

# International VIEWPOINT

ISSUE No 52

7 May 1984

## Nicaragua faces escalating war

A common armed  
force for Europe?

Portugal's  
revolution  
10 years after



# International Viewpoint

ISSN: 0294-2925

Fortnightly review of news and analysis published under the auspices of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.

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## A very dangerous stage has been reached

A little more than two years ago, in March 1982, the Nicaraguan government declared a state of national emergency. This was in response to the escalation of counterrevolutionary attacks to a much higher level than in the preceding years. Since then, the aggressions against the Sandinista regime have grown at a quickening rate.

According to official accounts, such as a report made by Humberto Ortega on December 28, the increase in attacks can be summarized as follows: "Air operations" grew from 275 in 1982 to 620 in 1983, "naval operations" from 24 to 169, and "infiltrations" and "other military provocations" from 69 to 108. The number killed was already over a thousand on the side of the revolutionary forces, while the counterrevolutionaries were said to have lost 1,824.

Livio MAITAN

During the first months of 1984 and in particular in recent weeks, the escalation has assumed still more spectacular proportions. It is difficult, for obvious reasons, to give precise figures. But according to Nicaraguan government sources, the counterrevolutionary forces number about 8,000, of which 5,000 are inside Nicaragua. According to imperialist sources, the number is 12,000 to 15,000.

In any case, in a recent press conference, the three Sandinista commanders — Joaquin Cuadra, Lenin Cerda and Julio Ramos — declared that the counterrevolutionary offensive underway was "the biggest" and the "most savage" since the start of the conflict. (1)

The counterrevolutionary assault is being waged in three sectors. In the north, the ex-Somocistas of the FDN are stepping up their harassment actions and their crimes. They have penetrated more than a hundred kilometers into Nicaraguan territory, and they are active in particular to the east of Matagalpa. In the northeast, and especially along the Atlantic coast between Puerto Cabezas and the Honduran frontier, the Miskito Indian forces led by Steadman Fagoth are operating. Other Miskito forces under the leadership of Brooklin Rivera are collaborating with Eden Pastora's ARDE in the south.

In fact, the most distinctive feature in recent months has been precisely much more intensive and systematic activity by the ARDE. For a whole period, Pastora complained that he was not getting aid, and therefore was not in a position to undertake effective actions. This situation has changed quite radically since the beginning of the year.

The ARDE has gotten a lot of materiel from the CIA. "Today," the *Corriere della Sera* correspondent wrote on April 19, "the ARDE depots are full of arms of all sorts. We have seen even bazookas and



Managua demonstration against US invasion, October 1983 (DR)

M-79 rifles that can destroy machine-gun nests. In San Juan del Norte, the ARDE even used Sam 6 and Sam 7 missiles. We have seen modern American helicopters. Obviously, there is no lack of means."

The San Juan del Norte operation, which has been given ample play in the international press, had more of a political than a military significance. The ARDE wanted to demonstrate that there are highly vulnerable zones that can be temporarily occupied. At the same

time, it was aimed at scoring some points in the competition with the other counterrevolutionary forces, in particular the FDN. In the wake of the occupation of San Juan, Pastora's brother, Orion, spokesperson of the ARDE, told the press that there could be no unification with the FDN unless it was purged of former Somocista criminals and unless it drastically changed its methods. (*Corriere della Sera*, April 19.)

Over and above the statements, it is clear: 1) The CIA has decided also to play the Pastora card; 2) Through its action in San Juan del Norte and its presence in other zones along the Atlantic coast, ARDE has acquired a greater weight in the counterrevolutionary front. 3) The Pastora-Rebelo duo can play a more dangerous political role in particular insofar as it can much more easily get a hearing from certain bourgeois political forces and Social Democratic parties in Western Europe (this was the aim of the recent tour that Alfonso Robelo did in Europe while the San Juan del Norte

operation was going on).

In addition to the counterrevolutionary operations on three fronts, there is the mining of the ports. The international press has drawn attention to the repeated attacks against the port of Corinto on the Pacific Coast. The most serious of these forced the temporary evacuation of 2,000 persons and destroyed 6.5 million litres of gasoline.

1. See in particular, *Le Monde*, April 14, 1984, and the *International Herald Tribune*, April 21-22, 1984.

More recently, an April 5 dispatch by the Agencia Nueva Nicaragua (ANN) reports, the port of Benjamin Zeledon on the Atlantic coast was "completely destroyed," while the ports of Puerto Cabezas on the Atlantic and Potosi on the Pacific coast also came under attack.

US warships were in Nicaraguan territorial waters at the time of these attacks. According to ANN again, "with the mining of the main Nicaraguan ports at the end of February, the CIA has imposed a veritable naval blockade of Nicaragua. This follows the failure of air and sea attacks on Nicaraguan installations."

All of these attacks have failed to dent the military and political strength of the Sandinista regime. But the counterrevolutionaries have shown that they are in a position to strike hard blows, to establish themselves in zones of the country, and to achieve operational superiority at chosen points, especially in attacks on the local militias, which have proved to be less well armed and trained than the counterrevolutionaries of the FDN and the ARDE.

### Wrecking campaign

The counterrevolutionary forces can create a situation of insecurity in peasant areas and provide arguments for the campaign the counterrevolutionaries are waging against compulsory military service. What is more, they can inflict serious economic damage. At the end of 1983, official sources estimated that the losses caused by sabotage amounted to "many millions of dollars." The outlook will be much worse if the enemy is able to block the ports, especially Corinto, through which a large proportion of the country's exports and imports pass.

Facing such a situation, the Sandinista leaders have stepped up their appeals to their people and to world public opinion. On March 13, in the name of the Government Council, Daniel Ortega called on "all the world's governments, the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Contadora Group and the people of the United States" to demand that Washington take its troops out of the region, immediately cease its aggressions against Nicaragua, seek a "reasonable" political solution to the Salvadoran crisis and undertake to find solutions to the existing problems with Nicaragua.

At the beginning of April, the Nicaraguan government received a visit from Harry W. Shlaudeman, US roving ambassador for Central America, and Langhorne A. Motley, US envoy and undersecretary of state for Latin America. It put these demands to them. The results were next to nothing. On April 7, Daniel Ortega raised the alarm about the "biggest military offensive" since the triumph of the revolution.

At the same time, the Sandinista leaders are continuing to put pressure on a series of Latin American countries, in particular Mexico and the Contadora Group. But they are not concealing their disappointment with the latter. "Conta-

dora must be more dynamic," Sergio Ramirez announced on March 23.

Three weeks later, the ANN wrote: "The moves by the Contadora Group are proceeding very slowly because of the character of this bloc, which functions on the basis of consensus. Its activity has assumed a still more vague character as a result of the opposition frequently shown by the American government." (April 5.)

Up to recently, it was possible to think, with some basis, that the US objective in regard to Nicaragua was to keep increasing the pressure to force the Sandinistas to take their distance from the Salvadoran revolution and thereby facilitate a political solution acceptable for the counterrevolution. It was also possible to think that there would not be any open

imperialist aggression in Central America before the US elections in November.

The evolution of the situation now casts doubt on any such assumptions. It is significant that *Le Monde's* Washington correspondent has written: "Through the intermediary of forces that have been reduced to the status of auxiliaries, the US has become involved de facto in a war against revolutionary Nicaragua." (April 24.)

A mechanism has now been set in motion that can get out of the control of those who launched it, and lead to a major military confrontation on Nicaraguan soil.

A very dangerous stage has been reached. It would be a grave error for the solidarity movements throughout the world to fail to fully appreciate this. ■

## Election preparations show mass support for FSLN

With the adoption of the electoral law by the Council of State in March, another important step was taken in setting the stage for the elections that are to be held November 4.

At that time, a president, vice-president and a 90-member National Assembly will be elected. The latter will have constituent-assembly powers. In all cases, those elected will serve for six years.

Livio MAITAN

The voting age has been set at 16, and soldiers will have the same right to vote as other citizens. The objections raised by some conservative parties to the vote for 16-year olds and soldiers were rejected. (1)

Every party can take part in the elections that has legal status according to the law on political parties. Concretely, this means parties represented in the Council of State. Every party or coalition will have the right to a subsidy of 6 million cordobas. (2)

The article of the law that set a requirement of 5,000 signatures to run candidates was finally taken out. The proposal to strike this provision came from the PSC, PSN, PCN, PLI, the CAUS and the CGT(I). (3) The FSLN mass organizations were against removing it. But this was agreed to after an intervention by Commander Carlos Nunez.

There are nine parties in the Council of State. By April 7, five of them — that is, besides the FSLN, the PSN, the PCN, the PLI and the PPSC (Partido Popular Social Cristiano) — had already announced that they would participate in the elections. Since the MAP (Movimiento de Accion Popular) is not in the Council of State, it will not be able to run. (4)

Over the four years in which the Sandinista regime has been in power, one of the main accusations that the bourgeois parties have directed against it



is that it has not gotten the endorsement of the people in elections. But from the moment that it was decided to call these elections — at a date even earlier than that projected at the start — the representatives of the old ruling classes realized that the elections would boomerang against them.

1. The PLI was against the right to vote for soldiers, but proposed that a certain number of seats be reserved for them.
2. The current semiofficial rate is 28 cordobas per 1 dollar.
3. Partido Social Cristiano, Partido Socialista Nicaraguense, Partido Liberal Independiente, Central Autonoma para la Unidad Sindical and Confederacion General de los Trabajadores (Independiente).
4. According to *La Prensa* of February 8, the Liga Marxista Revolucionaria, a small sectarian group that calls itself Trotskyist, although it has never been part of the Fourth International, applied for recognition. Reportedly, it got no answer.

In fact, it could be predicted that the FSLN would win a very comfortable majority, showing that it had the support of the masses, even on the electoral level. Very rapidly, the bourgeois parties and organizations began to challenge the democratic character of the elections, to raise the question about whether they would participate, to pose conditions.

In December already, the Coordinadora Sacasa, a coalition of three bourgeois parties — the Partido Social Cristiano, Partido Social Democrata (PSD) and the Partido Liberal Constitucionalista, the industrialists organization, COSEP and two yellow union confederations, the CTN and the CUS, gave the signal.

In a document, this coalition said that the elections would only be democratic if, among other things, there was a general amnesty (including for Somocista criminals), the law against taking capital out of the country was repealed, compulsory military service was eliminated and the makeup of the army was radically changed. With respect to the armed forces, the coalition proposed going back to the Council of State's original scheme (that is, an army including both the Sandinista forces and the vestiges of the Somocista National Guard). In other words, the Coordinadora demanded that the FSLN give up, even before the elections, the hegemony that it won through its struggle against Somoza and wipe out important gains of the revolution.

It should be noted that in a statement before his recent pilgrimage to Western Europe, the political leader of ARDE, Robelo, made a similar proposal. He said that everyone without exception had to be able to participate in the elections, that "institutionalized repression" had to be ended, and that a clear separation had to be made between the army and the political authority, among other things. (Cf. *Le Monde*, April 20, 1984).

## The parties

But let's take a closer look at the positions adopted so far by the various parties. First of all, as regards the organizations that belong to the FPR, (5) the PPSC will not make a decision until April 29. The PLI has decided to go it alone. The latter's option was not taken without conflict. At the meeting where the decision was made, there were two opposing tendencies. The majority, led by Virgilio Godoy, the minister of labor who had already decided to resign, came out for leaving the FPR and running an independent slate. The minority, led by Rodolfo Robelo, was for staying in the FPR.

The PSN seemed at first to have opted for a FPR united slate. Then it tried without success to achieve a front of the "Marxist left," together with the PCN and the Frente Electoral Marxista, an organization that came out of Accion Popular Marxista-Leninista. Finally, it decided to run candidates of its own, while at the same time reaffirming "its



'Everyone to the defence of people's power' banner flies over market (DR)

policy of unity and for a democratic revolutionary alliance around the FDR."

The FSLN itself so far has done nothing more than disseminate a document adopted at its March 23-25 National Assembly, in which the elections are presented as an occasion for ratifying the gains of the revolution.

## PCN condemns elections

Finally, another party that claims to represent the workers movement, the PCN, has explained in a public rally, through the person of its main leader, Eli Altamirano, that the November 4 elections "are a gain for the national and international bourgeoisie, a victory for the world bourgeoisie over the Sandinista people's revolution" and not "a means for defending the people's power."

This notwithstanding, the PCN will form an electoral front of its own with the perspective of forming "a democratic and patriotic government" that will carry through a democratic agrarian reform involving the nationalization of the land and will renounce the foreign debt accumulated by the Somocista regime.

On the other side, the chairperson of the COSEP, Enrique Bolanos, has resumed the line of the Coordinadora Sacasa, calling for boycotting the vote. He argued that the elections have been rigged from the start.

This position has run into resistance in the parties in the Coordinadora themselves. One of these parties, the PSD confirmed already at the end of February that it would not participate in the elections and withdrew from the debate on the electoral law. The PLC is split into two tendencies, one of which seems to be in favor of participating (preferably in alliance with other parties). It has not taken any decision yet. The PSC — which appears to be the most important party in the Coordinadora — has not de-

ecided anything either. Some elements seem to be opting for taking a "realistic" position, that is, for participating.

As for the other bourgeois party, which is not in the Coordinadora, the PCD (Partido Conservador Democrata), it has experienced a spectacular split, with violent polemics, forcible occupations of headquarters and so on. At the root of this split is the problem of whether or not to participate in the elections and more generally in the legal framework. Some elements seem to be advocating shifting to underground activity. The more moderate tendency is led by Pedro Espinoza, the other by Miriam Arguello. The latter is being supported by *La Prensa*, which refuses to publish communiques from the Espinoza tendency. The party is supposed to make a decision in May.

## Bourgeois parties in crisis

So, the picture is quite clear. The calling of elections has produced a crisis in the bourgeois parties, which feel trapped. They obviously do not share the opinion of Eli Altamirano and his party that the elections will mean a victory for the national and international bourgeoisie. They think, and quite rightly, that they have no chance of winning and that they will come out of the elections further weakened. That is a quite well-founded assessment.

We do not think that the problem of giving an institutional form to the revolution will be resolved by elections conceived on the basis of the bourgeois democratic model. But on the tactical level, it will not be the bourgeoisie that benefits. ■

5. Frente Patriótico Revolucionario, includes the FSLN, as well as the PSN, the PPSC and, until recently, the PLI.

## The fight for political democracy and social struggles

The following interview was given to Gerry Foley in Paris in February by Patricio Margarito, a leader of peasant organizing work and electoral activity for the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores, PRT, Revolutionary Workers Party, Mexican section of the Fourth International.

The interview has been translated and edited. Comrade Margarito has not had the opportunity to review the edited text.

*Question.* In its recent issues, *Bandera Socialista*, your paper, has had a number of articles about election victories for PRT slates in Indian towns in particular and mass mobilizations by the local people to keep the government party from stealing the elections. (We translated and published one of them in the January 16 issue of IV.) It seems evident that the breakthrough the PRT made in the July 1982 national elections is continuing to widen, to offer the means for reaching and mobilizing new sections of working people. Could you explain how the PRT's election campaign work has developed?

*Answer.* To start with, I think you have to put this work in its general context. In 1977, the government began to make a series of electoral reforms. This was to include legalization of a whole number of parties both on the left and right, as well as a reform of the mass media. The regime thought that the big oil income it was getting then would provide a sufficient basis for modernizing the Mexican political system. In fact, it had become ossified in many respects and was entering into crisis.

These moves were also in response to an obvious reality. The left had grown stronger. There was a real mass move-

ment. And there was real mass discontent, reflected in a continuous series of workers struggles since 1972, a growing peasant movement and democratic struggles by the shantytown dwellers, the students, primary school teachers and high-school students.

In this situation, the political reform envisaged widening the spectrum of legal political parties in Mexico. At the same time, it should be noted that the government found it very difficult to stick even to this course of limited reforms. From the outset, the reform was threatened by systematic attacks on the right to strike and to demonstrate. For example, at the time public consultations on the reform were underway, there was a massive invasion of the university campus by thousands of cops.

Since 1977, the PRT has argued that the political reform represented a concession to the workers, a recognition of the scope attained by the protest movement, but at the same time it was a trap laid by the government. The regime was trying to divert the social discontent into parliamentary channels.

We proposed a struggle to win legal status for all political organizations without conditions. We argued it should not be the government that decided whether

an organization was entitled to legal status or not.

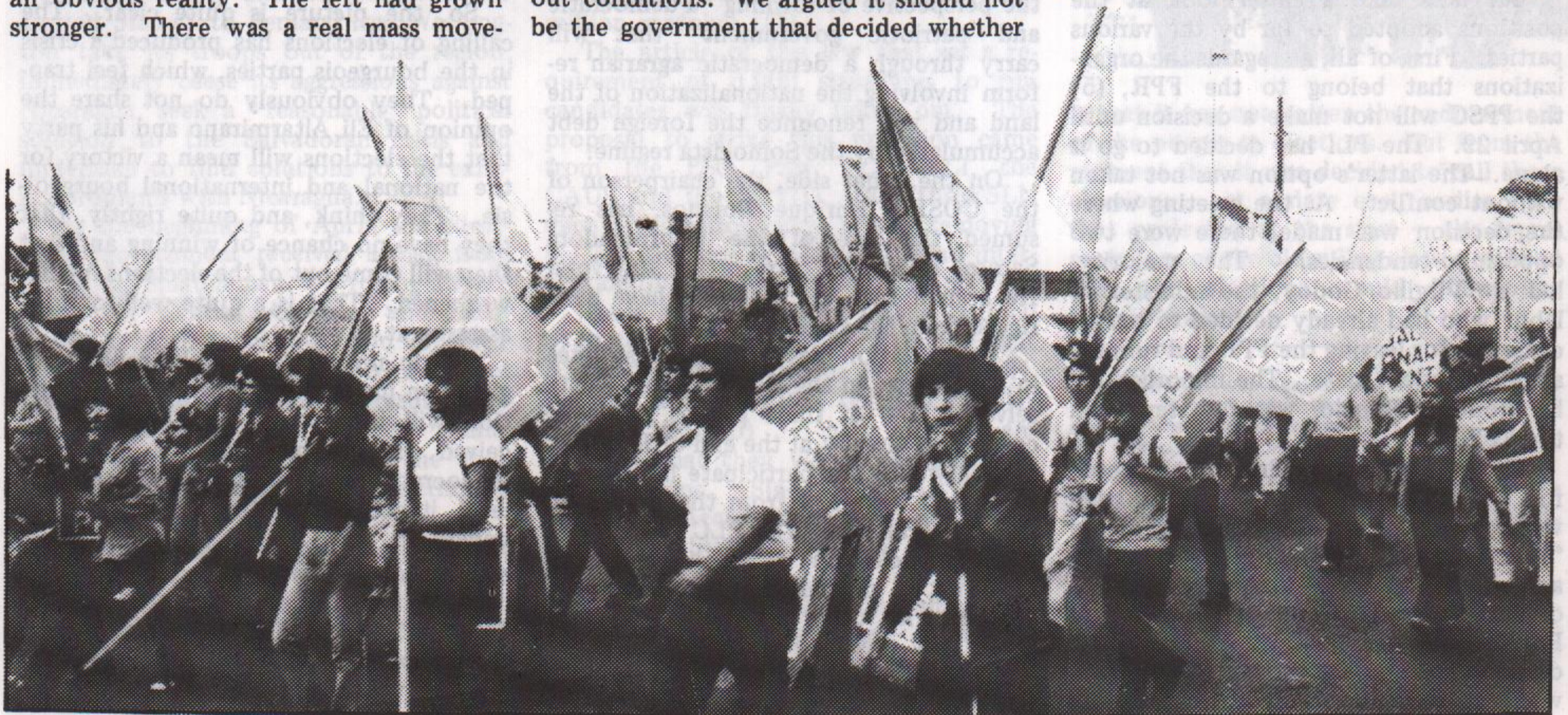
Through 1978 and 1979, we waged a struggle to meet the qualifications for legal status set by the reform. We considered at the time, from a tactical point of view, that we were not in a position to get registration as a legal national political party. We opted for a fight to gain recognition as a national political association, as provided for by the law, which posed very restrictive conditions. We gathered the 9,000 signatures that the government required. We handed in the addresses of more than twenty headquarters throughout the country. We demonstrated that we had been in existence for more than ten years.

Moreover, we campaigned for an electoral alliance with the Communist Party, which had not yet gone into the fusion process that produced the PSUM (United Socialist Party of Mexico). At the time the CP was continuing to call for a so-called left coalition, as it had been doing since 1976. This bloc included other Stalinist organizations. But it was also joined by the Liga Socialista, one of the ancestor groups of the PRT.

Nonetheless, from the beginning the attitude of the CP toward the PRT was very sectarian. It rejected any electoral alliance with us, and its reasons constantly changed.

At the time, we were not yet in a position to conduct a campaign of our own on a national scale. Nonetheless, we carried out some important local campaigns, launching nonregistered candidacies, which prepared the party for subsequent electoral work. Then, in 1980, we decided to launch the struggle to get the PRT registered as a recognized party and to compel the government to open us the way for registration of new political organizations.

The government had refused to open the registry because it claimed that the full spectrum had already been given legal status. Supposedly, this full spectrum included the government party, the PRI,



which claims to be a middle-of-the-road party. In reality, it is a strictly bourgeois party.

Then to the right of the PRI there were the PAN (National Action Party) and PDM (Mexican Democratic Party), two distinctly right-wing parties.

On the left it had recognized the Mexican CP, the Socialist Workers Party and the People's Socialist Party. The last two parties had traditionally played a role of supporting the government. There was also the Partido Autentico de la Revolucion Mexicana, representing discontented veterans of the Mexican revolution. This was supposed to represent the full spectrum.

We waged a struggle to demonstrate that we represented a distinct current on the Mexican left, that we had a program of our own, that we had a real presence in the mass organizations, and a base nationwide sufficient to qualify for legal status even in the very restrictive framework of the electoral law. We mounted a very extensive campaign that included public demonstrations, rallies, mass propaganda in the streets and in the public markets, collecting signatures, getting support from intellectuals. It included a whole process of involving broader sectors of the population. This got us a big audience in the press, radio and TV.

*Q. Where did your presidential campaign come into all this?*

*A.* We decided to back Rosario Ibarra de Piedra for president in April 1981, before we gained registration. We intended to propose her as a candidate of the left as a whole, to the workers and peasants movement, and we intended to continue to push this even if the PRT did not gain legal status.

Finally, in June 1981, the government agreed to open up a new period for registration of parties. And we then managed to win registration, although this was made additionally difficult because a number of important organizations on the left could not see the importance of fighting for legal status.

We did not decide to launch Rosario's candidacy ourselves until the end of 1981. At this point, we considered that the process of discussion had been exhausted and would not lead to a front with other organizations. The CP and its allies, then in the process of forming the PSUM, refused to even discuss running Rosario and said nothing about her.

We had argued that the left should run a candidate that represented the mass struggles that were being waged in Mexico, a candidate of unity and struggle. And, in our opinion, as the chairperson of the National Front Against Repression, Rosario clearly represented the unity and continuity of a series of democratic struggles being waged by the Mexican people.

But the PSUM launched the candidacy of a former CP general secretary, Arnaldo Martinez Verdugo. So, the dis-



*Peasants attend PRT election rally (DR)*

cussion was finished with them. But we were able to form a bloc with the Movimiento Revolucionario del Pueblo, a small organization of Stalinist origin, some of whose leaders had been involved in guerrilla struggle, and the Organizacion Comunista Proletaria. We worked out some common programmatic points and agreed that each organization could campaign separately for its own program. We then divided up the slate of federal candidates. The PRT itself distributed part of the money and media time that it got from the state as a legally recognized party to the other organizations.

We consider the results of the campaign very good. We were able to reach millions of people through our rallies, tours, and TV and radio programs. The government elections board, although it connived at massive fraud, accorded us a half million votes in the presidential elections, 1.7 percent.

*Q. Yes, but the independent estimates were that you got about twice that. And then they started a campaign to squeeze you out of the electoral arena altogether.*

*A.* Although they accorded us 500,000 votes in the presidential elections, they slashed this to 300,000 for the parliamentary elections. This was so we would not have the right to a parliamentary fraction. The secretary of government administration confided to a journalist, Sara Lojea, that it was no great problem to grant us legal recognition but that giving us a parliamentary fraction would cause too many problems. The government then started systematically applying this line in subsequent elections.

In state elections where we exceeded the 1.5 percent barrier, getting 3 to 4 percent of the vote, they changed the

electoral laws. This happened, for example, in Baja California, where we took second place in the capital of the state, behind the PRI but ahead even of the PAN, the traditional bourgeois opposition party.

But the PRI struck a deal with one of the factions of the PSUM and got an electoral law that set the threshold at 5 percent. In return, the PRI gave the PSUM a thousand votes in a very thinly populated area and therefore a deputy.

In the state of Veracruz, where you have to get 13 thousand votes, that is, 1.5 percent, to get a deputy, they conceded us only 8 thousand, despite the fact that there were more than 3,000 persons in our windup rally alone. In this very big state, which has more than 7 million inhabitants, we held hundreds of rallies with an attendance up to 1,500 to 2,000 persons. We calculate that more than 40,000 persons attended these rallies.

These cases reflect a clear intent to keep us off elected bodies. Moreover, in some states where the PRT has a very small organization, such as Chihuahua and Durango, the percentages registered for us were very low, less than 1 percent. We think we made some mistakes. For example, we did not do enough to organize poll watchers and this facilitated vote fraud. But we don't think the official results reflect the reality, because our campaign got broad participation in some areas.

These results put our party on the alert. It became clear that the government's intention was to push down our percentages more and more, not just to keep us out of the state Chambers of Deputies but to prepare the way for declaring in 1985 that the PRT vote has

collapsed and for removing our legal status.

At the August 1983 Central Committee plenum, we decided to make one of the major axes of the party's activity the fight for defense of our legal status, by showing the frauds in various states, by showing that we are being systematically blocked from access to the press and media.

The elections in Baja California came after this. So, we were much better organized, and since the people could see clearly what happened the commercial bourgeois press had a lot of articles about the fraud against the PRT. Because it was obvious that there had been a government operation to block Comrade Tito Pinera, who is already a very well-known person in this state.

*Q. Is this government operation to cut back political rights limited to the PRT?*

*A. No. The PRI is facing more and more trouble at the polls, and vote stealing and bullying are the main methods it knows. In Durango and Chihuahua, for example, there was a big increase in the PAN vote. Because of a crisis within the Mexican bourgeoisie, a lot more money was channelled to the PAN. And some elements in the PRI even ran as PAN candidates because their own party would not register them. In other cases, PRI members worked for the PAN on the quiet.*

So, in Chihuahua, the PAN won 11 municipal governments, including the main one, the government of Ciudad Juarez, which is on the border with the US. The PAN today governs the majority of the population of the state.

After Chihuahua, the next state election was in Baja California del Norte. And the president, Miguel de la Madrid, virtually took personal charge of this campaign. He travelled to Baja California del Norte to talk to businessmen. He offered them enormous economic benefits, preferential treatment, import permits, subsidies, all sorts of things, in order to undermine the PAN's bourgeois base. And he had a certain success.

At the same time, he decided to revert to the old PRI methods, which it had never entirely abandoned, but which in the previous period had been better covered up. That is, there was open electoral fraud, stealing ballot boxes, stuffing ballot boxes, preventing poll watchers from the various parties from getting into the polls, preventing non-governmental organizations from monitoring the vote, keeping the media and the press from publishing the propaganda of the other parties. The PRI even used the army and the police to steal ballot boxes.

All this amounted to a serious cutting back of the political freedoms that had been opened up. It represented a very grave attack on the democratic freedoms of the Mexican people. In fact, it fits into the framework of a whole reaction-

ary offensive, the austerity policy that the government is instituting in response to the economic crisis. It means imposing phoney Executive Committees on the unions, jailing union leaders, persecuting the peasant organizations.

So, they have started to try to close the minimal space that was opened up for political democracy. In these conditions, we have organized ourselves much better. In December, we participated in the municipal and state elections in Tamaulipas in the northeast of the country. In three cities, we ran quite large campaigns.

In Reinoso, we won a section that had split from the Partido Autentico de la Revolucion Mexicana, which lost its registration in 1982. In this area, we calculate that during the campaign there were more than 100 rallies, more than one a day, with an average crowd of between 500 and 800. And all this in a city of 25,000 inhabitants.

In Tula, all the communal lands commissioners [comisariatos ejidales — representatives chosen by the peasants] decided to make an alliance with us, and asked the PRT to register their candidates. Finally, all these peasants decided to join the PRT. They have handed in a list of 4,500 members to form a municipal committee.

This campaign won a clear majority over the PRI. In the windup rally, we got a crowd of 7,000 peasants, in a township that has 14,000 inhabitants. The PRI got only 2,000. When the vote took place, we had 55 poll watchers, one for every polling station and four for stations in the central district.

Nonetheless, the government used various maneuvers to rig the vote. First of all, it shortened the period for handing in the legal credentials for poll watchers.

It refused to take them before the last day, and then it rejected seven of them, leaving us no time to appeal. That meant that at seven polling stations we could not monitor the vote.

Then it sent so-called auxiliary representatives of the State Election Board to all the polling stations to overrule all the other election bodies. They prevented other poll watchers from being accredited, and in this way they blocked us from another seven or eight polling stations.

At the end of the day, when it was clear that the vote was going for the PRI in some polling stations, they stole the ballot boxes and held the count outside the Municipal Elections Committee. So, they grossly inflated the PRI vote, giving the government party 5,800 votes, and the PRT only 2,790. We waged a very hard struggle against this fraud.

There were a lot of mobilizations and even discussion of seizing the municipal government building. But since this was the people's first experience in electoral opposition, they came to the conclusion in representative assemblies that they were not yet ready to wage such a head-on struggle. They proposed the alternative of consolidating a people's organization that at the same time would serve as a basis for future struggles.

We think that the advance in the consciousness of the peasants and the consolidation of a peasant council has been fundamental. There has been an agreement that the peasants will not take their problems to the township board but to the council, which will represent them in dealings with the federal and local governments. So, what has been set up is a sort of parallel representative body that ignores the township government except in cases where dealing with it is



*Young and old alike support PRT (DR)*



absolutely unavoidable.

Similar experiments are being carried out in other townships in the state of Tamaulipas.

In the mountainous state of Guerrero, one of the poorest areas in the country, we clearly won the township of Copalillo in December. The PRI had only twenty people at its windup rally, and the PRT had more than 1,700. So, the government saw that it had no chance of winning the elections. This is a rural township that includes a central district and nine villages. It has about 8,000 inhabitants. So, the government sent soldiers in to steal the ballot boxes in all the villages. They took them to the nearest city, and finally they just declared that the PRI had won the elections.

The reaction of the people was very violent, very strong, very courageous. They have gone through the experience before of overthrowing township governments, seizing the township building. A People's Commune has been set up that elected its own township board. This marks a process of very deepgoing self-organization in the township, and it also involves assemblies to back up this parallel township government. We think that this is going to be fundamental for developing new forms of organizing the peasant population.

Copalillo is mostly Nahuatl speaking [language of the Aztecs, still spoken by a sizeable minority in Mexico], and the development of forms of parallel government have been linked to the economic organization of the peasants, to the Coordinadora Revolucionaria Independiente [Independent Revolutionary Peasant Coordinating Committee] and to the Coordinadora Nacional Plan de Ayala.

Once again, it is not only the PRT that faces the problem of governmental election stealing. In general the PRI will not let go of any municipality, even to let it go to a petty bourgeois party like the PST that supports the government.

In January, we organized a public conference of all the parties to publicize these attacks. It was attended by more than 200 journalists and was widely reported in the press and on TV. All these parties were defending their own interests. But we think that it can be useful in defense of democratic rights in general to make alliances even with right-wing parties to show that the government is dismantling its own political reform.

It is in these conditions that we are proposing to organize a campaign of mass affiliation, a new campaign of propaganda and agitation, to lay the ground for our campaign in the 1985 elections. In the meantime, we are going to face a fundamental challenge in the June elections in the state of Mexico, in which the majority of the country's population lives. This state includes whole sections of Mexico City, satellite cities with up to two million people, the whole industrial zone. Today we are making a very big effort to involve the whole party in this campaign, which will be decisive in many



Mexico City shantytown dwellers face grinding poverty (DR)

respects for the 1985 campaign.

*Q. It appears from Bandera Socialista that the biggest successes for the left so far in the local elections are Indian minority areas.*

*A. The local elections that the PRI is losing, not just to us but to the PSUM, are mainly in districts that are basically Indian. There is the example of Juchitan, which is the second largest city in the state of Oaxaca. This victory can be considered a triumph for the entire left, even though it was the PSUM that fielded the winning ticket.*

The population is Zapotec. The women there wear the traditional dress. There has been a very important intellectual movement, the creation of magazines in the Zapotec language, a recovery of the culture, of the tradition.

We went through a similar process in Copalillo, where the Indian cultural element was important.

I think that two very important aspects combine in this process. First the peasant movement in Mexico has a continuous history of struggle for the land, for winning back local autonomy, and for recovery of the language and the indigenous culture.

But also for ten years, almost twelve years, there has been an uninterrupted process of peasant struggles and a maturing of new forms of organizations. And one of the axes of this organization has been the struggle of the Indian peoples. Mexico has 154 different Indian regions where 154 different languages are spoken. Since the Spanish conquest, there has been a continual attempt to destroy the cultures of the Indian peoples. In the last century, even the liberals considered the survival of the Indian languages and cultures a fundamental obstacle to the advance of progress in Mexico.

The Mexican revolution itself developed a populist policy for eliminating the Indian cultures and languages through integration. That meant teaching them

Spanish, giving them roads and schools. Nonetheless, the situation of the 13 million Indians remains disastrous, they suffer the worst conditions of deprivation and brutal repression. And on top of this there is ethnic oppression, contempt, racism and a systematic effort to destroy their traditions, their language, their culture.

In these conditions, the Indian populations have maintained their own organizations, which are often subsurface. They recognize the official local governments, but more important for them is the Casa del Pueblo [People's House], the community organization. These residual forms of autonomous organization can merge in broader forms of organization in defending electoral victories.

The struggle for control of the township governments also interrelates directly with the economic struggles of the peasants. In Juchitan, the fight for control of the city government is clearly linked to the fight for recovering 30,000 hectares of land now in the hands of the landlords and local strongmen.

In Copalillo, the fight for control of the township government is closely linked to the struggle of the Indians against the local economic gangsters who distribute to them the raw material for weaving hammocks, the main local industry. To assist this struggle also we have fostered the development of cooperatives for acquiring raw materials and selling all sorts of handmade products.

We have also proposed in our mass meetings and in the course of our campaigns that the struggle for ethnic unity must be deepened, that is the struggle for recovering the local cultures. It is our view that in countries such as ours, where there is such great diversity of cultures, a fundamental element of political pluralism, of the kind of socialism we are fighting for, is the revival of the various languages, of the various cultures, of various forms of ethnic and local autonomy.

## Will there be a West European army tomorrow ?

It is not out of place to ask if a European capitalist army is going to be formed in the near future. In recent times there have been a number of decisions moving in the direction of a common military structure. This has taken the form of pooling, if not integrating, military, including nuclear, capacity. Increasingly broader circles of the European bourgeoisie seem to be opting for such a project. Even within the workers and peace movements, top social democratic leaders such as Willy Brandt, leader of the West German Social Democratic Party (SPD), have defended this orientation.

The British, French, West German and Spanish governments in particular have recently reactivated bilateral clauses concerning military co-operation. In the United States, Henry Kissinger, acting as a trail blazer for Reagan, has assumed the role of spokesperson for proposals to 're-shape Nato', with the aim of making the European governments take more responsibility. The two main candidates for the Democratic party nomination, Walter Mondale and Gary Hart, are trying to outdo each other in proposing strategic plans which would give the European partners a bigger share of the responsibilities.

These proposals do not only concern the defence of capitalist Europe, but also other strategic zones such as the Middle East and the Persian Gulf. Francois Mitterrand, current president of the European Council of Ministers, even proposed, in February 1984 at The Hague, a militarily-equipped orbiting satellite as a European response to Ronald Reagan's 'star wars speech' last year.

The workers and peace movements have to understand what lies behind all this hullabaloo. In fact, its main purpose is to put forward an ideological and political response to the activity of millions of Europeans for peace and against militarism.

To clarify what is involved, it is useful to look back at the failure to create the European Defence Community at the beginning of the 1950s. This makes it possible to see more plainly the modifications in a whole series of political, economic and military factors that today place objective limits on the bourgeoisie's political offensive for a common defence policy.

Every step forward by the European ruling classes in coordinating, harmonising or indeed fusing their military capacity and defence policy would represent a severe defeat for the mass peace movement and the workers movement. In order to fight such projects, we have to have a clear grasp of their practical political scope.

Jean-Louis MICHEL

The European ruling classes have actively considered the idea of a common defence policy several times since the end of the Second World War. This was particularly true at the beginning of the 1950s, when West Germany, France, Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands were on the point of concluding a treaty setting up the European Defence Community (EDC), with the strong encouragement of Britain and the United States. These latter were, with France, signatories to a tripartite declaration on May 27, 1952, which stated, 'Western defence is a joint undertaking in which the British and American governments cooperate as members of the North Atlantic pact. These links are now strengthened by the reciprocal guarantees established between the member

states of the European Defence Community, between these member states and the United Kingdom, as well as between these member states and the states participating in the North Atlantic Treaty. For these different reasons, particularly the fact that these new guarantees only apply to the states concerned insofar as they are members of one or the other of these organisations, the American and British governments have as much a permanent interest as the French government in the effectiveness of the treaty establishing the European Defence Community, as well as the solidity and coherence of this community.'

This body, which would have led to the creation of a real European army under the auspices of Nato, finally collapsed like a house of cards on August 30, 1954, when the French National Assembly refused to ratify the treaty instituting

the EDC. The only tangible result of this first attempt at common European defence was the assembly of the Western European Union (WEU) (1), which survived as a consultative parliamentary body, without much power up until a few years ago.

The failure of this first attempt is frequently attributed to the refusal of the French and British bourgeoisies to allow the defeated German bourgeoisie to rearm. This is only a partial explanation, although true.

The World Council for Peace waged a vigorous campaign of opposition to the EDC, particularly in France. The basis of the campaign was the Stockholm Appeal, launched on March 19, 1950. (2) Five hundred million signatures were collected all together, 14 million in France alone. Despite the strong chauvinist undertones ('stop German rearmament') of the campaign, which implied that the French army was endowed with all democratic virtues, it nevertheless offered a means for demonstrating mass opposition to European militarisation under the orders of the American imperialists in several of the countries concerned.

### Failure of the EDC

This point deserves emphasis, because the situation at the time was, overall, favourable to such a project. The overwhelming American military superiority and East-West polarisation that existed at the time — which were best expressed in the Korean war — favoured a common European military build up, from which the American leaders would have nothing to fear. In fact, quite the contrary, as such a proposal was a direct extension of Nato and of American strategy within it. None of the European countries signing the EDC treaty had a nuclear capacity. Indeed, if they had, this would have considerably modified the concept of military integration. The possession of nuclear weapons would have made any such integration conditional on the existence of strong supranational political power. The characteristics of the first generation of American nuclear weapons, and of the conventional weapons of the time did not make it possible to establish worldwide strategic continuity between conflicts taking place thousands of miles apart, except on paper. Striking proof of this fact was given in the way that the ques-

1. All West European countries are represented in this assembly. It is the only European body competent to deal with defence questions.
2. The World Council of Peace is an international body formed after the war on the basis of the Stockholm Appeal. One of the main sponsors was Nobel prizewinner Frederic Joliot-Curie. The appeal was launched at the international conference of peace activists in 1949, and demands the complete banning of all nuclear weapons. This initiative was also partly linked to the diplomatic actions of the Soviet Union. Nonetheless, it made it possible to mobilise massively in favour of peace. The World Council of Peace today is mainly composed of the peace movements linked to the Eastern European countries and the Western Communist Parties.

tion of using atom bombs in Korea was dealt with by the US general staff under the leadership of General MacArthur. It is also striking to note that the EDC treaty in Article 13 left 'non-European territories for which a member state has taken responsibility for defence' outside its scope.

There are also political and economic factors that, taken together, favoured the development of an integrated military defence, besides these reasons of military strategy.

Economically, the European bourgeoisie found themselves in a position of direct dependence on, rather than competition with, the American ruling class. This was particularly true for the armament industry. On the other hand, it is true that the need to rebuild a productive capacity destroyed by the Second World War put objective limits on the capacity to undertake a too burdensome rearmament and militarisation drive. Article 3 of the EDC treaty insisted on this point, stating that, 'the Community will use the least onerous and most effective methods'.

The political weakness and cowardice of the ruling classes in capitalist Europe, and the weakness of their just rebuilt national states, pushed them to consider abandoning at least a part of their national sovereignty without too much regret. To give a vivid idea of the morale of a sizeable section of bourgeois politicians of the time, it is interesting to recall what the then Belgian minister of foreign affairs, and future Nato secretary general, Paul-Henri Spaak, said to the Soviet delegation leader Vichinsky, at the United Nations in 1948: 'Without wanting to discuss any particular regime, we want to state that, having fought against Hitler and fascism, we do not intend to submit to any authoritarian and totalitarian doctrine....The Soviet delegation does not have to look for complicated explanations of our policy. Do you know what is the basis of our policy? It is fear, fear of your government, fear of your politics.' (3)

### What frightens the European bourgeoisie

All in all, in 1954 the bourgeois classes failed in their project of forming a European army under American hegemony, despite political, military and economic conditions a hundred times more favourable than exist today. At the end of the 1950s they tried to strengthen the Atlantic Alliance in a community-oriented perspective, but this time within the definite framework of Nato.

French prime minister Felix Gaillard declared at the 1957 meeting of the North Atlantic Council (heads of government meeting): 'An alliance like this is an experiment in cooperation unprecedented in history. It is true that this cooperation in defence matters is limited to a precise geographical zone. But, for political questions our interests are necessarily linked beyond this confine....When this alliance brings together peoples who



Joint military operation by British, American, West German and Dutch troops (DR)

know that the fundamental reason for their unity is not only the desire to defend their strategic or economic positions, but to save and reaffirm all the spiritual and moral values on which their civilisation is based, then it has to go beyond a mere alliance to achieve a real community spirit.' (4)

This speech, in unison with many others, was once again inspired by the fear then unsettling the ranks of the European bourgeoisies. A few weeks earlier the Soviet Union had launched Sputnik 1, the first satellite in the history of humanity. The political, economic and military context had been radically changed by the evolution of East-West relations, and of relations between the United States and Europe, by the first convulsions of the new rise of the colonial revolution, not to mention the impact on all these factors of the arms race.

The EDC, or even the very idea of integrated common defence, was well and truly buried, despite the progress that had been made toward building a united capitalist Europe by the Treaty of Rome, which created the European Economic Community, in 1957.

While fear is once again the main motivation in the present political offensive by certain sectors of the bourgeoisie and the reformists in favour of common defence of capitalist Europe, it is a different sort of fear. Despite the flood of propaganda that has been let loose on the masses of Western Europe about the so-called Soviet threat, the real concern of the Western governments is the growth of the powerful peace movements. The change that these make in the national situation of each country and in the international context itself is underrated.

In Western Europe, with the notable exception of France, the activity of these movements has broken social and political consensus on defence policy. The mass movement demands nothing less than control over government defence policy. This is clearly expressed in the

demand for referendums to be held on key choices.

This is obviously unacceptable for any capitalist state, and so the comforting mask of bourgeois democracy collects a few more wrinkles. Henry Kissinger summed up the situation quite well when he explained that, 'a public climate of growing nuclear pacifism undermines what credibility remains [of Nato]'. (5) According to him, 'Too many Europeans accept the caricature of a US run by trigger-happy cowboys whose belligerence has provoked Soviet intransigence.' This comes from a sort of 'European schizophrenia' which is expressed in 'a fear that the US might not be prepared to risk its own population on a nuclear defence of Europe, coupled with the anxiety that America might drag Europe into an unwanted conflict by clumsy handling of Third World issues or East-West relations.' This is quite a clear analysis, which takes account of all the political difficulties that the militarisation policy in Europe is coming up against.

Two other elements have to be added into the damage done by the peace movement from the standpoint of the ruling classes. First of all 'the demand for peace' helps to clear away the mystification of what is really involved in the negotiations between the imperialists and the Soviet bureaucracy. The perspective of 'restarting dialogue with Moscow' owes a lot to the existence of the European peace movements and, of course, to the nearness of the American presidential elections. This prospect has forced Reagan to loosen up his position for the sake of American public opinion. The absolutely predictable lack of tangible results in

3. *Combats inachevés*, Paul-Henri Spaak, Fayard, 1969, Volume II.

4. Quoted by Claude Delmas, *L'OTAN*, PUF, Paris, 1982, p 54.

5. 'A Plan to Reshape Nato,' Henry Kissinger, *Time*, March 5, 1984.

disarmament from the classical game of East-West relations (START, INF, MBFR, Stockholm) (6) can only stimulate a further rise in the mass movement, on a more radical basis.

The masses take for good coin hypocritical declarations such as the final protocol of the Helsinki agreement on the defence of human rights. So they are now calling on governments to account for their violation of these generous principles. All this leads to changes in the traditional political setup, particularly with the growing involvement of reformist forces — and especially social democracy — in the antiwar movement.

Such a change in the political climate in Western Europe would not be without consequences for the situation in Eastern Europe. The spillover effects of the antiwar mobilisations in the West are deeply felt in several states in this area, notably East Germany.

When this or that bourgeois politician talks of relaunching European military cooperation, to 'preserve peace' of course, this is the situation they are responding to.

In contrast to the situation in the 1950s, the European bourgeoisies today are no longer strictly dependent on the United States. In some arenas they are able to compete economically with their American partner, and politically they do not always let the USA tell them what to do. On the military front the situation is more complicated. Theoretically, the forces of the different West European capitalist states form a topnotch military entity under one command, but this perspective is totally illusory.

It is illusory because the integration of these military forces cannot be posed in the same terms as in the 1950s. The main military force in Western Europe — outside the American forces, including the submarines assigned to Europe and the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean — is the French.

### Military cooperation and European defence

While France remains one of the pillars of the Atlantic Alliance, it withdrew its forces from the joint military command in 1966. It has a large nuclear capacity, although not comparable to that of the US or the Soviet Union. Like the United States, it is militarily involved in a number of world hotspots, in Africa, the Middle East and the Persian Gulf. Britain is quite a different case as it has a much greater military dependence on the United States for obtaining and maintaining nuclear arms systems and for military strategy, because it is completely integrated into the Nato command structure.

Military integration would necessitate the inclusion of the French nuclear force in a wider overall conception. Several hypotheses have been put forward (Paris-London, Paris-Bonn) but they stumble on the following questions: In the context of a strategy of deterrent, who will

## For strikes against the missiles

Birger SOERENSEN

"If a five minute strike for peace could not stop the installation of the missiles, what sort of strength is needed to get them taken out?"

That is the rhetorical question the 1984 Danish peace conference sent to the three main labor organizations in Denmark, the LO, FTF and the AC.

The majority of the 99 participants in the conference had no doubt about what the answer was. This was shown by a long series of proposals made to the conference and the applause they got. Finn Jensen from the peace group at the B-and-W shipyards said, for example:

"The Dutch equivalent of the LO [the FNV] has already decided to hold a 15 minute general strike on May 10. The Danish LO [Landsorganisation — National Labor Organization] should follow this example. It should use its international contacts to take the lead in working for a simultaneous strike against the missiles in all the European countries."

Gert Petersen, the chairperson of the People's Socialist Party [which got about 12% of the vote in the last general elections], also spoke enthusiastically about a new strike for peace. He said:

"What is decisive now is to get it accepted that we are no longer talking about minutes but days and weeks, if we finally begin to strike against the missiles."

On the same line, the chairperson of the Danish Communist Party, Joergen Jensen, said:

"It is essential for the workers movement to begin to use work stoppages to put an end to the crazy stepping up of the arms race. Personally, I would be happy to see the workers movements all over the world decide to stop all work until the missiles are taken out. Whether this lasts five minutes or five weeks is not the important thing. The decisive thing is that we go as far as we can and still maintain unity."

The idea of a European-wide people's strike against the missiles is spreading like wildfire. Since a group of teachers in Naestved formed an initiative group to spread the idea a few months ago, a long series of peace groups, workplace committees and unions, as well as persons of degrees of prominence, have come out in support of the initiative.

Dennis Hehr, one of the initiators, says, "It's really overwhelming. We always believed in the idea, but none of us expected it to spread so quickly."

The fact that the idea has real power was shown, among other things, by the vote at the 1984 Danish Peace Conference. In particular in the discussions at the various plenary sessions where the idea was raised, the reception was positive, at times even enthusiastic.

A long series of shop stewards and union officials signed a statement in support of the idea, including Gert Petersen from the People's Socialist Party; Holger Foss, the chairperson of the building workers and also a member of the Socialist People's Party; as well as Anker Scherning from the Samarbejdskomitee [one of the peace organizations] and the Danish Communist Party.

Previously, leading Social Democratic unionists and members of the SAM (Socialdemokrater mod Atomvaaben og Militarisme — Social Democrats Against Nuclear Weapons and Militarism) expressed their full support for the idea. This includes the chairperson of the Aalborg district council of the LO, Frank Iversen; the chairperson of the Vestegnen district council in Copenhagen, Knud Andersen; Christian Zastrau from the Copenhagen engineering workers; Kurt Johansen from the Copenhagen warehouse and retail-trade workers; as well as Toben Thomsen from the Aalborg bricklayers.

Finally, the initiative group got a declaration of support from the Nej til Atomvaaben group [one of the major peace groups], which through its Copenhagen coordinating group is giving full backing to the idea.

The Initiative Group has just printed thousands of posters, stickers and leaflets to be distributed on the Easter marches.

If you are interested in learning more about the project, you can contact the Initiativgrup at Herlufmagle School, 4169 Herlufmagle [in the Copenhagen area] or call (01) 73 17 17.

have the authority to make the final decision to use nuclear weapons? Francois Mitterrand like Charles de Gaulle before him would say, 'The nuclear deterrent is the president, it is me'.

In fact, the integration of military forces at this level would suppose the previous existence of a European political power with a strong executive, whose president would have full power in this arena. This type of power, like that of a nation-state, will not come from a linear

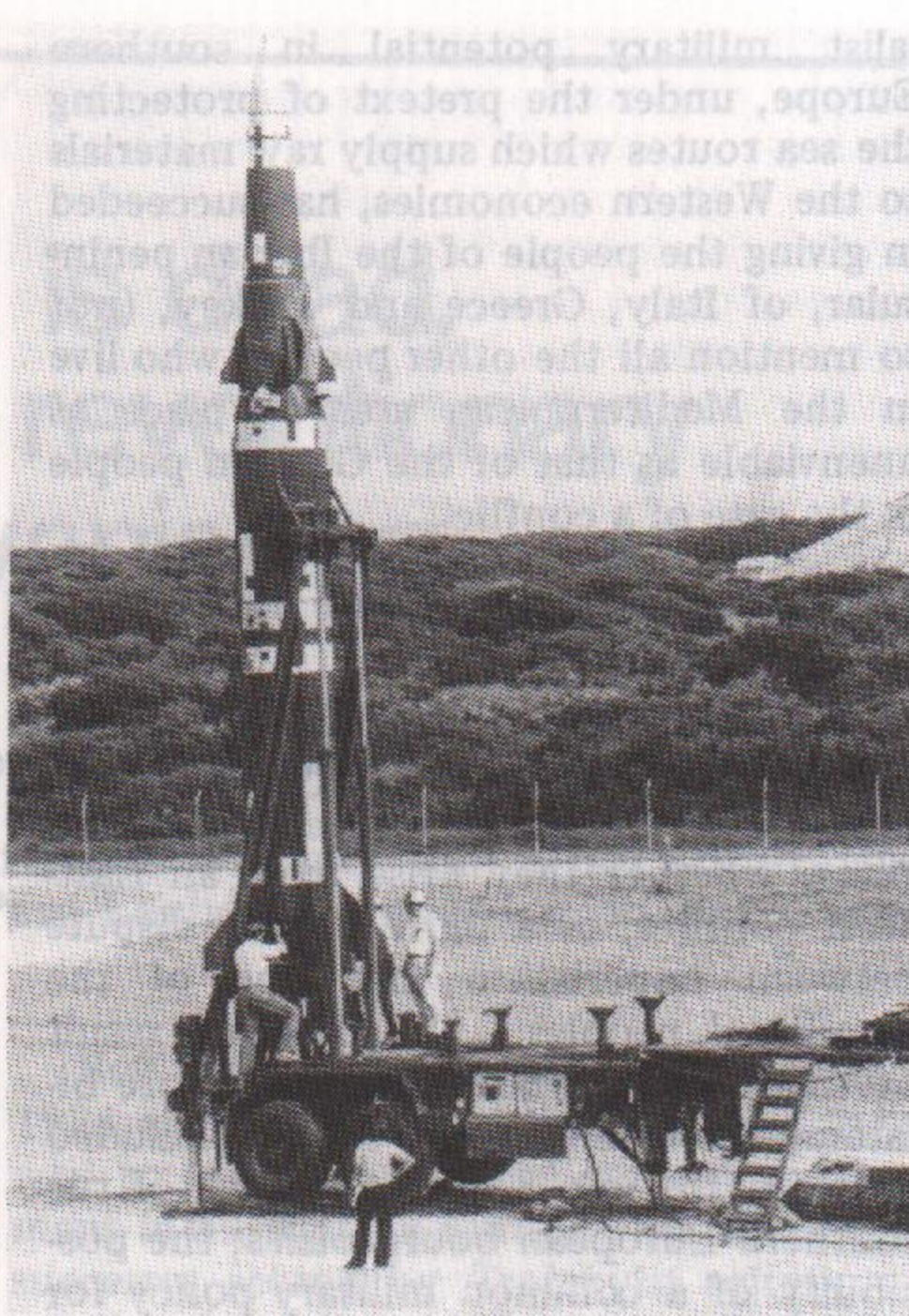
evolution. On the other hand it is easy to see the interest for the French bourgeoisie in linking German economic potential to their own military strength. The reactionary leader Jacques Chirac has already made this sort of proposal. This does not hold up, unless one imagines

6. START: Strategic Arms Reduction Talks; INF: negotiations on intermediate range missiles; MBFR: negotiations on conventional forces.

a complex 'dual key' system of control on which Nato has already come to grief. (7) The proposal by John F. Kennedy on this at the beginning of the 1960s has remained a dead letter. Anyway, German leaders have never shown much interest in such projects.

If integration from the top thus has to be excluded, there remains creeping integration at the bottom. This means a strengthening of cooperation, principally at the economic level, for research and production of new weapon systems. Because of the particular importance of its arms industry, which takes almost 10 per cent of the world market, the French government is actively in favour of this proposition. For Prime Minister Pierre Mauroy 'The concept of defence of Europe has to be well distinguished from that of European defence. The idea of European defence implies an integrated, collective organisation, which could only be introduced if a single political authority existed. On the other hand, the increased consciousness in European public opinion of the imbalance that has appeared in the balance of forces between East and West gives a new topicality to the idea of "defence of Europe". In this spirit we should be able to develop cooperation between Europeans, particularly on the question of arms. Certain tri- or bilateral projects have already started: Transall, Jaguar and Alphajet aeroplanes; Puma and Gazelle helicopters; Milan, Hot and Roland missiles; tripartite minesweepers, for example. However, the structures for this cooperation, the Permanent Arms Committee, or the European Independent Programmes Group, have only obtained limited results. A joint policy of arms production should be considered as a priority target among the many tasks that have to be undertaken to improve a system of defence for Western Europe. In a period where there are active peace, neutralist and anti-nuclear movements, it is particularly important to preserve and strengthen Western European countries desire for defence.' (8)

*Manoeuvres of the French Rapid Action Force created by Mitterrand (DR)*



*Launching ramp for Pershing II (DR)*

This is the only project that is even slightly serious and credible, even if in the short and medium term it faces big obstacles.

The main obstacle is that the armament industries of the different countries are not of the same size or importance, or in the same relationship to American competition. This is because of the different scope of the arms industry in each country, its place on the world military chessboard and, finally, because of the differing shares acquired by each national industry on the world arms market. A report of the general affairs commission of the Western European Union in 1979 described the particular situation this produces in the following terms: 'In the present circumstances every thing indicates that, within the Atlantic Alliance at least, the American arms producers profit the most. In fact, since they enjoy the large market that the US armed forces offers them, they can supply foreign markets with products whose production

costs, including those of research and development, are spread wide. The European industries though can only spread their costs over the much smaller number of units that their national armies require. Thus, they are in a less advantageous position in the markets of their European partners than their American rivals. This situation gets worse still if one looks at the possibilities for "compensation". As they produce a smaller number of finished products, in order to offer equal "compensation", they have to increase the amount that they are prepared to buy from their customers. (9) Thus the economy of scale phenomenon works in favour of the American producers against their European rivals on two counts. This explains the commercial success they have often had in Europe during the last few years. These successes help to still further limit the outlets for the Europeans, while increasing those for the Americans. Thus they strengthen the process which is rapidly leading European industrialists to confine themselves to a back up and sub-contracting role for their American rivals.' (10)

#### The economic limits

The situation has changed very little since then. And this led Pierre Mauroy to make the following remarks to the French National Institute for Defence Studies on September 20, 1983: 'The arms family projects were launched in 1977 in the framework of the Atlantic Alliance. These should have made it possible to divide research and development between Americans and Europeans, according to their capacities. This project had to be abandoned under the pressure of American industrialists. Governmental will is not always enough in this arena. There are considerable economic, financial and industrial interests at stake. I think that the defence industry of the European countries has never been able to present a united front to its American partner. What is more serious, is that the European governments have not tried with sufficient conviction to defend and encourage a European armament industry.'

Bitter remarks, hard reality arising from the actual relationship of forces in this arena, which it is difficult to see how to change.

The international economic and finan-

7. 'Dual key' control implies joint responsibility between two states on the decision to fire nuclear weapons. In other words, one state would be able to veto the decision. This makes it less likely that weapons would be fired, and thus reduces credibility as a deterrent, particularly when one key would be held by the US and the other by a European country.

8. Opening speech at the September 1983 session of the IHEDN (National Institute for Defence Studies).

9. The 'compensation' mechanism entails that a state wishing to sell arms has to offer to buy arms or other products from the buyer.

10. A report on the conditions for European cooperation on arms, presented to the 25th Ordinary Session of the Assembly, in May 1979.

cial mechanisms help to perpetuate this state of affairs. At the same time the general capitalist economic crisis on the one hand, and the prospect of a contraction in the world arms market on the other are casting a shadow over the future of those, like the French bourgeoisie, who have developed an arms industry out of line with the economic and industrial potential of their country.

On May 17, 1983, *Le Monde* gave a more precise analysis of this question of financing the spending linked to US arms production. Among other things one could read there: 'Financing military spending other than by deficit would condemn the American economy first to stagnation and then to a sort of economic regression which would doom any military ambitions. Therefore, the only compromise solution has to be compulsory saving, which will nevertheless put into question the maintenance of the net volume of investment compatible with sustained growth. In 1983, spending was five times greater than net investment. In 1984, although the new recovery should continue, the ratio is expected to remain at 2.5:1. The monetary veil has cast its undulating folds around the reality of the evolution of American military strategy. In general, the imposition of such a high level of compulsory savings (7 to 8 per cent of Gross National Product) in a democracy, can only be achieved in a lasting fashion through inflation, which is in any case more and more difficult to control. There is only one other way of sustaining such an intense military effort: to reduce compulsory savings, that is to increase voluntary savings through maintaining a high interest rate. The help from foreign, European or even Arab, savings in the financing of the US military spending effort reconstitutes a de facto solidarity in a way that corresponds rather closely in the end to a proportional distribution of responsibility according to income.'

In these economic conditions, the perspective of substantial strengthening of military cooperation between European bourgeoisies, at least for arms production, seems in jeopardy.

While, in the present state of affairs, economic limits constitute the main obstacle to introducing joint arms production, what is going on in the background concerning military strategy should not be ignored. By extending their defence policy and, as a consequence, that of the capitalist world to a worldwide perspective, the US is forcing its allies, one after the other, to new sacrifices of sovereignty. The Euromissiles, and then the adoption of the Air-Land Battle doctrine by Nato — which opens up the perspective of a nuclear, chemical, conventional forward offensive battle on European territory — show this clearly with respect to the central European field of battle.

This has rather overshadowed the Americans' other manoeuvres and war plans, particularly in the Mediterranean. The considerable strengthening of imper-

ialist military potential in southern Europe, under the pretext of protecting the sea routes which supply raw materials to the Western economies, has succeeded in giving the people of the Iberian peninsula, of Italy, Greece and Turkey, (not to mention all the other peoples who live in the Mediterranean area) a place as unenviable as that of the German people in the case of a conflict.

### Opposing imperialist war plans

None of the European imperialist powers could have a strategy that brings together all the possible threats and conflicts, whether they arise from an East-West conflict, or a more limited dispute between imperialism and one of the 'southern' peoples. The practical result of this is that, while more and more bilateral agreements have been concluded between US imperialism and each of the southern European bourgeoisies, the possibility of a common military policy for the European bourgeoisies in that zone, that would not be strictly aligned on the American line, has become less likely.

French imperialism, despite its very long tradition of involvement in this zone, has also unavoidably had to face this problem.

The sinister Henry Kissinger, well-known for his odious cynicism, was among the first to let the cat out of the bag, with an overall proposal to 'reshape Nato'. The package gift, as it were, was prettily wrapped and presented to the European bourgeoisies as a token of 'the vitality of the Alliance [which] requires that Europe develop a greater identity and coherence in defence matters'. (11) To do so, the Europeans 'By 1990 should assume the major responsibility for conventional ground defence,' and take over the post of Supreme Allied Commander in Europe.

As for the United States, it would get the post of secretary general of the Alliance, and 'continue with responsibility for both strategic and tactical nuclear defence'. Under these conditions, the USA would be able to carry out 'a gradual withdrawal of a substantial portion of its present ground forces', although this would be compensated for by strengthening 'existing US land-based air power on the continent'.

Nevertheless, Kissinger projects maintaining additional US ground forces 'in Europe for a time afterward, in a new status analogous to that of the French forces, prepared for use in Europe but also available for use in emergencies outside it'. It would be difficult to be more explicit.

Although he holds no official position, this trail blazer for US imperialism is nevertheless a significant figure. And a dangerous one. His proposal is to transform all Europe into a US base for Washington's military adventures around the world. Revealingly, he even concludes that his proposals do not amount to an 'abandonment, but an embrace of Europe'. This is precisely what the

European capitalist governments will be asked to endorse over the next period, as usual in a more or less amended version. It is likely that these governments and their backers, caught between the dictates of their protector and the demands of massive peace movements, will wax indignant and swear by an independent European defence policy. This will be all the easier as they will be conceding the main points to their US ally.

The workers and peace movements have no interest in granting even an ounce of confidence to the bourgeois or reformist projects that, in the name of a third road between capitalism and the bureaucratic dictatorships of Eastern Europe, advocate European 'neutrality' and total denuclearisation, so as to better prepare national or multinational conventional bourgeois defence. Those who advocate such plans are, willy nilly, helping the war plans that both the European bourgeoisies and American imperialists are preparing. None of these schemes should get any support whatsoever.

The dangers contained in the present ideological offensive in favour of a European defence policy must not be either underestimated or overestimated. Not underestimated because the offensive's goal is clearly to find a political answer to the peace movements that will allow the unobstructed pursuit of militarisation. Nor should they be overestimated because the conditions do not exist for attempting something like 1952, or even for French imperialism's dreams of a much closer multilateral cooperation to come true. One should not confuse primarily ideological speeches and offensives with the actual creation of a united capitalist Europe in the military field.

The tasks of the peace movement thus emerge more clearly. Just as peace activists fought and continue to fight the deployment of any new US missiles in Europe, just as some of their counterparts in central Europe have begun to fight for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Germany, they will have to fight — as the movement did in the Spanish state — to shut down all foreign bases, especially in southern Europe. These are three demands that lead to the necessary break with Nato, which means not only a break with US imperialism but with the European bourgeoisies as a whole, bourgeoisies that have been allied to the US in the framework of a counterrevolutionary alliance since 1949. Naturally, for us this fight is part of the only historical perspective consonant with the interests of the proletariat, that of the Socialist United States of Europe, because 'The slogan of the United States of Europe is not a cunning invention of diplomacy. It springs from the immutable economic needs of Europe which emerge all the more painfully and acutely the greater is the pressure of the USA.' (12) ■

11. Henry Kissinger, *Time*, March 5, 1984.

12. Disarmament and the United States of Europe, Leon Trotsky, October 1929. *Writings of Leon Trotsky (1929)*, Pathfinder Press, New York, 1975.

# Pierre Frank is dead, a generation of revolutionary fighters is vanishing

Comrade Pierre Frank died last Wednesday April 18, in the morning. He was 78 years old and had been active in the workers movement for over six decades. His comrades and friends will pay him a last tribute at the time of his cremation at the Pere-Lachaise cemetery, in Paris, on April 27.

Ernest MANDEL

With the death of Pierre Frank, the Fourth International loses one of the very last survivors of the generation of revolutionary communists who joined the fight of the Soviet Left Opposition and Comrade Lev Davidovich Trotsky at the time the Soviet bureaucracy exiled the Russian revolutionary leader to Turkey, in 1929. Trotsky had developed a substantial influence among the French Communist Left, partly because of the relations he had established with trade unionists like Pierre Monatte and Alfred Rosmer and Communists like Boris Souvarine during and immediately after World War I.

As a result, beginning in 1923, the various organs of the French Communist Left gave wide coverage and support, albeit often critical, to the struggle waged by the Left Opposition and Leon Trotsky within the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Communist International.

But only a small nucleus grouped around the surrealist Pierre Naville, the trade unionist Alfred Rosmer and the young chemical engineer Pierre Frank fully identified with Trotsky's struggle. Pierre Frank joined Trotsky on the island of Prinkipo, near Istanbul, and became part of the secretariat formed around the old Russian revolutionary. These young secretaries were the team that helped Trotsky prepare the first conference of the International Left Opposition (ILO) in 1930 and draft the founding document of our world movement.

The 1929-1934 period was a period of initial growth for the Trotskyist movement in France. Pierre Frank actively participated in its leadership, with his friend Raymond Molinier. The magazine *Lutte de Classe* (Class Struggle) and the newspaper *La Verite* (The Truth) were launched. An intense propaganda campaign was waged against the rise of the Hitlerite fascist threat in Germany. Still more intense was the agitation campaign for the workers united front to stop fascism, first in Germany and then in France. This campaign failed in Germany, with well-known tragic consequences.

But in France, after the February 6, 1934 events, it succeeded and opened the way to a new rise of the workers movement in all Western Europe. But the very successes scored by Trotskyist agitation on the ground created considerable difficulties for the building of an organization.

The small Trotskyist organization of the time, the Communist League, was overwhelmingly outweighed by the two reformist apparatuses — the social democratic apparatus of the SFIO (Socialist Party) and the Stalinist apparatus of the PCF (Communist Party) — who collaborated closely to smother the revolutionary anticapitalist potential contained in the expansion of the working class struggles

and mass organizations.

The French Trotskyists had to engage in a series of discussions to determine the correct tactical orientation in that complex situation. A series of grievous differences and splits ensued in which Pierre Frank and Raymond Molinier did not always pick the same side as Leon Trotsky. Still, there were some positive developments for the Trotskyist current during the 1935-1939 period: gains in the Socialist left and later in the centrist Socialist Workers and Peasants Party (PSOP) left, with the recruitment of people like Jean Rous, David Rousset and Daniel Buerin who stayed with the Trotskyist movement for a time, and Pierre Lambert and Marcel Hic who joined it to remain the rest of their lives. Nevertheless the fundamental trajectory was not towards growth, but towards stagnation and setback. In addition, beginning in 1937 the weight of the Popular Front's defeat in France and of the defeats in the Civil War in Spain, began to bear down, and paved the way for World War II.

Pierre Frank, Raymond Molinier and their very small group, separated from the bulk of the forces that prepared the foundation of the Fourth International in 1938, were chiefly identified with a thorough-going preparation of antimilitarist and anti-imperialist work that earned them repression and persecution at the hands of the French imperialist government. This led Pierre to move to Great Britain where he was also per-

Pierre Frank (right, standing) with Trotsky and others at Prinkipo in 1933 (DR)



secuted by the British government, including being interned in a concentration camp. He was gladdened by the news of a beginning reconciliation with Trotsky shortly before the latter's assassination in August 1940.

In occupied France, the different Trotskyist organizations remained divided by tactical problems, but they all continued the struggle under the occupation and made no concessions at any time to either German imperialism and its super-exploitation of the French working class, or French imperialism. The prominent role of these fighters in launching the massive workers and people's resistance in France earned these organizations a new phase of growth, running from 1940 to 1948.

This is when the group connected to Pierre Frank in occupied France, under the leadership of Jacques Grimblat and Rudolphe Prager, began to orient, after some mishaps, towards the reunification of the Trotskyist movement which was actually achieved in 1944, following the European conference of Trotskyist organizations that took place in February of that year, in the midst of the occupation. Pierre Frank had drawn all the lessons from his own misadventures in the 1930s and rejected blind factionalism; he applauded the course towards unity with both hands.

As soon as World War II was over and he was allowed to return to France, he joined the united International Communist Party (PCI), became a part of its leadership and was assigned by the latter to the leadership of the Fourth International that had been reconstituted around Michel Raptis (Pablo). In this capacity, he actively prepared the Second World Congress of the Fourth International in 1948, as well as all the successive congresses of our organization up to and including the Eleventh World Congress in 1979. He was often the reporter on important political and theoretical questions at International Executive Committees (IEC) and World Congresses. He was also the editor in charge of the publication of the magazine *Quatrieme Internationale* for several decades, and without his obstinacy that journal would not have the continuity that it enjoys today.

With the end of the post-World War II revolutionary upsurge in Western Europe, that is around 1948-1949, the French Trotskyist movement — along with the Trotskyist movement in all Western Europe and North America — went through a new period of stagnation and setback which were reflected by increasing internal problems and a series of splits. Pierre Frank participated in all these internal debates and understood they had a function beyond their negative aspects. The fact is, they served to maintain the programmatic and theoretical continuity of our movement through the inevitable readjustments necessitated by the new phenomena revolutionary Marxists had to grapple with, such as the victory of the Yugoslav, Chinese and

Indochinese revolutions led by forces which originated in the international Stalinist movement but were led to break with it on key questions of revolutionary strategy to be able to lead the revolution to victory in their respective countries.

The small PCI survived during this period, led by Pierre Frank. Its main achievement was to understand the importance of the colonial revolution that continued to unfold in the world throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Because of this solidarity work, Pierre Frank was arrested in 1956. Thus, he had the honor of being the only leader of the French workers movement to be arrested for solidarity with the Algerian revolution.

Indeed, the PCI, spurred on mainly by Michel Raptis and Pierre Frank, committed itself to an active defense, including material and political aid, of the Algerian revolution, the Cuban revolution and the Vietnamese revolution. This enabled it to influence and then win over a broad current of Communist youth in the Union of Communist Students (Union des Etudiants Communistes — UEC) that had spontaneously adopted the same orientation.

This led to the creation of the Revolutionary Communist Youth (Jeunesse Communiste Revolutionnaire — JCR) and after the thunderbolt of May 1968, to the fusion of the JCR and PCI that gave birth to the Communist League, French section of the Fourth International, the first example in Europe of the transformation of one of the small original Trotskyist groups into a numerically stronger organization with more roots in the working class.

The resurgence of the world revolution in each of its three sectors, with the upsurge of the colonial revolution, the resumption of workers struggle of pre-revolutionary scope in a series of Western European countries, and the process that led to the Prague Spring, made it possible



Pierre Frank (DR)

for the Fourth International to resolve, at least partially, the problem of its internal divisions and led to the reunification of our movement in 1962-1963.

For five years, the Fourth International had to work under conditions of extreme organizational and administrative weakness, with a day-to-day leadership reduced in fact to three people: Comrade Pierre Frank who was its organizational linchpin, Comrade Joseph Hansen, insofar as the reactionary Voorhis Act forbidding US organizations to affiliate internationally permitted, and myself. After the breakthrough and development of our organizations in 1968-1969, our movement was able to establish broader leadership structures in which Pierre Frank continued to occupy a prominent position.

His literary work includes many articles and brochures, but two of his books deserve particular mention: *The History of the Fourth International* and especially the monumental *Histoire de l'Internationale Communiste (1919-1943)* whose two volumes were published by La Breche Publishers in 1979. This book, which is the only scientific, Marxist work on this decisive topic illustrates the scope of the experience and lucidity that Pierre acquired in his nearly sixty years of activism. Likewise, it also reflects his fundamental concern for the continuity of communist theory and practice, that is, in the twentieth century, of revolutionary Marxist theory and practice.

Pierre Frank had a very deep sense of friendship, generosity and of the indispensable emotional ties that bind militants committed to the gigantic task of reconstructing the world on a socialist basis. Because our movement embodies an obstinate desire to maintain the continuity of the Communist movement, Pierre Frank attached particular importance to all manifestations of a rebirth of Leninism and Marxism in the Soviet Union and other bureaucratized workers states. The explosion of workers struggles in Poland and around Solidarnosc, the appearance of Comrade Alexander Zimine's book *Le stalinisme et son "socialisme reel"* (Stalinism and its "Actually Existing Socialism"), produced in the Soviet Union and published by La Breche in 1983, were a source of joy and satisfaction and marked the last years of his life. In all the conversations I had with him, these were the events, along with the need to give the utmost importance to the differentiations presently developing within the PCF, that occupied his attention.

Farewell dear comrade, dear friend, older brother, your memory will live on in the Fourth International with whose existence and construction your entire life was identified. The growth and transformation of our movement, leading to the future mass communist International, will enable us to keep that memory alive in the entire international working class. ■

April 19, 1984



## Pierre Frank (1905-1984)

Pierre Frank was born in Paris in 1905. His parents, of Russian origin, were employed as tailors. In the course of his studies as a chemical engineer, he participated in 1924-25 in the foundation of the General Union of Technical Students in Industry, Commerce and Agriculture (UGETICA), under the sponsorship of the Union of Technicians in Industry, Commerce and Agriculture (USTICA), the first union organisation of technicians created in France after the 1914-1918 war.

The political involvement of Pierre Frank, which started when he was 15, led him to join the Communist Party 5 years later, in 1925. As a trade unionist he was active in USTICA and, for several years, in the Chemical Federation belonging to the Communist-led United General Confederation of Labour (CGTU).

In 1927, he saw the platform of the United Opposition in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), led by Trotsky and Zinoviev, as the answer to the disastrous course being followed by the Stalin-Bukharin leadership. He supported the Opposition's theses, and was central in the creation of the first French Trotskyist publication *La Verite* (The Truth), of which he became managing editor. His political position led to expulsion from the section of the CP in the industrial Paris suburb of Aulnay-sous-Bois.

A participant in the creation of the first Trotskyist organisation in France, the Ligue Communiste (Communist League) in 1930, Frank remained a member of its leadership until 1934. In May 1931 he became a member of the International Secretariat of the international Trotskyist organisation led by Trotsky.

In July 1932 he went to Turkey to join Leon Trotsky, still in exile in Prinkipo, and was his secretary for a year.

Once back in France, he was in the forefront of all the political battles of the Trotskyists in 1934, at a time when the ranks of the working class were deeply divided faced with the fascist threat.

At the end of 1934, the Ligue Communiste publicly decided to send all its members into the Socialist Party (SFIO, Section Francaise de l'Internationale Ouvriere, French section of the Socialist International at the time). Within the party they formed the Groupe Bolchevik-Leniniste (GB-L, Bolshevik Leninist Group). Pierre Frank was elected as alternate member of the Permanent Administrative Commission of the SFIO at its June 1935 congress in Mulhouse. But in October 1935, along with other leaders of the GB-L, he was expelled from the party on the pretext of disciplinary infractions. The Socialist Party then became involved in constituting the Popular Front with the Communist Party.

Following the expulsion of the Trotskyists from the SFIO, divisions emerged in their ranks. In December 1935,

Pierre Frank, with Raymond Molinier, created a new journal, *La Commune*, which stood for broad regroupment outside the SFIO. This was in contradiction with the line of the revolutionaries organised in the Jeunesses Socialistes Revolutionnaires (Revolutionary Socialist Youth) and supported by Trotsky. These differences led to the creation of the Parti Communiste Internationaliste (PCI, Internationalist Communist Party) alongside the GB-L in March 1936. After a fleeting reunification which led to the formation of the Parti Ouvrier Internationaliste (POI, Internationalist Workers Party), the PCI recommenced its own activity. This division of Trotskyist organisations in France lasted into the middle of the Second World War.

A warrant for Pierre Frank's arrest was issued in 1939. Sentenced in absentia to several years in prison, he went into hiding. Arrested in Britain in 1940, he was interned on the Isle of Man until 1943.

After the war ended he had to wait another year before being able to become freely active in France once more, but in 1946 he participated in the Fourth International conference that sealed the reunification of the Trotskyist forces. From that point on he was continuously in the top leadership of the International and its French section. After 1948 he alone represented the continuity with the pre-war generation of activists. He played a leading role in training the cadres of the movement internationally.

At the same time, Pierre Frank continued his activity in the French section, particularly during the fight against the Indochinese and Algerian wars. He was once again arrested and sentenced for his work in solidarity with the Algerian National Liberation Front.

The small nucleus that had carried on the tradition of militancy was given a new lease on life by the formation of the Jeunesse Communiste Revolutionnaire (Revolutionary Communist Youth) by those expelled from the Union des Etudiants Communistes and the Communist Party in 1966. At the end of June 1968, after the PCI and the JCR had been dissolved by the Gaullist government, Pierre Frank was yet again held in custody for ten days, for plotting against the security of the state.

After the fusion of the PCI and the JCR and the creation of the Ligue Communiste in April 1969, Pierre Frank continued his work as a leader for many years, before giving up all leadership responsibilities at the end of the 1970s. At the Eleventh World Congress of the Fourth International in 1979, he was elected a consultative member of the International Executive Committee, as a recognition of his long and continuing contribution to the international leadership.

Responsible for the publication of many of Trotsky's works, and having made the first sign of the anti-bureaucratic opposition in Poland (the *Open Letter to the PUWP* by Kuron and Modzelewski) known in France, he himself wrote several political works, particularly the *Histoire de l'Internationale Communiste* (not yet published in English), to which he devoted the last years of his life.

### Declaration of the FOURTH INTERNATIONAL and the LIGUE COMMUNISTE REVOLUTIONNAIRE

The United Secretariat of the Fourth International and its French section are in mourning. With the death of Pierre Frank we have lost one of our most valiant members, one of our best leaders.

Pierre Frank was a companion of Leon Trotsky and with him a co-founder of the Fourth International and of its French section. He was in the thick of every battle. His life is an example of a militant in the service of the revolution and the working class. He never faltered, right to the last, even during those terrible years when there was only an isolated handful of Trotskyists to denounce Stalin's crimes as well as the abominations of imperialism.

Pierre Frank, along with the generation of militants who shared his commitment, passed on to us an irreplaceable heritage — the heritage of Marxism and the revolutionary tradition of Lenin and Trotsky. Against the social democratic and Stalinist betrayals he was in the front ranks of those who kept alive the revolutionary experience which is the cornerstone of our struggle today. We benefited from his vast knowledge of the French workers movement and his acute understanding of its debates and traditions.

Throughout his life Pierre Frank placed internationalism and building the Fourth International at the centre of his political activity. In all the debates and when there were big political and organisational choices to be made he taught us that — as Rosa Luxembourg said — 'the centre of gravity of the class organisation of the proletariat rests on internationalism'.

The United Secretariat of the Fourth International and its French section pay tribute to the memory of this workers' leader, this exemplary revolutionary leader. We call on our members and sympathisers to pay him solemn homage on Friday April 27. At this difficult time the LCR especially sends its militant solidarity to his companion Marguerite, who was deported to Ravensbruck for the same ideal and was at his side in all his battles.

Paris, April 18, 1984, 10:00 am  
United Secretariat of the Fourth International  
Political Bureau of the LCR

# A look back at the Portuguese revolution

Now Marshal Spínola — he was promoted from general a few years ago — has been named chairperson of the Organizing Committee for the Tenth Anniversary of the coup of April 25, 1974, that overthrew the dictatorship of Marcelo Caetano. He is a man who fought on the side of the Nazi armies, was an outstanding officer in the colonial wars. He was the governor of Guinea-Bissau in 1968, and was responsible for the murder of the Guinean nationalist leader Amílcar Cabral. He was also the first president of Portugal after the fall of the dictatorship and responsible for the two failed coups d'état of September 28, 1974, and March 11, 1975. After going into exile, in the wake of these coup attempts, he organized a terrorist force, the Portuguese Democratic Liberation Movement (MDLP), which carried out numerous outrages and murders. At the time, the journalist Gunter Walraff managed to lead this old general into a trap in interviews with him, getting him to reveal his plans for an armed struggle to overthrow the post-April 25 regime. Now, having returned to the country, he is organizing the commemoration of a revolution in which he did not participate, which he opposed and

which he tried to destroy by force of arms. Paradoxes?

There has been no lack of paradoxes in the last ten years. We have a Socialist premier, Mario Soares, who declares that socialism is going to be put in mothballs. We have a minister of education who is a freemason and has given the Catholic church facilities in public education that even Salazar could not agree to. The panorama of the revolution is rich in such anecdotes. The corps of parliamentary politicians in Portugal was built up in haste. From them you cannot expect the sort of discretion and unflappable front that you might find from their counterparts in the "Western democracies."

In fact, it is not easy to explain how the revolution unfolded and what sort of heritage it has left. This article will take up the peculiarities of this prerevolutionary crisis, the concrete application of the policy of the working-class parties and in particular the "exceptional" character of the Portuguese CP, and finally some questions that now arise for the European revolution.

Francisco LOUCA

On September 9, 1973, when 136 officers met to discuss professional questions, the most radical measures they suggested to win their demands were a strike and a demonstration. Two months later preparations were already underway for a coup. Initially, the pretext was ambiguous at best. The professional officers wanted to prevent the application of a measure the government adopted to meet the problem of a shortage of officers caused by the continuation of the colonial war, namely that any man with a university education, after six months training, would get the same status and salary as officers who had slowly climbed the hierarchical ladder.

However, these meetings, given impetus by more radical officers, were sufficient to set in motion a broad movement bringing together professional demands, the desire to end the colonial war as soon as possible (in terms of money and lives, it cost proportionately twice what the Vietnam war did), and the desire to reestablish the democratic freedoms that had been suppressed by the oldest dictatorship in capitalist Europe. Rightist, and even extreme rightist, officers participated in meetings alongside members of the Communist Party and far-left groups.

This is why the dictatorship's enormous police apparatus (the PIDE had 22,000 agents at the time and 200,000 paid informers, approximately one for



Soldiers and sailors demonstrate for peace on first May Day march (DR)

every forty persons in Portugal) was unable to block the movement, of which it was aware. This movement was a deep-seated reaction by an essential part of the officer corps, the officers that directly commanded troops. Moreover, the fact that a coup was being prepared was an open secret. Caetano himself tried to forestall the consequences by organizing an orderly transfer of power into the hands of those generals who could serve as a bridge to the malcontents. They were Generals Costa Gomes and Spínola, who at the time were the chairperson and deputy chairperson of the Armed Forces General Staff.

After these attempts failed, the regime tried to establish a position of strength. Spínola and Costa Gomes were forced to resign, and the other generals were to pledge their loyalty to Caetano. That was on March 14. Two days later, the Caldas da Rainha regiment set out for Lisbon with 200 men and armored cars. It did not get the counterorder in time that postponed the military action planned for that day.

Despite the failure of this coup, in which the rebels did not manage to fire a shot, the regime was unable to organize an effective repression and to break up the Movimento das Forças Armadas

(MFA). The conspirators calmly went back to their work, and on the night of April 25, Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho organized his command post in the Pontinha barracks. The majority of the military units obeyed his orders. One after the other, the radio and TV stations, the airport and the ministries were occupied.

In this operation, three facts have to be highlighted, since they had a considerable influence on subsequent events.

To begin with, the military coup was aimed first of all at getting control of the mass media. Once this was achieved, the rebels were able rapidly to create a favorable political relationship of forces. The population was alerted to what was happening. It came into the streets, making it next to impossible for the loyal troops to move around. Those soldiers loyal to the regime were demoralized by uncontradicted reports, often exaggerated, that the MFA was in control of the situation.

### The masses begin to act

In particular, the takeover of the media had two effects that were psychologically decisive. The radio picked up and retransmitted appeals back and forth between the military leaders and the ministers, showing their indecisiveness and confusion. Nothing could be more effective in demoralizing their troops. Besides this, and no less important, the support that the rebel soldiers could feel gave them growing confidence. The fact is that they had come out of their barracks on the orders of the captains, but without knowing what their mission was.

Secondly, the masses immediately occupied the centers of the main cities. This was entirely spontaneous but it had great advantages for the rebels. The troops involved were reinforced, and the masses got ahead of them in some respects (such as the assault on the PIDE headquarters and the liberation of the political prisoners). Thus, the masses themselves began to influence the course of events. This spontaneous mobilization culminated on May 1 in the biggest demonstration in the history of the country.

In the third place, the regime itself tried to avoid confrontation. Its operational incapacity was surprising. Marcelo Caetano, the premier and strongman of the regime, did not execute the emergency plan and go to the well equipped Monsanto base. Instead he rushed to take refuge in the Carmo barracks, remaining isolated in the center of Lisbon. The barracks were then surrounded by MFA soldiers and masses of people. He gave no orders to his ministers, who fled, every man for himself. The president of the republic, Americo Tomas, stayed at home all day. No one thought about him.

The only initiative that Caetano took was designed to assure that Spinola succeeded him. He summoned the general, who swore that he had nothing to

do with the coup — which was partially true — to ask him to take power before it “falls into the street.” Spinola asked for, and got, the MFA’s mandate to carry out the transfer of power. The revolution was still respecting the rules. That was how the dictatorship ended, after 48 years.

The dictatorship’s last act was to transfer power to Spinola, who quickly formed a Junta de Salvacao Nacional (Council of National Salvation) so that it could formally designate him president. In this way, the captains’ movement was bypassed. Its favorite was Costa Gomes. And no one had any doubts that the officers in the Junta did not represent the MFA. But the compromise was accepted. Spinola named a government, with Palma Carlos as premier and one of the general’s acolytes, Firmino Miguel, as minister of defense. He also created a Council of State including civilian figures (16 officers, 5 civilians).

In this context, the first confrontation developed that was to determine the course of the revolution. Spinola in fact represented the only way of controlling the crisis opened by the coup and to re-establish a power center quickly. His strong links to big finance capital assured him the support of the bourgeoisie. The top military officers, at least those with the agility to jump to the winning side during the coup and thereby remain in their commands, were with him. He played his card. He sought to reinforce his power by postponing the elections for the Constituent Assembly and getting himself confirmed as president by a plebiscite. In this way, he pushed aside the officers of the MFA, which he wanted to dissolve. Such a strong government was the precondition for achieving two objectives — controlling the mass movement and preventing decolonization. Spinola’s objective for the Portuguese empire was to achieve a neocolonial solution in association with the stronger imperialisms.

These two objectives represented the limits of the readjustment the bourgeoisie was prepared to make. The new regime was to keep democracy outside the factory gates and above all let it go no further than the Portuguese homeland. These were the conditions the bourgeoisie considered essential for the defense of its order.

Spinola, consulted about the draft of the MFA program, declared his support for restricting freedoms, especially for releasing only selected political prisoners, for limiting the right of political association, and above all, for refusing the “right of self-determination” to the colonial peoples. (See the documents in Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho’s book *Alvorada em Abril*, Lisbon, 1977, pp. 339 and 478). In his first speech in the name of the Junta, Spinola said that his “primary task” was “to guarantee the survival of the sovereign nation in its multi-continental form.”

The first question was immediately settled by the events. The political

prisoners refused to accept selective releases. It was everyone or no one. They all got out. The parties immediately began forming publicly. The headquarters of the national union organizations started to be occupied by the workers, along with the city halls. The centers of the repressive organizations, the Portuguese Legion, the censorship offices, were sacked by the masses. The government kept having to accept fait accompli. On May 11, vacant houses started being occupied by poor families. The Junta was obliged to go along. It should be pointed out, and I will come back to this later, that the right-wing parties were slow in forming. Both got their impetus and money from Spinolistas, first the Democratic People’s Party (PPD) and later the Social Democratic Center (CDS). Spinola tried to create a mass organization that would back his struggle for power. He failed in both cases.

The history of this failure was concentrated in dramatic episodes. The first was the fall of the First Provisional Government that had tried to grant full powers to the general, and the installation of the Second Provisional Government in July 1974, with Vasco Goncalves as premier. Then there was the failure of the coup of September 28, 1974, after which Spinola resigned. Finally, there was the coup of March 11, 1975, whose defeat forced Spinola to flee to Spain.

The failure of Spinolismo marks the end of the first major stage of the Portuguese revolution. Much more than the subsequent struggles for power — with the exception of November 25, 1975 — Spinola’s defeat ended a chapter. It represented the failure of the strategy followed by the Portuguese bourgeoisie in the initial months of the revolution, which could be summed up in the cynical phrase, “If you can’t beat them, join them.”

### Spinola loses control

In fact, the hope for maintaining the direct continuity of the regime, with only a little external face lifting, depended on the possibility of maintaining intact the conditions for exploiting the workers in Portugal and in the colonies. The independence of the colonies, which was forced through on the spot by the fraternization of the opposing armed forces, despite the dreams of the military hierarchy in the Terreiro do Paco about rebuilding the Multicontinental Portuguese Community, coincided with a vast mobilization of the workers in Portugal itself. The combined power of these developments shattered the big bourgeoisie’s schemes for maintaining the essential continuity of its system. It is at this point that we see members of the family of Mello and Champalimaud reduced to being luckless pistoleros in the Spinolista gangs and forced to flee in their general’s two helicopters. Their holdings were nationalized after March 11. Marcelo Caetano lost his last bet.

This failure has to be seen in all its magnitude. It left the bourgeoisie without an immediate alternative for running the country. As the dictator Caetano put it cynically but with considerable accuracy, "the Portuguese bourgeoisie enjoyed a climate of peace for almost half a century under the protection of police organizations that shielded it. It had no fighting spirit and did not know how to act to defend the principles that it professed." (Marcelo Caetano, *Depoimento*, Rio de Janeiro, Ed. Record, 1975, p. 93.)

This situation of political disarmament had a lot to do with the characteristics of a long-lived dictatorship. Unlike the European fascist regimes that were built on the basis of the rise of a mass party, the dictatorship in Portugal was established before its party was created. At no point, except in the crucial years 1930-33, did the petty bourgeoisie mobilize in any way comparable to the Nazi movements. Catholic and provincial, Portuguese "fascism" had the adroitness to follow a political course balancing off the interests of the various bourgeois factions. None of them produced an alternative, and anybody who was unhappy ended up in exile, in prison or six feet under.

The only bourgeois current that differentiated itself from the regime in the last years was the one that came to form the PPD, later the PSD. But it became compromised by its association with Spínola and his strategy for reforming the regime from within. (Its leaders, in particular Sa Carneiro, had been deputies for Salazar's Uniao Nacional).

### Crisis of bourgeois rule

In this context, the crisis of bourgeois rule assumed extraordinary proportions. Its focus was in the armed forces, which for long years had been the Praetorian Guard of the regime, and from there it was transmitted to all components of the state apparatus — the repressive bodies, the courts, the schools, the media. And no bourgeois force had the political strength to steer a course through this crisis.

A specific feature of the Portuguese prerevolutionary crisis continued through the 14 months of its duration. There was a desynchronization between the crisis of the state apparatus and the development of centralized bodies of alternative power. This, indeed, is understandable considering the long way the workers movement had to go. It only began to regain an identity of its own and to accumulate experience after 1969, under a dictatorship and in the atmosphere of a colonial war.

This feature misled a lot of observers. Alfredo Margarido maintains that "what occurred constantly in Portugal was a struggle between the various cliques in the new corps of politicians to take over the state apparatus, and at no time was the state structure put in question." ("68/78: um fantasma perigoso," *Raiz*



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*e Utopia*, No 5/6, p. 73.) For his part, Pierre Navilla has stressed that the military had not given up any portion of the power, and went no further than creating a fictitious democratization.

Thus, the existence of an overall crisis of the state, as well as the specific dialectic this generated, has been rather little understood. The mass movement penetrated into the breaches opened by the paralysis of the repressive apparatus. It spread direct democracy. It accelerated the breakdown of the army. It undermined the successive governments. The political radicalization that could be seen was the result of this process. The crisis of the state apparatus smoothed the way for the offensive of the mass movement, which in turn influenced the relationship of forces inside the MFA.

In fact, this set of contradictions had a name — the MFA. The MFA was the tip of the iceberg of power. Following the defeat of the generals, it represented the organizational structure of the captains. That was where the center of power was. When the offensive was launched that would prepare the way for the coup, the group of nine (Melo Antunes, Vasco Lourenco, etc.) put it quite clearly. "Without clarifying the question of power in the MFA, it is not possible to seriously take up the question of the state organization and prevent its complete ruin....It is necessary to energetically

repel the anarchism and populism that are leading inevitably to the catastrophic dissolution of the state in a stage of the society's development in which, without the state, no conceivable plan can be viable." (*Jornal Novo*, August 7, 1975.) At least the actors in the play know the role they have to play.

The MFA was subjected to a variety of centrifugal pulls. In the summer of 1975, it broke up under the pressures to which it was subjected. On the one side, it faced an offensive by its right wing and center, which laid the groundwork for the coup and revitalized the traditional structures of the military hierarchy. On the other, it faced an offensive by the workers, involving the spread of self-organization and the development of autonomous initiatives, the most advanced example being the soldiers' movement. The latter gave rise to a massive movement for democratic and other concrete demands, the SUV (Soldados Unidos Vencerao — Soldiers United Will Win).

The demonstrations built in September by the SUV in Lisbon and Oporto were the first indication of the possibility of a qualitative advance in the political situation and the creation of dual power. They attracted large sections of Socialist Party supporters, escaped the control of the CP, and were recognized by the Workers Commissions as a fighting vanguard. In pushing the generals aside, the

captains helped to open up a prerevolutionary crisis. When the soldiers challenged the power of the captains, it meant that the revolution was beginning.

The enormous political authority that the MFA won among the masses in 1974 and which it maintained for a considerable part of 1975 gave it a great capacity for absorbing social tensions. But those who see this process as simply a series of populist maneuvers by the military arm of capital are wrong. The MFA broke up precisely because it was not such an instrument, because it was profoundly affected by the pressure of the masses in a situation in which there were no solid bourgeois alternatives and the relationship of forces was evolving favorably for the working class. The specificity of the MFA was, in fact, bound up with the course of events and the crisis of bourgeois rule over society. This is the fundamental reason why in the future Portuguese revolution, expecting another MFA will be like waiting for Godot in Beckett's play.

During 1975, the MFA tried to balance off the various pressures within it. It moved forward progressively, with its left wing growing stronger. (The forces close to the CP predominated in the MFA Assembly in the early months of 1975, but the forces linked to Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho and to far-left groups controlled the main operational commands in Lisbon.) As a reflection of the military institution, the MFA always sought to guarantee its role as the center of political power. (Thus the internal discussions were kept secret, and all decisions were presented as if they were unanimous.) On this, all currents within it agreed. Defining itself as a "national liberation movement" (a small belated triumph of the African nationalist armies over the ideology of the occupation armies), it declared that "it is the MFA through its revolutionary organs — the Comissão Coordenadora do Programa, the Conselho Superior and the Assembleia — that must lead the ongoing revolutionary process." (*Boletim do MFA*, No 8, January 14, 1975.) Later the "Guide Document for the Alliance between the People and the MFA" set the objective of creating a "state apparatus with a popular base" that would "promote the potential of the initiatives of the local people's organs," but guaranteeing the role of the Conselho da Revolução as the "supreme organ of national sovereignty."

## The MFA divided

On the political level these slips reflected various attempts to remodel the MFA leadership and the government. On July 16, a triumvirate was established, comprising Otelo, Costa Gomes (the president of the republic) and Vasco Gonçalves (premier). It was called the "Directorio." Its failure led to new attempts at remodeling. The group of nine negotiated with Otelo to replace Vasco Gonçalves as premier. At this

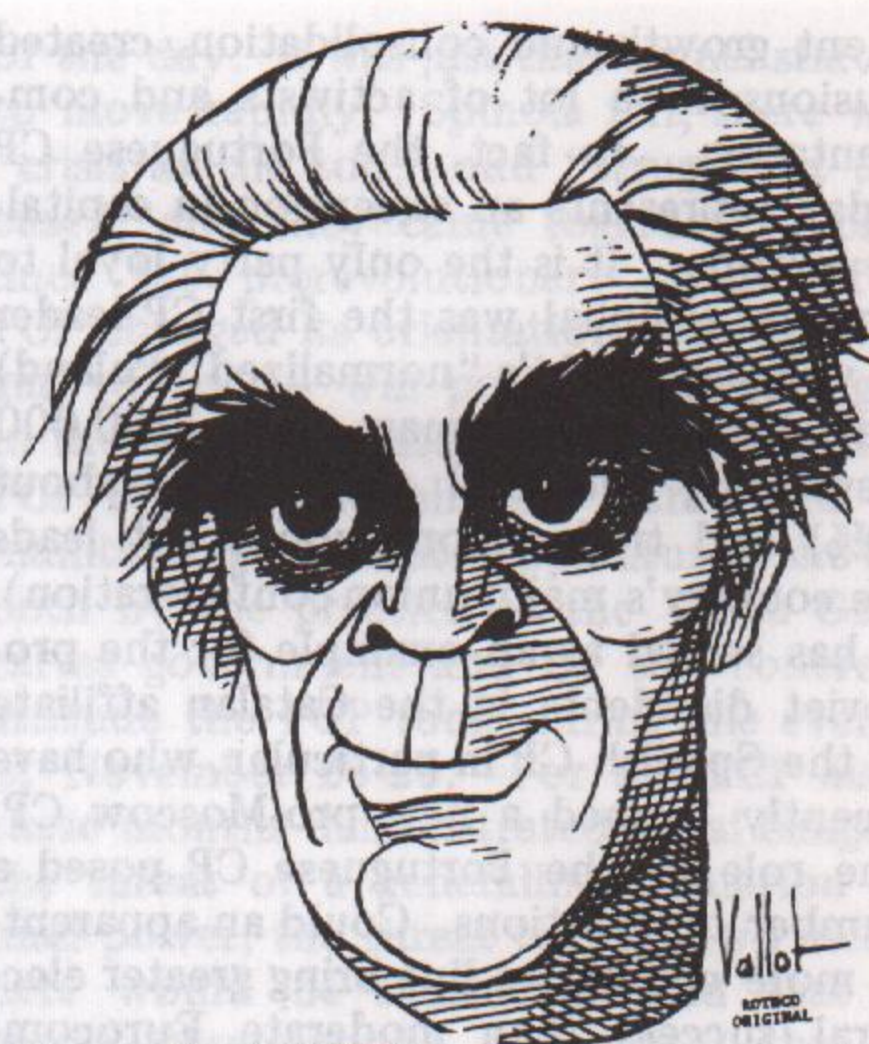
point, the CP was already in a minority in the Assembly of the MFA. This is the real reason that led the CP leadership to take part in the FUR (1). It was trying to make alliances that could neutralize the far left and its influence in the MFA to open up the way for an alliance with the center. It was able to carry through this disastrous maneuver only during the November 25 military actions, when the CP managed to demobilize the units that were trying to resist the coup. (Cf. Costa Gomes, *Sobre Portugal*, Lisbon, 1977, p. 89.)

The class polarization in the society as a whole finally broke up this center of political power, which had been growing weaker and weaker. The fact that the government of Admiral Pinheiro de Azevedo, which had the confidence of the SP and the group of nine, went on strike for fear of being shut up again in the government palace by workers' demonstrations is a good illustration of the relationship of forces. The message was clear. Only a crackdown could reverse the relationship of forces. Preparations for the coup were underway.

## November 25, 1975

Clearing away the smokescreen that was built up around the coup, it becomes evident what really happened. It is true that some far-left parties, especially sections of the group that was then dominant, the Movement of the Socialist Left (MES), believed that a semi-palace coup could be effective. (2) In reality, what this would amount to would be another demonstration of force that would make possible a recomposition of the relationship of forces within the MFA. In fact, the MES's strategy fitted in with this perspective. Its view was that you don't take power but you occupy it, and to accomplish that an alliance with the MFA left and the CP was sufficient. The military relationship of forces was overwhelmingly in favor of the left. In Lisbon, the country's main center (it was different in the other regions), the COPCON (3) commanded 11,400 soldiers, including 7,000 with commando training and equipment (sharpshooters, paratroopers, etc.), and the right controlled 800 commandos, who were under the command of Jaime Neves.

But the fundamental thing was that neither the left of the MFA nor the CP wanted to take such an initiative. The COPCON commanders turned themselves in at the presidential palace in the pre-dawn hours and remained prisoner there. All that was necessary to get this result was a telephone call. These commanders were not prepared to break with the hierarchy and the military institution. They continued to obey the orders of their superiors until the latter expelled them from the army. Some of them opposed the SUV and the soldiers movement, which profoundly modified the conditions of the political struggle in Portugal. This is the reason for their surrender.



Alvaro Cunhal (DR)

The political strength and the initiative, however, was on the side of the right wing of the MFA. In fact, there was a broad coalition between an extreme right (the paratroop officers and the air force command), a right (Eanes), and a center (Melo Antunes and the group of nine, who went on TV a few days after the coup invoking Gramsci to justify this "historic bloc"). And with it were the bourgeois parties, the Socialist Party, and the whole civilian far right, which were working to create the conditions in society for the success of the coup.

The military actions launched were very revealing. The whole initiative in the coup was taken by 100 commandos and 100 soldiers with 25 armored cars (that is, distinctly less than the military column that tried and failed to carry out a coup on March 14, 1974). This force occupied various strategic points, in particular some bases and barracks, and attacked the Military Police, which included 2,000 soldiers. Militarily, this attack was a failure. The commandos fired, but the response forced them to retreat with seven dead. But the Military Police surrendered because its commanders went immediately to turn themselves in to President Costa Gomes, who supported the coup.

The declaration of the state of siege, the confusion and passivity of the workers movement, the breakup of the military left brought the prerevolutionary crisis to a close. Order again reigned in Lisbon.

The CP's behavior during the pre-revolutionary crisis, as well as its subse-

1. Frente da Unidade Revolucionária, a bloc of the far left groups formed on the basis of the August 25 bloc, which also included the Communist Party. For the program of the August 25 bloc and the FUR, see *Intercontinental Press*, September 15 and 22, 1975. — IV.

2. The Movimento da Esquerda Socialista (MES), originally strong in the metalworkers union. It opposed the CP from the left in the beginning of the Portuguese process, but was later drawn into the wake of the CP and has since disappeared. — IV.

3. Comando Operacional do Continente (Mainland Portugal Operations Command), the special security command headed by General de Carvalho. It was created after the fall of the first provisional government. Carvalho could co-opt any unit he considered necessary. Generally, he was careful to include the radical ones. — IV.

quent growth and consolidation, created illusions in a lot of activists and commentators. In fact, the Portuguese CP today represents an exception in capitalist Europe. It is the only party loyal to Moscow (Cunhal was the first CP leader to visit Jaruzelski's "normalized" Poland) that has a major mass base (200,000 members), electoral following (about 20%) and trade-union support (it leads the country's major union confederation). It has served as an example for the pro-Soviet dissidents in the Catalan affiliate of the Spanish CP in particular, who have recently formed a new pro-Moscow CP. The role of the Portuguese CP posed a number of questions. Could an apparently more combative line bring greater electoral success than moderate Eurocommunism? (Certainly some CP leaders

asked themselves this question.) Could such an orthodox Stalinist party be "revolutionary"? (A lot of Portuguese far-left activists asked themselves this question, and more than a few answered it in the affirmative.)

### The Communist Party

The historical peculiarities of the PCP are linked to the history of a workers movement in which no other party was able under the dictatorship to maintain organizational continuity. (The Socialist Party, in contrast, was formed in West Germany in 1973.) Moreover, it enjoyed an unusually favorable relationship of forces relative to the weak bourgeois liberal oppositions. Its political line followed all the zigzags of the Stalinized

Third International. It was ultraleftist, popular frontist; it supported the Nazi-Soviet Pact, then it was pro-British; it swallowed everything. Within the tradition of the Portuguese left, marked by the ideological influence of the republicans of the 1920s, the PCP was also a profoundly procolonialist party. It always followed the strategy of "national democratic revolution," which meant that it oriented toward a national uprising that would lead to the big monopolists and agriculturalists ending the vestiges of feudalism.

The PCP's pursuit of this policy, however, was marked by two peculiarities. In the first place, it faced no significant competition from any other working-class force. (In fact, it was quite well aware of dangers of competition. That

## Chronology 1974-1975

### 1974

- April 23 — In the Eduardo VII Park in the center of Lisbon, Otelo gives out the instructions to the MFA leaders.
- April 24 — At 10:00 p.m. the MFA operational center in the Pontinha barracks starts functioning.
- April 25 — At 12:14 a.m. the song *Grandola, Vila Morena* is broadcast over Radio Renascenca. This is the signal for starting the coup. At 3:00 a.m. the center of Lisbon, the radio and TV facilities, are occupied; at 4:00 a.m. the airport; at 4:20 a.m. the first MFA communique is broadcast over the radio. At 6:00 a.m. the ministries begin to be occupied. Late in the evening, Caetano surrenders and hands over power to Spinoia.
- April 29 — The first occupations of houses; they start in Monsanto.
- May 1 — Gigantic mass demonstrations.
- May 11 — The occupations of houses in Chelas are recognized by the Junta de Salvacao Nacional.
- May 15 — Spinoia is named president.
- May 16 — The First Provisional Government takes office.
- May 27 — A national minimum wage of 3,300 escudos a month [at the time about 140 US dollars] is established.
- May 28 — Postal strike. Troops are sent to replace the strikers. Two officers refuse to obey orders and are jailed.
- June 1 — Demonstration organized by the PCP and Intersindical against "strikes for the sake of striking."
- July 10-17 — Power play by Spinoia. Failing to get the increased powers he seeks, Palma Carlos resigns. Spinoia tries to form a government headed by Firmino Miguel.
- July 18 — The MFA forces the naming of Vasco Goncalves as premier.
- July 27 — Spinoia recognizes the right of self-determination for the colonies.
- August 15 — Government refuses to permit a demonstration in Lisbon in support of the MPLA; one person killed.

- August 26 — Signing of the Guinean treaty of independence.
- September 5 — Signing of the Mozambican treaty of independence.
- September 10 — Spinoia calls for a demonstration of the "Silent Majority."
- September 13 — The three currency-issuing banks are nationalized (i.e., the BP, BNU and BA).
- September 28 — Attempted strongarm operation by Spinoia with the support of the militarized police (GNR) and paratroopers. The masses build barricades. The coup fails.
- September 30 — Spinoia resigns. Costa Gomes replaces him.
- October 20 — Special congress of the PCP, the dictatorship of the proletariat removed from the party program.
- November — Land occupations begin

### 1975

- January 14-20 — The polemics around "trade-union unity" law. The Council of the Twenty (the MFA's Program Commission, Otelo and the other military leaders) approves the law unanimously. The government ratifies it. The SP opposes it.
- January 15 — The Alvor Accords for a "transition" in Angola are signed with the FNLA, UNITA and the MPLA.
- February 6 — The MFA Assembly decides to "institutionalize" the movement.
- February 7 — Prohibited demonstration against Nato and firings takes place. It draws 5,000 people despite the opposition of the PCP.
- March 11 — Spinoista attempted coup. Paratroopers attack Ralis. The attempt fails. Spinoia flees to Spain.
- March 14 — Council of the Revolution formed. Nationalizations.
- March 26 — The Fourth Provisional Government. Vasco Goncalves remains premier. Includes ministers from the SP, PCP and PPD.

is why it reacted so violently against the split of the pro-Peking members of its Central Committee in 1963, denouncing them to Salazar's political police.) The only other force in the field was a weak bourgeois liberal opposition. Thus, the PCP always kept a strong organizational control over the electoral fronts it created to run in the phoney legislative elections Salazar held to mollify the "Western World." Its cadres were educated in this tradition — a reformist policy aimed at achieving the best possible relationship of forces for the CP. As Krushchev said, "in order to sup with the devil, you have to have a longer spoon than he does." Thus, also the Kremlin follows a coherent international orientation, not missing opportunities to fight for improvements in the relationship of forces, as Afghani-

stan shows.

So, April 25 was a magnificent opportunity for the PCP. It controlled the trade-union movement. It predominated in the factories. It had a strong influence in the MFA. The PCP saw the realization of one of the objectives of its "national democratic revolution" in a context that went beyond the simple organization of a normal bourgeois democratic regime. There was growing, active participation of the masses in political life. But it is often forgotten that there were two phases to the PCP's application of this policy.

Initially, the PCP put its money on Spinola. Its ministers in the government loyally fought tooth and nail against strikes and occupations. "Consolidate the state" was the watchword

of the day. It was just that events started to move rapidly. Spinola fell, there was "crisis at the top," and "struggle at the base," and they came together to produce the prerevolutionary crisis. The PCP changed its orientation then and began to try to win positions of strength in the state apparatus. The fact that the PCP operated within the framework of maintaining the state apparatus is shown both by the practice of the Vasco Goncalves government and by the concrete attitude the PCP took during the events of November 25-26. For the PCP also, these months demonstrated a real danger, the threat of a generalized situation of dual power, the threat that its own members would be radicalized and that it would lose control, the threat that it would be unable to control the move-

April-May	— Nationalizations of the banks, insurance companies, transport, railroads, electricity, petroleum, air transport, cement, shipbuilding, tobacco and heavy machinery industries. The land occupations increase.	September 10	— The first demonstration of the SUV in Oporto.
April 25	— The Constituent Assembly elected. The SP gets 38%, the PPD 26%, the PCP 13%, the MDP 4% and the far left 4%.	September 19	— Formation of the Sixth Provisional Government under Pinheiro de Azevedo. Four SP ministers, 2 PPD ministers, 1 PCP minister.
May 1	— The PCP prevents Mario Soares from speaking to the demonstrators.	September 25	— The SUV demonstrates in Lisbon.
May 19	— The "Republica Affair" begins. The workers fire the directors.	September 29	— The radio and TV occupied by troops loyal to the Fifth Government.
May 27	— Radio Renascenca is occupied by the Workers Commission.	October 22	— A demonstration takes back control of Radio Renascenca.
July 8	— Issuance of the "Guide Document for the People-MFA Alliance."	November 7	— The paratroopers blow up the Radio Renascenca transmitters on orders from the government.
July 9	— The SP leaves the Fourth Government.	November 9	— The paratroopers revolt against the hierarchy because of the orders they got. In the meantime 123 paratroop officers begin to prepare a coup, with the support of the military commands of the Northern Region, the Air Force and the Commandos (Jaime Neves).
July 13	— The PCP headquarters in Rio Maior is destroyed. Similar attacks occur in other localities, including against other parties (the MDP, LCI, MES, UDP).	November 12-13	— Building workers surround the government palace and trap the premier and the deputies.
July 21	— The MFA Assembly sets up a "Directorate" of Costa Gomes, Vasco Goncalves and Otelo.	November 18	— The government "goes on strike." Failure of the third attempt to reach an accord between Otelo and Melo Antunes.
August 6	— Jaime Neves is purged by the Amadora commandos. Otelo reinstates him.	November 20	— The Council of the Revolution removes Otelo from the post of commander of the Lisbon Military Region. The paratroopers rebel. They reject a demobilization order.
August 7	— The "Document of the Nine" is published.	November 25	— Paratroopers occupy four Air Force bases. The Commandos reoccupy Monsanto. Otelo surrenders to Costa Gomes, who declares a state of siege and bans publication of the newspapers.
August 8	— Formation of the Fifth Provisional Government under Vasco Goncalves.	November 26	— The Commandos surround the Military Police. Seven dead on the Commando side and one on the side of the Military Police. The Military Police commanders surrender.
August 11	— The nine are suspended from the Council of the Revolution.	November 27	— The Commandos surround COPCON and seize its Staff Headquarters. COPCON is dissolved.
August 13	— Issuance of the COPCON Document.	December 6	— Eanes, the military commander of the November 25 operation, is named Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces.
August 25	— The PCP, MDP, LUAR, FSP, MES, PRP and LCI form the FUR.		
August 27	— The Va Division is occupied by the commandos.		
August 28	— The Directory breaks up.		
September 4-6	— Crisis in the MFA. The Goncalves faction is put in a minority and leaves the Council of the Revolution. The Fifth Government resigns.		

ment through fancy footwork in the MFA, the unions, and the Workers Commissions. The split in the MFA and the onset of a decline in its authority over the mass movement, now propelled by the soldiers movement and by new advances of the Workers Commissions, was a sign for the PCP, as well as the right, that the movement had to be stopped.

The offensive of the right, for which the PCP had no direct responsibility and was in fact one of the main victims of the repression in the armed forces, enabled the party to maintain the image of an aggressive current identified with the "gains of April." And since it was the center of gravity for most organized workers, it quickly gained strength in the unions, which became decisive with the ebb of the Workers Commissions in the factories. This explains the growth of the party.

## The Socialist Party

The contradictions, nonetheless, are obvious. The identification with April gains leaves open the question of orientation. It can be summed up as follows: Is the present situation the result of the "national democratic revolution"? To avoid this problem, the PCP assures us that "the revolution is continuing." But this question has been central in all the party congresses that have taken place since November 25. The PCP's triumphalism conceals two realities: first, that the "democratic revolution" handed the power to the bourgeoisie and that it is now firmly in control; and that the PCP can no longer hope to influence sections of the state apparatus as it did during the 14 months of the prerevolutionary crisis. Its latest attempt to do this has been directed at the current that looks to the incumbent president, General Eanes, the commander of the November 25 operations! The PCP has sought to convince him to form a party in the hope that thereby it can get a deepgoing restructuring of the party system, weaken the SP, and in general regain the positions that it lost.

Only one factor is delaying the explosion of these contradictions — the SP. The structure and policy of the SP are still the best cards Cunhal has for defending his positions. In fact, if there is anything "peculiar" in the Portuguese political scene, it is this Socialist Party.

After spending a brief period in the PCP, in the 1950s and 1960s, Mario Soares participated in the republican discussion circles, and his activity remains in this tradition. Back when the dictatorship was in open crisis, Soares cautiously accepted the possibility of collaborating with Caetano's "thaw." He said: "I think that the great majority of people in the country are prepared to encourage the government [of Marcelo Caetano] in its efforts to liberalize, insofar as they are convinced that these efforts are sincere and are leading to genuine democratization of the national life." (Mario Soares,

*Escritos Politicos*, Third Edition, Lisbon, 1969, p. 117.) Just try to imagine Felipe Gonzalez saying something like that about Carrero Blanco or Arias Navarro! (4) This comparison is by no means out of place. In the same book, Soares points to the law that Fraga Iribarne (5) was responsible for at the start of the 1960s as a model for freedom of the press. The other side of these positions is a neo-colonialist policy: "So, self-determination in no case means an abandonment [of the colonies] but rather solving a problem on the basis of a perspective essentially concerned with the future." (Ibid. p. 163.)

The SP leadership has been molded in this tradition. Before the fall of the dictatorship the party had no mass influence. However, by taking advantage of its international connections and its membership in the Second International and by identifying itself with the fight for democracy, it managed to channel the political activity of a large section of the workers in the post-April 25 period.

Like the PCP, the SP in the first phase adapted to the Spínolista government. But it did not take the lead in criticizing the strike mobilizations. It did not have the strength or authority to do that. It limited itself to supporting the government. One of the SP ministers, Raul Rego, who held the portfolio for communications, agreed to the fining of its own newspaper (*Republica*) for printing reports about the refusal of two officers to obey orders in repressing the postal workers strike. But in this period it was the PCP that proved most useful in the government, a fact that went unchallenged even by the United States.

## Lessons of a setback

In the second stage, facing the growing crisis of the MFA and the upsurge of the masses, it was the SP that staffed the trenches to defend the state against "anarcho-populism." And to this end, it allied itself with all the forces of the right. Upholding the sovereignty of the Constituent Assembly was an aspect of the SP's policy but not the only one. It agreed to a pact with the MFA in 1975 and then to a second one in February 1976. These accords determined the organization of the political power, what the members of the Constituent Assembly had to approve about the government and the presidency, and later gave the presidency to the victor of November 25, General Eanes. In fact, Eanes was to play a political role quite independent of the SP. It was with the MFA that the SP hoped to be able to push the PCP to the sidelines and restore the authority of the state. In fact, it could not have accomplished this without the support of the military hierarchy. It was Jaime Nevers' tanks that finally resolved the "question of the state," as Melo Antunes euphemistically termed it.

The SP played its most important role beginning after November 25. It was, as the words of Chico Buarque's song say,

to "put everything back where it belongs." But that's another story. It is enough to note that one of the present SP ministers, Eduardo Pereira, has declared proudly that "the SP is managing to do what the right was incapable of doing." (*Expresso*, October 1, 1983.) He is right.

For many people, the Portuguese revolution was a mirage of May 1968. Moreover, in defeat Spínola looked like a combination of Prince Lvov and a pitiful version of Kornilov. The soldiers with carnations in the barrels of their rifles also revived memories of the Russian revolution. All the gradualist theses were encouraged by the successes of 1974-1975. It appeared possible to occupy the power bit by bit without seizing it in a decisive move. A strange, progressive MFA led some people to mix up Portugal with Peru. In fact, there was no end of analogies — with the role of the army in Peru, with the dangers shown in Chile, with the workers movement in Spain, with the bourgeoisie in dependent countries and on and on.

The Portuguese revolution has to be understood in the context of the special conditions created by the crisis of the dictatorship and of a colonial empire maintained by an industrialized capitalist structure, which was however subordinate to stronger imperialisms. This, to a certain extent, is what I was referring to before. The Portuguese revolution was sort of a bridge between the French May 1968 and the African revolution. It had aspects of both, and a lot of aspects that were peculiar to it alone. There is no doubt that a national reality cannot be reduced to a "unique combination of factors operating internationally."

Most of all, the Portugal revolution stands in relation to an unknown factor — the European revolution. For many decades the center of gravity of the world proletariat, Europe has become an enigma for the revolution. Since the second world war, the establishment of a workers state in Yugoslavia and the formation of the bureaucratically deformed states in East Europe, there has been no concrete experience in Europe to bring us closer to the problems faced in taking power. There have been two prerevolutionary crises in which the tendency toward the development of dual-power organs exerted a pressure but did not come to fruition (France in 1968, Portugal in 1975). There have also been innumerable acute political crises that did not lead to an open struggle for power. Overall, these experiences seem to offer

4. At the time Felipe Gonzalez was still trying to give a left face to a Spanish Socialist Party (PSOE) that had not yet been legalized or established itself. Carrero Blanco was Franco's designated heir, who was assassinated in 1973. Carlos Arias Navarro, Franco's son-in-law, was minister of the state administration under Carrero Blanco and succeeded him as head of government on January 4, 1974.

5. The leader of the Alianza Popular, as well as long time Francoist leader. This rightist pro-Franco formation has become the major bourgeois party in Spain, following the collapse of former Premier Suarez's Democratic Center Union. — IV.





Ralis soldiers join demonstration (DR)

negative, rather than positive indications about the possibility of revolution in Europe.

The Portuguese revolution did little to help answer these questions. This is above all for one reason: It developed in the context of the crisis of a dictatorship and not out of the contradictions of a bourgeois democratic state, which has been the fundamental mechanism for wiping out previous revolutionary advances.

However, it is clear that the years of the Portuguese revolution posed two fundamental questions:

The Portuguese revolution confirmed once again that the natural form of *spontaneous* organization for the proletariat and its allies, in the context of an overall social crisis, is organs of direct democracy, which make it possible for the masses to participate concretely in decision making and to confront the ruling class effectively. In Portugal, they were called Workers Commissions. In the fall of 1975 this process broadened to include forms of coordination on the local level with unions and neighborhood committees. This tendency was evident from the first days, since the first days, since the giant demonstration of May 1, 1974. But it took long months to firmly establish itself and begin to create a national structure. At the same time, the development of class consciousness showed a great unevenness. So, it was essential to

have mediations. The lack of this left the way open for illusions in the MFA, the notion that the MFA would facilitate the advance of this movement without any great conflict for a period. And to prepare the ground for such mediations, what was needed was a previous experience, a "dress rehearsal." This was essential for forming a vanguard with a continuity of organization and tradition.

A national system of dual power was the decisive precondition for combining the uneven advances in class consciousness and challenging reformist hegemony. The Portuguese crisis got as far as this turn in the road. It can be said that if indeed power is harder to win but easier to hold in the "West," creating such a system of dual power is also more difficult. The relative facility with which this process proceeded in Portugal reflects the peculiar and exceptional character of our prerevolutionary crisis, in which the most advanced feature was precisely the crisis of the apparatus of rule.

To overcome the barriers to developing a system of dual power in the face of an integrated political, ideological and repressive apparatus is a challenge that the European revolution has not yet met.

The second question has to do with the conditions for forming a revolutionary vanguard. It became clear that while socialism was indeed on the agenda in Portugal in the summer of 1975 there were not the forces for launching a strike for power. The immediate task was still

to develop the embryonic forms of workers power within bourgeois society. There was no coherent vanguard force. Neither the far left of the time, nor the left wing of the MFA, nor still less the PCP represented such a force. However, the existence of such a force before the social explosion was a precondition for such an upsurge to go forward. Obviously, this does not mean a small organization but an already constituted party with an already established weight in the relationship of forces within the workers movement. If this feature had been present, it would have been possible to confront a situation in which the conditions for building a revolutionary party could go through rapid transformations thereby making possible qualitative leaps, which would of necessity have modified the form, structure and perspectives of the original nucleus.

It is hard to see how any party capable of leading a revolution can develop without going through such processes, a party capable of integrating into itself, and integrating itself into, the various forms of social and political radicalization that arise, such as currents in the unions, the reformist parties and the social movements. This also implies a revolutionary nucleus that can understand and carry out this task. All those who lived through the Portuguese crisis of 1974-1975 can easily understand the enormous possibilities that were revealed then for an advance toward this goal. ■



# AROUND THE WORLD



## 'Fourth Internationalist Tendency' formed in US

*This article was published in the Bulletin In Defense of Marxism, New York, No 4, March 1984. It has been abridged.*

On the weekend of February 3-5, expelled Socialist Workers Party (SWP) members from several cities met in Minneapolis, [Minnesota] in response to the January 17 call for the formation of a Fourth Internationalist Tendency. As a result of recommendations from this meeting and subsequent decisions by local groups, the F.I.T. was constituted as a national organization and has local committees functioning in nine cities. Its members are discussing final formulations of the F.I.T. platform, to be printed in *Bulletin* No. 5.

The members of the F.I.T. all agree that its political priority is to participate in the absolutely essential process of theoretical and programmatic discussion which has been placed on the agenda by the [SWP] leadership's attack on Trotskyism. Always in the past, when revolutionary Marxists have been faced with a fundamental programmatic challenge of this kind, the response has been to subordinate everything else to a defense of our theory.

This is because we understand that the program *is* the party, and defense of the party means first and foremost a fight to defend the program. Nothing else the party does, important as it may be, can actually lead to our goal — the overthrow of class society and the initiation of a new era of human solidarity and liberation — if we lose sight of the basic lessons of the past codified in the historic program of the SWP and the Fourth International.

The last time our movement in the United States faced a challenge of the same theoretical scope as the one presented today by the Barnes leadership was during the 1939-40 fight against the petty-bourgeois opposition of Burnham-Shachtman-Abern. At that time the response of Trotsky and Cannon was the same as we propose today — mobilize the ranks of the party, take on the programmatic challenge as our number one priority, and defeat the revisionists politically.

In the 1939-40 struggle the proletarian Marxist current was a majority in the party leadership and ranks, although a slim majority. Today we are, at least so far, a small and persecuted minority. The

active and most conscious supporters of Trotskyism have been expelled, and the leadership has substituted a campaign of slander and personal vilification for infomed political discussion and debate. All of this makes our task more difficult and changes the forms that our programmatic and theoretical struggle will take. But it does not alter the basic content of the fight that must be waged to maintain the SWP as a revolutionary party.

The F.I.T. does not want to put any organizational barriers in the way of the necessary discussion of political program with the members of the SWP. We are *not* trying to build a new organization in opposition to or as a substitute for the SWP. We have, however, been forced to organize ourselves outside the party because we have been bureaucratically expelled. In each city where supporters of our tendency exist we are constituting local organizing committees. We have also elected a National Organizing Com-

mittee and three national coordinators to help organize our work and to guarantee that we function in a cohesive and centralized fashion.

The F.I.T. campaigns for readmission into the party of our tendency members and of all others unjustly expelled for their political views as part of the leadership purge. We have endorsed the *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism* which was started in December by Frank Lovell, and we will continue to publish it and other materials as our major contribution to the discussion in the SWP and the Fourth International. Other priorities will be our own education and the circulation of *International Viewpoint*, the biweekly magazine that reflects the views of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.

We plan to actively support and participate in the public campaigns of the SWP, most importantly the 1984 Mason-Gonzalez election campaign, but also in defense work, *Militant* sales, forums, etc. And we hope to work in a fraternal way with party members who participate in their unions, in Central America and Caribbean solidarity work, women's liberation activities, the Black struggle, and other mass movements where we too will be present and active. ■

## Sri Lankan women workers defend living standards

Thirteen hundred women workers are presently in struggle in the Polytex textile factory in Sri Lanka, the largest textile factory in the neighbourhood of the Colombo free trade zone. This strike is led by the Industrial Transport and General Workers Union.

Polytex is controlled by big Ceylonese and Hong Kong firms. Since 1978 Chinese technicians have been training the women workers to produce quality textiles for export to Europe and the US.

In December 1982 the workers, 95% of whom are women, went on strike for a wage increase to 22 rupees a day, and a bonus for reaching the quota. The demands were won and the strike ended in mid-January 1983. An important factor in its success was the international solidarity achieved.

A new conflict erupted in 1983 when management refused to recognise that production goals had been met, and thus to pay the bonus of 100 rupees per month. They also demanded that the union agree not to oppose disciplinary action against workers who do not reach the production goals.

Management then began a campaign of harassment, sending warning letters to the employees. On February 15, 1984 they sacked 7 women union activists.

The women went on strike two days later. Their main demands are for the payment of the, as yet unpaid, monthly bonus; a daily rate of pay of 30 rupees and reinstatement of the 7 women.

This conflict has obviously been provoked by management to smash the union. Management says that the government is primarily concerned with 'protecting' foreign investors from the organised workers movement — in the free trade zone strikes are forbidden.

The union has appealed for international support and financial aid, as it is not able to pay so many strikers for very long. Send letters of support to the striking women: C/O Industrial Transport and General Workers Union, 53 Rajamalwatte Road, Colombo 15. Letters of protest to: Mr Sohly Captain, Managing Director, Polytex Garments Ltd, Hemas Building, 3rd Floor, Colombo 1; and Minister of Labour, Labour Secretariat, Colombo 5. ■

## Uruguayan PST-U asks for recognition as Fourth International section

The second congress of the Socialist Workers Party of Uruguay (PST-U) took place last January. The first point on the agenda was the question of the international affiliation of the organisation.

Representatives of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, and the International Committee (IC), led by Pierre Lambert's Internationalist Communist Party in France, were invited to the conference. The PST-U leadership considers the split from the Fourth International by the Lambert current, and that led by Nahuel Moreno with which it was itself associated, in 1979 as irresponsible, although it considers there have been recent positive developments in the political line of the IC. By a large majority it agreed to ask for recognition as the Uruguayan section of the Fourth International at the next world congress.

The congress took place only a few days after the January 18 general strike and in a situation very marked by the vigorous rise of the mass movement over the last year. The organisation decided to integrate the PST-U into the Frente Amplio at every level. This broad front first appeared at the time of the 1971 elections. Marking an attempt to break with the traditional two party system of Uruguay, it won over 20 per cent of the votes, and was the largest minority in the capital, Montevideo. It reappeared in November 1983 in the upsurge of the mass movement and the reorganisation of the trade-union movement. Composed of the Communist Party, the Socialist Party, Christian Democracy and a grouping known as the Independent Left, the Frente Amplio also has 20 local committees in Montevideo.

Against the transitional plan put forward by the dictatorship for the period until the November elections, the PST-U counterposes the demand for the immediate re-establishment of all democratic, political and trade-union freedoms, a general amnesty with no exceptions, punishment of torturers and the calling of a Constituent Assembly. Instead of the bourgeoisie's plans for a national agreement and social pact, it puts forward workers demands, wage increases in line with inflation, rehiring of all those laid off and non-payment of the foreign debt. The PST-U is working to build the PIT (inter-union coordinating body that called the general strike) as the single workers federation, in the tradition of the National Workers Convention (CNT), banned by the dictatorship over ten years ago.

On organisational questions the congress showed itself to be firm but open. Firm in categorically and unanimously condemning the campaign of calumnies directed at two PST-U leaders by the

Moreno current. As this current refused to accept the international commission of enquiry proposed by the PST-U, the congress demanded that it stop this campaign and make a public self criticism. The congress showed itself open in inviting all

## The ORM(DS) of Brazil asks to affiliate to Fourth International

The second congress of the Revolutionary Marxist Organisation (Socialist Democracy) [ORM(DS)] took place in March 1984.

The organisation was founded in 1981. It is the result of a process of revolutionary regroupment on the basis of two fundamental criteria: programmatic agreement on the key questions in the class struggle, and practical agreement in building the PT.

The different elements now organised in the ORM(DS) were the first of all the revolutionary groups to commit themselves wholeheartedly to building the PT as an independent workers party, organised at the grass roots in groups of activists. Building a revolutionary party with mass influence in Brazil requires combining the work of building the PT with bringing together all the revolutionary Marxists. This is neither an entryist orientation, nor simply a tactical relationship to the PT, but a real effort to build a militant mass party. This conception was reconfirmed by the second congress of the ORM(DS) at the same time as the discussion of a first balancesheet of the PT and the new tasks on the agenda.

By a large majority, the congress also took the decision to ask for recognition as the Brazilian section of the Fourth International. The ORM(DS) — and before that the different groups that came together to form it — have had fraternal and active relations with the Fourth International for several years. The decision to join the Fourth International is thus the logical outcome of this process of collaboration.

Two debates particularly stood out concerning the political situation today in Brazil. Firstly, on the situation in the trade-union movement, given the split that took place in 1983 between the CUT (United Confederation of Workers), led by unionists linked to the PT, and the Congress of the Working Class (Conclat) which is organised by Communist Party activists and a section of the 'pelego' union bureaucracy, symbolised by the bureaucrat Joaquim de Andrade, presi-

dent of the metalworkers union in Sao Paulo, the most powerful trade union in Latin America.

dent of the metalworkers union in Sao Paulo, the most powerful trade union in Latin America.

This congress demonstrated the existence of a party forged by ten years of opposition to the dictatorship. Particularly to its credit are the strong workers implantation and the regular publication, over six years, in the country itself, of a journal that has now reached its 46th issue. ■

The other debate concerned the current campaign for 'direct' presidential elections, which concentrated on the dictatorship's plans for transition towards a controlled democracy.

On the trade-union front, the ORM(DS) decided to make a priority of strengthening the CUT as a tool for the struggle of the most combative sections of the union movement. At the same time, it reaffirmed the need for unity in action with the reformist bureaucratised forces of the Conclat, and a reunification congress of the two confederations that are being built. The division, deliberately provoked by the bureaucrats and reformists of the CP when they found themselves in a minority on the eve of the second congress of the working class and the foundation of a real united confederation, does not aid the combative forces, contrary to the naive belief of many of the CUT union activists.

This division is rather an obstacle to the organisation and mobilisation of a new general strike, bigger than that of June 1983 (see *International Viewpoint*, No 39, October 31, 1983).

Within the campaign for direct elections the ORM(DS) argues for going further in the slogans directed towards a democratic break with the dictatorship. It particularly emphasises the call for a free, sovereign constituent assembly. It also puts forward the need to constitute a popular and workers bloc in the country around the most urgent demand of the masses: repealing the 1983 decrees on freezing wages; a radical agricultural reform; a break with the International Monetary Fund, by the non-recognition of the foreign debt, starting by declaring a unilateral moratorium on repayment. The masses should participate in the campaign for direct elections with their own candidate, the main workers leader in the country, Luis Inacao da Silva, 'Lula'. This will be the proposal of the ORM(DS) members at the PT convention in April. ■

## Danish peace movement defends Nicaragua

The first in Western Europe to stop the new nuclear missiles, the Danish peace movement has also taken the lead in defense of Nicaragua. Its position can have an important impact on the antimissiles movement in other countries.

It was in the B-and-W shipyard canteen. The entire hall was alive with excitement. People got up from their chairs, and a roar of applause greeted the dark man in a striped suit who had just gone to the podium. He had not yet said anything, and anyway it could not have been heard. The crowd's sympathy for him, or more precisely for the cause and the country he represented, was simply so overwhelming that they had to express it by clapping in unison.

And the sympathy was returned. For a moment, his face lost its gravity and it shone with happiness and appreciation. From the speakers' stand, he clapped back at his unknown friends in the chairs below.

His name was Jorge Jenkins. He was the ambassador to Stockholm of the Nicaraguan workers and peasants, and the day was the midpoint of the biggest conference of the peace movement yet held in Denmark. His presence in itself in the B-and-W canteen that Sunday afternoon where over 900 peace activists, mainly from the unions, were gathered showed the development that has taken place in the Danish peace movement.

The peace movement is no longer only concerned about the stepup in the nuclear arms race. It has also begun to take the anti-imperialist struggle seriously, in particular the fight that the Nicaraguan workers and peasants are waging.

Jorge Jenkins had no doubts about it. After a two-minute standing ovation, he went to the microphone, and all around the room you could hear people calling for quiet. Suddenly, the canteen fell silent.

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*"Companeros! Kammerater!*

On behalf of my people and of the Sandinista revolution, I thank you for your expression of solidarity. It is a great pleasure for me to be able to be with you today to share with you our concern for peace in the world.

Many of you may ask what connection there is between the danger of a nuclear war in Europe and the war in Central America.

The answer is that both dangers have the same source. It is the aggressive Reagan administration in Washington that

is endangering peace and creating conflicts everywhere in the world.

The government that is now installing deadly first-strike weapons in Western Europe is the same one that invaded Grenada and is waging war in the Middle East and in Central America, right now in El Salvador and Nicaragua.

In this same aggressive attitude, the administration in Washington is taking the liberty of using violence against independent nations such as Nicaragua, whose harbors it has mined. The Reagan administration in fact has become so insolent that — even though it has an ambassador in Nicaragua and we have one in Washington — it is openly discussing how many million dollars it should give to support the contras who are terrorizing the people of Nicaragua.

Now, I ask you. What kind of confidence can you have in such people? Adventurist, greedy, grasping people that they are, they have thrown everything into regaining the military prestige that they lost in Vietnam.

In the last year alone, about twelve hundred people were killed in Nicaragua in armed clashes with the contras. The material losses mounted up to 300 mil-



lion dollars.

But in spite of all the outrages and aggression, the people of Nicaragua and the Sandinista front are determined to hold the first free election in the history of our country. And we are prepared to support all the efforts for peace made by the so-called Contadora group. Likewise, we are determined to continue our program of democratization in Nicaragua. [Applause.]

The problem in Central America does not lie in El Salvador or Nicaragua but in the United States, where an aggressive regime has flatly rejected all peace proposals in favor of a military solution.

In Nicaragua, a revolution is underway that is changing the society from top to bottom. This process is an example for many other peoples who would like to be in a similar situation. So, Nicaragua is not alone. A concrete example is the group of Danes who have come to Nicaragua to mount a peace watch on our border with Honduras. I would like you to clap for these people who are risking their lives to show solidarity with Nicaragua. [Applause.]

By their example they are showing that Nicaragua does not stand alone. They are helping Nicaragua preserve the peace in our region. This is an example that will always be remembered in Nicaragua and in Denmark.

We are a small country that has been forced to defend ourselves and our revolution. And let it be clear. We are prepared to defend our revolution for as long as need be. But it should be stressed that our arming is for defense. The war we are waging now is one that has been forced on us.

The Nicaraguan people are a peaceful people. They have fought for forty years to get where we are today. We will not give that up. We will fight to keep what we have gained. How can we do otherwise when more than 50,000 Nicaraguans lost their lives in the last phase of our struggle for liberation.

The best kind of war is one that does not happen. Civilized nations are trying to solve conflicts in the world through negotiations. Nicaragua is trying to follow the peaceful road.

*Patria o Muerte! Our country or death!"*

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Then the crowd exploded again. The 900 participants in the conference rose spontaneously and clapped in unison. There was no doubt about their sympathy. The Danish peace movement supports the Nicaraguan people's struggle against imperialism, for social justice and human dignity.

The participants in the conference adopted a resolution of support for Nicaragua. They demanded that Denmark immediately increase its aid to the country. And they voted to turn over the surplus in the conference funds, 5,500 Crowns [about 500 US dollars] to the Peace Watch Initiative. ■