for mankind comes knocking on the front door. ■

El Salvador...

(continued from page 1)

The U.S. Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES) is supporting a bill, H.R. 1509, to prohibit all military aid to the Salvadoran junta. Thus it leaves untouched the more than \$100 million in economic aid which is now the lifeline for the bankrupt junta! In the Senate, Teddy Kennedy has an even milder bill essentially to stop "American guns killing American nuns." While recalling the spectre of "another Vietnam," CISPES' political thrust is to sum up the issue in terms of the democratic demand of self-determination—the basis for an alliance with U.S. liberals. "Let the People of El Salvador Decide!" was the title of a full-page *New York Times* (3 February) ad sponsored by CISPES.

With a civil war raging in El Salvador, this Wilsonian program has a definite bourgeois class content. Thus Mexican president López Portillo in a CBS-TV interview condemned both U.S. and Soviet intervention in Central America. Senator Kennedy, another fervent partisan of Salvadoran self-determination, was careful to state, "I strongly oppose" military support "from Communist and other radical states to the insurgent forces in El Salvador." To top it off, when Reagan recently visited Canada he was able to paper over differences with the Liberal Trudeau government by references to "self-determination" for El Salvador. For revolutionary communists it is the class line which is the highest principle. Thus the Spartacist League supports Soviet/Cuban aid to left-wing rebels in El Salvador. In contrast, CISPES and its friends presumably would have nothing to say or do if the Salvadoran army put down the mass insurgency without significant U.S. support, as they did in 1932, killing 30,000.

Appealing to bourgeois liberals, the leaders of the Salvadoran popular front and organizers of "mainstream" protests against U.S. intervention in Central America adopt the program of the imperialist "doves." At a CISPES rally in New York, a spokesman for the Frente Democrático Revolucionario (FDR), Carlos Paredes, declared: "El Salvador is not going to a Cuban system unless Reagan pushes it." In Detroit, an upcoming teach-in co-sponsored by CISPES lists as a featured speaker Carter's ambassador to El Salvador, Robert White. Although currently opposed to military aid to the junta, White labels "Marxism-Leninism" the "ultimate enemy of Western civilization," merely differing with Reagan over how to fight it. As for the U.S.-centered reformists, the Stalinist Communist Party and the anti-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party are so sensitive to the contradiction between popular frontism and revolutionary class struggle that they put themselves forward as thugs against the Spartacist League, in a vain attempt to seal off the liberal El Salvador protest milieu.

But they can't escape. Without a Marxist program of unconditional defense of the Soviet Union against imperialism and proletarian opposition to popular frontism, it is impossible to give revolutionary leadership in the battle over Central America. The liberal policy of simple "self-determination" is a program for bloody defeat of the worker and peasant masses. It is the present-day equivalent of the imperialist "non-intervention" pact with the Kremlin in the late 1930s which spelled doom for the Republic in the Spanish Civil War. Seeking to appease the "democratic" capitalist powers, Stalin eagerly pledged not to aid the Republic. Only enough Soviet arms were sent, clandestinely, to assure Soviet influence over the popular-front government, not enough to defeat Franco. It was the Trotskyists who fought against the Stalinist treachery in the '30s, and again today the SL which calls for military victory to left-

wing insurgents in El Salvador, for proletarian revolution as the only way to defeat imperialism.

In mounting his anti-Soviet war drive Reagan is consciously fighting the "Vietnam syndrome." The liberals and reformists respond by trying to recreate the old Vietnam antiwar movement, as if this were any answer. What was won in Indochina was won on the battlefield. As for the popular front at home, it collapsed as soon as American troops were withdrawn in 1973. On Vietnam,



WV Photo

S.F. march against junta terror, February 18.

too, it was which side are you on. It was the Spartacist League that called for "All Indochina Must Go Communist!" and military victory to the NLF/DRV, while the SWP called for "troops out" and the CP's slogan was "negotiations now"—two policies of liberal bourgeois defeatism. And because the liberal/radical antiwar movement did not build revolutionary opposition to imperialism, it was only a few years until the "Vietnam syndrome" was largely overcome through Carter's anti-Soviet "human rights" crusade which opened the door to Reagan.

The CISPES, the CP/SWP, the Salvadoran FDR/FMLN, Nicaraguan Sandinistas, etc. are all desperately looking for an alliance with a "progressive" wing of the bourgeoisie. But there is no "progressive" bourgeoisie in the imperialist era. Who do they want? A John Kennedy, perhaps, who launched the Bay of Pigs invasion and U.S. imperialism's dirty war on Vietnam? A Franklin Roosevelt, whose "Good Neighbor" policy installed the first Somoza? A Woodrow Wilson, who talked of "self-determination" while sending the Marines into Nicaragua? Nor can López Portillo's Mexico or Helmut Schmidt's West Germany play a progressive role—if they intervene it is only to head off a "Communist threat." Thus it is only the Trotskyists who fight to defeat imperialism's anti-Soviet Cold War drive which menaces not only the Central American masses but the entire world. For workers revolution throughout Central America! Defend Cuba and the USSR! ■

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This afternoon members and supporters of the Spartacist League/U.S. were physically expelled from a conference called by the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES) at the New School. This blatantly anti-communist exclusion was engineered by a CISPES goon squad led by members of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), which had secretly decided the night before to strongarm SL supporters at this "public" conference. The SWP thugs even called the cops—the strike-breakers and racist killers of the capitalist state—to keep out the Trotskyists of the Spartacist League. Why? Because they can't answer our Marxist politics, our revolutionary opposition to imperialism and class collaboration. So they try to silence political debate on the left. All defenders of democratic rights must protest this outrage!

When a crowd gathered at the conference, many of them shocked by the goon squad's vicious assault, SWP chief thug Mike Maggi tried to claim the SL was "disrupting." At no time did we disrupt anything—instead we

were prevented from exercising the same rights as everyone else. As soon as we walked in the door, SLers were told we could not sell our newspaper, *Workers Vanguard*. *WV* salesmen outside the building were not allowed in after they had finished selling. Yet numerous groups were selling freely in the corridors. When an SL supporter tried to speak in the "Human Rights" workshop, as soon as he mentioned the words Spartacist League, SWPers in the audience started interrupting, yelling "shut up," screaming to drown him out. He was then bodily thrown out of the room. A *WV* reporter was excluded from the press conference, even though Salvadoran FDR spokesman Carlos Paredes said he was opposed to political exclusions. Women and black comrades were dragged across the lobby, down the stairs and thrown out the door.

The Socialist Workers Party resorts to these Stalinist exclusion tactics because it wants to be the thugs and waterboys for a new popular front, just like they did in the antiwar movement for the Democratic Party "doves"—



WV Photo

New School, March 21: SWP goons will not silence revolutionaries.

who turn out to be imperialist "hawks" when it comes to the Near East or Europe. These phonies have so little to do with socialism that they admit known fascists, KKK terrorists, to "debate" while excluding Trotskyists! The CISPES organizers see themselves as spokesmen for the popular front in El Salvador, the FDR, and don't want communists around because it might scare away the liberal capitalist politicians they are appealing to. Thus they oppose our call for "Military Victory to Left-Wing Insurgents in El Salvador" because they're for a so-called "political solution" with a section of the junta. This just means that the army will stay and the killing will go on and on. They even oppose our demand, "U.S./OAS Hands Off!" because they think Mexico or Venezuela will help out the Salvadoran rebels. But if these Latin American bourgeois

regimes intervene, it will be to prevent the civil war in El Salvador from escalating into proletarian revolution.

The Spartacist League is for workers revolution throughout Central America! That is why they want to silence us. This is what popular frontism leads to—in Spain the reformists resorted to murder to silence communists. Today the Spartacist League was the first to warn the "Defense of Cuba and the Soviet Union Begins in El Salvador." And now that the Pentagon is threatening military blockades, the SWP and CISPES goons are trying to gag those who defend the USSR and Cuba. But it won't work. The voice of proletarian revolution will not be silenced. Protest this anti-communist exclusion!

NYC Spartacist League
March 21, 1981

Militant L.A. Demo: "Stop Deportations to El Salvador!"

LOS ANGELES, March 23—Chanting "Stop Deportations to El Salvador! Asylum for Refugees from Junta Terror!" some 70 demonstrators gathered today at the Downtown Federal Building, headquarters of the hated Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). Protesting the U.S. policy of deliberate murder through deportation of hundreds of Salvadoran refugees a week, the united-front demonstration was initiated by the Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth League (SL/SYL) and endorsed by over 23 individuals and organizations. This was the first demonstration in this country to focus on the U.S.' direct complicity in the slaughter of refugees by the Salvadoran military junta.

According to the *New York Times* (2 March) and by the INS' own admission, nearly 12,000 Salvadorans in the last fiscal year have been sent back to the clutches of the murderous junta and its right-wing execution squads. *Lamigra's* airlift to death came to light in January when 42 Salvadorans awaiting deportation in an INS concentration camp in El Centro, California went on a hunger strike after learning about a Christmas Day massacre of a group of deportees at the San Salvador airport. Demonstrators demanded a stop to this bloody trafficking in butchery.

Endorsers of the protest included the Southern California District Council of the ILWU; the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee; Phil Russo, ILWU Western states' region director of organization; attorney Leonard Wein-glass; David Hilliard, former chief of

staff of the Black Panther Party; the Militant Action Caucus (MAC) of the CWA; the People's College of Law; and the Los Angeles Feminist Women's Health Center. The latter actively participated in building the demonstration, sending their own contingent, with speakers and signs reading "Stop Deportations of Refugees and Exportations of Green Berets!"

Many so-called left groups responded to the urgent united-front call with miserable sectarianism. "Our organization doesn't like your organization's position on the FDR," said Workers Power. It was "too difficult [to] get our

people there" complained the mealy-mouthed FRT (Morenoite). The Valley College chapter of the Committee in Solidarity of the People of El Salvador (CISPES), however, enthusiastically endorsed the demonstration. While the CISPES newsletter publicized the action, at the final hour they resorted to the vilest sabotage, calling up their entire mailing list with the phony story that the demonstration was canceled! While hundreds of Salvadoran refugees are locked up in El Centro awaiting deportation, CISPES tries to destroy a demonstration in their behalf because the protest was called by the SL/SYL. Every class-conscious militant and individual concerned with saving the lives of the victims of junta terror will be disgusted with these treacherous liars and saboteurs!

At the demonstration SL spokesman José Silva noted that "The Spartacist League has always been in the forefront of the fight against deportations. We

have also fought to achieve full citizenship rights for all foreign-born workers in this country." Silva called on the Salvadoran workers and peasants to "break with the bourgeois politicians, the Guillermo Ungos, the so-called patriotic officers who have joined forces with the toiling masses not to aid their struggle but to act as a brake, to ensure that the struggle is kept within the confines of capitalism." He concluded, "No more Chiles!... The popular front means workers' blood! For workers revolution in El Salvador." MAC spokesman Barry Janus told the crowd:

"This INS policy is nothing new. This country has been a haven for the Somoza lovers! This country is a haven for the Hitler-loving Marshal Ky! This country provides warm refuge for Nazi war criminals, and CIA-trained gusanos who killed Orlando Letelier! They are welcome here. We will not forget the leftists and unionists who fled Pinochet's terror. The door was slammed in their face when they tried to get in the U.S."

"We in the Militant Action Caucus call for a labor boycott of military goods to El Salvador. And we say... when this war-mad Reagan goes to send in the Marines, the working class better be ready to stop it. We fight in our union to break our union's ties with the American Institute for Free Labor Development... we say no CIA/AIFLD dirty tricks in El Salvador... Stopping Reagan in El Salvador is a necessary display of international working class solidarity!"

The demonstration concluded with chants and applause. The Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth League is proud to have initiated this important united-front demonstration in defense of refugees from the U.S.-aided white terror. We also salute the Valley State CISPES and other militants who refused to buckle under to the Los Angeles CISPES' filthy attempt to wreck the protest. To those "leftists" who refused to endorse the demonstration we can only say—on the behalf of thousands of victims of junta terror—where were you? ■



WV Photo

CWA militant Barry Janus calls for military victory to left-wing insurgents in El Salvador.

WORKERS VANGUARD

Vote No! Stop Pension Royalties Giveaway!

Miners: Strike to Win Big!

MARCH 24—Sam Church claims the contract he just negotiated with the coal bosses is a good deal for miners. So do the bosses' papers. Don't buy it. The president of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) says, "This is a happy day," because the companies didn't win continuous seven-day operations, that they didn't break up the industry-wide pension plan, that miners get a "wage increase" that barely keeps up with the present rate of inflation. First they threaten to kick you in the groin, then they take it back and you're supposed to be thankful. Baloney!

On top of that the International bargainers just gave away the royalty on non-union coal, which goes into the UMWA Health and Retirement Fund. Not only is this a major attack on the already shaky pension plan, it's an open invitation to Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA) bosses to buy non-UMWA coal and subcontract their properties to non-union companies. This would further reduce the UMWA's shrinking percentage of U.S. coal production—already less than half the total. Moreover, for the first time they're putting in a 45-day probation period, to weed out union militants. And the UMWA construction workers are left high and dry without a contract. This deal is an attack on the lifeblood of the United Mine Workers, and every good union man and woman should vote it down, rip it up and burn the paper it's printed on!

Sam Church's deal is *worse* than what miners have got now. And what about all the vital union gains that have already been given up—in particular, the *cradle-to-grave health care*, which was the calling card of every UMWA organizer and a lifesaver for miners and their families. Mine safety was thrown to the winds when the '78 contract allowed *mine safety committeemen* to be arbitrarily removed from their elected positions by the companies and pro-management arbitrators. Or the *right to strike* over grievances, often a life-and-death matter: the companies gave up the anti-union Arbitration Review Board, but they'll just appeal to the pro-company courts. An all-out UMWA strike must demand restoration of all these vital union gains!

Of course, a lot of workers are getting a lot less than this, including members of the once-mighty United Auto Workers who are taking mammoth pay cuts, hundreds of thousands of layoffs and numerous plant closings. If the BCOA decided not to put the miners up against the wall, it is because of the miners' determination to fight. What gave the companies second thoughts was the sight of roving pickets in seven states, with thousands of miners on wildcats, conjuring up memories of the bitter 110-day strike in 1977-78. Although the settlement then was a defeat, the ranks' will to fight was not broken. Even the viciously anti-labor Reagan government started backpedaling on its proposed Black Lung benefit cuts when 10,000 miners demonstrated around the



10,000 coal miners demonstrate in Washington, D.C. March 9 against Reagan's cutback of Black Lung fund.

White House two weeks ago.

The large oil, steel and utility companies which own the coal mines are bloated with profits. In the past decade the selling price of coal has rocketed by over 600 percent! And Conoco, the oil company which owns Consolidation Coal, the largest employer of UMWA miners, made over \$1 billion in profits—more than \$74,000 per employee! Even the company mouthpiece *Business Week* (30 March) recognizes that if the miners go out, they will fight for big stakes: "A strike of more than a few days will cause rank-and-file miners to expect more than the industry is now offering as a price for returning to work." And the miners *can* win more, a lot more! In fact, the UMWA is in a position to lead the whole American working class in a powerful fight against company take-

aways and Reagan cutbacks.

Voting "no" on Sam Church's piss-poor deal is the first step, but it's not enough. If there's a strike, UMWA miners will face not only the coal companies but a solid bosses' front from the White House on down. And to win it's necessary to dig in for a real battle for real gains, not just to keep the present rotten contract. Miners need a *full cost-of-living escalator* to protect against runaway inflation. The fact that Miller and Church (who really ran the 1977-78 strike) didn't win COLA three years ago cost more than \$1,500 for every worker under BCOA contract. With more than 25,000 UMWA members on layoff without supplemental unemployment benefits or severance pay, the union must fight for a *shorter workweek with no loss in pay*, to

provide jobs for all, and *UMWA control of all hiring and upgrading*. Strike to win big! Win a fat contract now, and for the first time there will be a basis for successfully organizing Western mines.

But to take the offensive, coal miners must build a new class-struggle leadership to dump Church & Co., who only want to play footsie with the BCOA and Reagan. A lot of phony "socialists," however, have done nothing but build Church's image. The Socialist Workers Party (SWP) *Militant* (20 March), for instance, reported on the March 9 Washington demonstration quoting the UMWA leader's begging "Mr. President" speech without criticism, and even continues to defend the sellout Arnold Miller: "And the revolt in the miners union ten years ago established democratic rights that put the miners in a stronger position to fight against such conditions." No, the UMWA is now in a weakened, *defensive* position, fighting to hold onto and win back *past* gains—precisely because the Miller "reform" leadership led the last strike to disaster.

The reformist Communist Party (CP) sings the same tune, avoiding all criticism of Church just as they did with Miller three years ago. According to the CP's *Daily World* (20 March), the recent wildcats "appeared to have no connection with the breakdown of contract talks"! This was the same line as the International, which was trying to end the wildcats by labeling them "local" disputes. The Spartacist League, however, warned from the beginning that the pseudo-reformers of Miners for Democracy were relying dangerously on the bosses government—the enemies of the labor movement. "Labor Department Wins Mine Workers Election" was the headline of our prophetic 1973 article on MFD (see the *Workers Vanguard* pamphlet "The Great Coal Strike of 1978"). Because we fought for a genuine class-struggle leadership instead of tagging along after whoever was popular at the moment, it was *Workers Vanguard* that pointed the road to victory throughout the 110-day battle when the SWP, CP and others were apologizing for the endless sellouts negotiated by Miller and Church.

The pro-capitalist American labor leadership has been in retreat for so many years that the UMWA leadership can try to sell this takeaway contract as a victory! To beat it back requires a program for victory, from elected strike committees and appeals to the rest of the labor movement not to handle coal to a political fight against the twin parties of capitalism. Reagan will hard-line it against the miners, but Jimmy ("Taft-Hartley") Carter is no more a friend of labor than the Republicans. And a genuinely class-struggle leadership of the United Mine Workers would recognize the key role that this combative union can play in leading not only organized labor but all the victims of the ruling-class offensive in Reagan's America. Remember: miners can't live on jelly beans, and the bosses can't live without coal! ■