AFRICAN CULTURE
Transubstantiated Modernity

third world

Bimonthly • Number 24 • February 1990 • US$2 • NCz$ 60,00 • ₦5

Peru: Setting an Uncertain Course

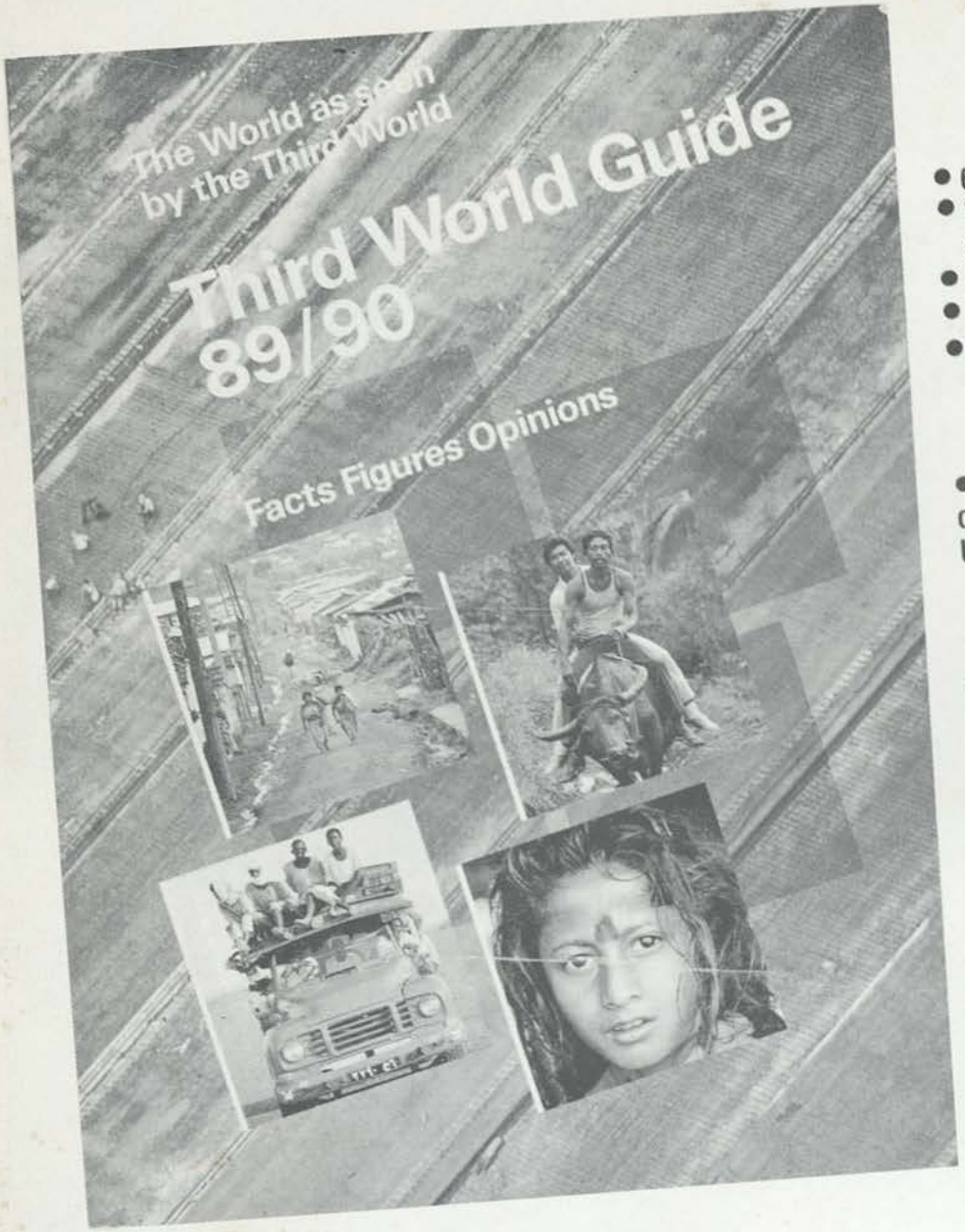
Alfonso Barrantes

Vargas Llosa

Abimael Guzmán

Left, Right or the Shining Path?

A Revolutionary Reference Work



- 628 pages • 275 maps
- 10,000 references • A special section on each country
- Biographies • Bibliography
- Problems and Perspectives
- Current issues

- "Contains a naked portrait of reality." – Eduardo Galeano, Uruguayan writer

- "Thoroughly researched and well presented." – Walter Bgoya, Tanzania Publishing House

- "For as long as I remember, we have been talking about the need for such a guide." – T. Rajamoorthy, Penang, Malaysia

Special Offer

Order the Third World Guide along with *third world* magazine and save over 10 percent.

Third World Guide only ---------- US$ 25
Third World Guide and a one-year subscription to *third world* magazine ---------- US$ 30 (save US$ 4)
Third World Guide and a two-year subscription to *third world* magazine ---------- US$ 35 (save US$ 5)

Name: ---------- Institution: ----------
Address: ----------
City: ---------- State/Province ----------
Country: ----------

Mail to:
Third World
Subscription Dept.
Rua da Gloria, 122, gr. 105
20241 Rio de Janeiro, RJ – Brazil

CONTENTS

Presidents-elect: Brazil's Collor, Chile's Aylwin and Uruguay's Lacalle

"Mechanical troubles" in Afghanistan

New-style non-alignment

EDITORIAL

The Invasion

It was almost a surreal way to end two of the most fruitful years for advances in international relations and democracy. But the North Americans did it: they invaded Panama.

It may seem surrealistic, but it isn't. In fact, it is consistent with U.S. behavior historically. President George Bush is just the most recent U.S. pirate to raid the Central American and Caribbean region.

Of course, General Manuel Noriega – the invasion's declared target and the focal point of its propaganda – was just a poorly disguised pretext. When its interests are at stake, the U.S. is happy to live with dictators, as it did in Chile, and even with big-time drug runners. If the White House believed that Noriega would allow the U.S. to maintain control over the Panama Canal – thus running in the face of a treaty that mandates a completely different scenario – he would still be in office, perhaps still receiving a salary from the Central Intelligence Agency.

But Noriega was determined to see that Omar Torrijos' dream of bringing the canal under Panamanian control became a reality. Thus, he was viewed as a member of the drug mafia who should be tried in the U.S.

The resistance to the invasion – in the face of impossible odds – demonstrated that many Panamanians understood the stakes: their independence. Bush, drunk with his apparent power, may have underestimated that resistance and the resulting cost in North American dead and wounded.

But one thing is certain: his stature as a world leader, a serious player in peace negotiations, has been diminished. Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev will begin to think twice about North American good faith, while democrats in Eastern Europe, many inspired by the North American example, will recoil. And Bush no longer has the moral right to denounce anybody else's invasions.

The old image of Yankee imperialism is now at high tide. "Yankee Go Home!" is once again a popular and timely slogan. Washed away are the hopes of a U.S. policy concerned with human rights and international law, hopes that have been encouraged during the Gorbachev era.

In one of his last interviews before dying in a mysterious helicopter crash in 1981, Torrijos told me that he expected the North Americans to try to back out of the canal agreement. "They'll try everything, even the use of force," he predicted. He then warned: "The canal is a defenseless child that can be easily destroyed. The gringos aren't familiar with the spirit of struggle of our people."

Neiva Moreira, Publisher

LETTERS

Attack on the other Israel

Adam Keller, editor of **The Other Israel** *and a sometime contributor to* **third world**, *received a call-up order from the Israeli military requiring him to participate in maneuvers. He has sent the order back to his reserve unit.*

Should the order not be canceled, Keller will present himself on the specified date and repeat his refusal to the mobilizing officer in person. He is then likely to be imprisoned, for a period which may also depend on the amount of publicity and solidarity his case receives in Israel and internationally.

Arrangements will be made to ensure the continuity of the publication for **The Other Israel**.

Letters can be sent to: Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin, Hakirya, Tel-Aviv, Israel: and/or to the Commanding Officer, Reserve Unit, Military postal code 03246, Israeli Defense Forces, Israel. Please send copies to: P.O. Box 956, Tel-Aviv 61008, Israel.

The Editorial Board
The Other Israel
Tel-Aviv, Israel

Debt Cancellation

The Berne Declaration Group is a public interest organization active in the Swiss solidarity movement for more than 20 years. We are happy to inform you about a new and rather special debt policy action which took place. On November 20, 1989, 50 individuals who had taken up personal loans from Swiss banks formed a Swiss debtors' cartel and repudiated paying back their loans to the banks. As the debt of the Third World has already been paid, they will instead pay them back to the debtor countries of the Third World. This is meant as a symbolic act of compensation and protest against the illegitimate capital drain from the Third World through the debt service payments. More specifically, the participants will put their loans into a fund for supporting NGOs active on the debt issue in Third World countries which have been afflicted by the debt policies of the Swiss banks.

Also we would like to support, and cooperate with, representative organizations in the South which are active for just solutions of the debt question within their countries.

Peter Bosshard
Berne Declaration Group
P.O. Box 177
8031 Zurich, Switzerland

Romania revisited

A letter you sent to subscribers implies that readers were annoyed about the Romania ad (editor's note: the publication, **Romania: Special Issue** *that was sent to the* **third world** *mailing list) because they thought they were paying for it. Actually, I assumed the government was picking up the tab, but I was annoyed anyway, just because the whole thing was an insult to my intelligence. There was certainly enough news and commentary in the world press, including the alternative media, about the brutal and despotic nature of the Ceausescu dictatorship to make the advertising supplement*

entirely incredible. Thus I for one was not suffering from any "misconception," "confusion," or "inconvenience," but rather a sense of disappointment that **third world** *would be associated in any way with such garbage, regardless of who was footing the bill.*

Frankly, I am not persuaded that "the journalistic integrity of **third world** *has not been compromised." Does* **third world** *plan to bite the hand that has now fed it by running any critical articles on the apparently appalling economic and human-rights record of the former Romanian government? The fact that your "disclaimer" was so weak as to be almost unrecognizable does not inspire confidence. On a similar note, you owe it to your readers (or at least this skeptical one) to explain whether the Iraqi government has in any way subsidized your journalists' travel to that country and the subsequent production of a series of puff pieces that managed to wholly ignore serious and credible allegations of gross human-rights violations during the recent war, including alleged use of poison gas to kill thousands of Kurdish dissidents. Absent such clarifications, and more balanced journalism, I'm afraid your credibility will indeed suffer. The Romania controversy is a symptom of a general problem I believe you need to address.*

Ted Stroll
San Francisco, California, U.S.A.

History

I frequently purchase **third world**, *but I have some difficulties understanding articles on the Middle East: Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Iran/Iraq, the PLO, Israel, etc. I understood, for example, the cover story on Iraq (August 1989) in terms of the conflict between Iran and Iraq, Iraq's victory, its current situation, its power and its reconstruction. But I remain ignorant in relation to the rest, that is, references that relate the Iran/Iraq case with the rest of the nations and organizations of the region. I don't know what Egypt, over there in Africa, has to do with the case, for example.*

I lack a historical base, and I think this is probably common among **third world** *readers.*

I suggest, then, that the magazine do an article (or several articles), including helpful maps, that will better explain the history. Understanding history, we can better interpret current events.

Joano Sobrinho
Belo Horizonte, Brazil

Editor's Note: The *Third World Guide*, **our biannual almanac, does just this. The guide can be ordered by using the coupon provided in the advertisement in this issue.**

Women in Iraq

I want to compliment you for the outstanding quality of the articles published in your magazine. With each edition, we, the readers, have the opportunity to better understand the problems faced by the nations of the Third World. In the last issue, I particularly liked the article on women in Iraq, "Poetic Activism." The objective approach contributed to a more realistic vision of the role of women in certain sectors of Islamic society. Congratulations to journalist Beatriz Bissio.

Alzira Umbelino
Sabará, Brazil

500 years

The celebration of the 500th anniversary of the "discovery and conversion" of Latin America is taking shape. On the official level – that of governments and the church – the tone is triumphant. Large parties are being scheduled to celebrate the "Meeting of the Worlds" and "Missionary Work" that began with the conquest. Just to give an idea of the importance the church is giving to this event, the 4th conference of the Latin American Episcopal Council (CELAM), which should have taken place last year, was put off until 1992, in S. Domingos, considered to have been the first city founded by the Spanish on the continent.

We are already organizing around this event and welcome suggestions and participation. Among the proposals being considered are: (1) A Peoples Tribunal to judge the "500 years of Colonization and Missionary Work"; (2) A Resistance Party to celebrate five centuries of resistance and victories; (3) efforts to retake control of the land (especially for Indians and peasants); Popular Santo Domingos, to highlight the presence of 280 million Catholics on the continent during the CELAM meeting, a gathering of just 900 bishops.

Please contact us for more information. Participate with your group or community.

Creuza Maciel
Latin American Peace and Justice Service
Rua da Lapa, 180 - sala 1107
20021 Rio de Janeiro, RJ
Brazil

THIRD WORLD

Rua da Glória, 122, Gr. 105
20241 Rio de Janeiro, RJ – Brazil
Telephone: (021) 242-1957, (021) 222-1370 and (021) 252-7440
Telex: (021) 33054 CTM-BR
Electronic mailbox: Geonet: TERCEIRO-MUNDO

third world **is published by Editora Terceiro Mundo as a step towards establishing a New International Information Order. It contains information on and analysis of the conditions and aspirations of emerging nations. Separate editions are published in Spanish (Cuadernos del Tercer Mundo) and in Portuguese (Cadernos do Terceiro Mundo).**

Publisher: Neiva Moreira
Associate Publisher: Pablo Piacentini
Executive Editor: Beatriz Bissio
Associate Executive Editors: Roberto Remo Bissio, Procópio Mineiro
International Editorial Board: Darcy Ribeiro, Eduardo Galeano, Juan Somavía and Henry Pease García

THIRD WORLD (English Edition)
Editor: Bill Hinchberger
Associate Editor: Roberto Raposo
Business Manager: Andréa Moutinho da Costa Santos
Address: Rua da Glória, 122, Gr. 105
20241 Rio de Janeiro, RJ – Brazil

Art Department: Pedro Toste (editor). **Layout:** Dayse Vitoria and Reginaldo Caxias. **Art Department (contributors):** Adérito Gusmão, Alvaro Camello, Guilhermina Ferecê, Silvia Helena Pompeu. **Library:** Helena Falcão (head librarian), Isabel Falcão, Angélica Campello de Oliveira, Roberto de Oliveira Bastos and Walmir Peixoto. **Data Bank:** Raimundo José Macário Costa. **Data Entry and Composition:** Luzia Almeida Neiva and Lidio Marinho P. Luna. **Commercial Assistant:** Jozira Salgado Santos. **Comercial Department:** Henrique Menezes. **Distribution and Promotion:** Rafael Peres Borges and Carlos Alberto de Carvalho. **Distribution and advertising in Nigeria:** Emeka Goldwin and Associates, P.O. Box 1391, Sabo-Yaba, Lagos.

International Editorial Staff: Roberto Bardini (Mexico), Carlos Pinto Santos (Portugal), and Cristina Canoura (Uruguay)
Correspondents: Horacio Verbitsky (Argentina), Fernando Reyes Mata (Chile), Alejandra Adoum and Eduardo Khalifé (Ecuador), Aldo Gamboa (Cuba), Rafael Roncagliolo and César Arias Quincot (Peru), Guillermo Segovia Mora (Colombia), Etavaldo Hipolito (Mozambique) and Claude Alvarez (India).
Contributors: Abdul Nafey, Adrían Soto, Alberto Mariantoni, Ash Narain Roy, A.W. Singham, Carlos Avelino, Carlos Cardoso, Carlos Castilho, Carlos Núnez, Fernando Molina, Francesca Gargallo, Gérard Pierre-Charles, Gregorio Selser, Herbert de Souza, João Mello, Ladis au Dowbor, M. Venugopala Rao, Marcela Otero, Mario de Cautín, Mia Couto, Narinder Koshla, Nils Castro, Phill Harris, Ricardo Bueno, Roger Rumrill, Theotonio dos Santos, Medéa Benjamin, Jayme Brenner, Juan Carlos Gomucio, Adam Keller, Héctor Ramos, Marcelo Montenegro and Cedric Belfrage.

CADERNOS DO TERCEIRO MUNDO (Portuguese Edition)
Editor-in-Chief: Neiva Moreira
Editor: Procópio Mineiro
Correspondents: Paulo Cannabrava Filho (São Paulo), Clóvis Serra and Memélia Moreira (Brasília), José Carlos Gondim (Amazon)
Proofreading: Cléa Márcia Soares
Address: Rua da Glória, 122, Gr. 105
20241 Rio de Janeiro, RJ – Brazil

CUADERNOS DEL TERCER MUNDO (Spanish Edition)
Editor-in-Chief: Roberto Remo Bissio
Address: Miguel del Corro, 1461
Montevideo, Uruguay

third world has operational agreements with the following news agencies: Third World Network Features (Malaysia), Inter Press Service (Italy), ANGOP (Angola), AIM (Mozambique), SALPRESS (El Salvador), SHIHATA (Tanzania), WAFA (Palestine), Africa Press Clips (Austria), and Nueva Nicaragua (Nicaragua).

Photographs: Walter Santos, Hélio Santos, Agence France Presse, Reuters, Third World Network, the United Nations, and FAO.

Other photographs this issue: Maruska Freire Rameck (pages 37-38), Metavídeo (pages 39, 41-42), Eson Alves/Metavídeo (page 40).

Cover: Pedro Toste
Cover photo: Beatriz Bissio

SOUTHERN AFRICA

Migrant Pawns

Zimbabweans: on their way to South Africa?

South Africa appears to be winning a strategic economic war in which migrant workers are mere pawns.

Signs of this latest twist in the century-long joust between Pretoria and its neighbors over control of "surplus" labor come with news of the collapse of a regional labor organization and new aggressiveness on the part of South African contract negotiators.

Four nations provide contract labor to South Africa, mainly in mines and on farms: Lesotho, Swaziland, Mozambique and Botswana. Lesotho ranks first, with 113,000 miners who travel to work for periods of nine months to two years. Thousands more work in other sectors. About 10 percent of Lesotho's population works in South Africa, and they send home remittances and deferred pay equal to 70 percent of the nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Mozambique provides 47,000 workers, mainly in agriculture. Swaziland has been getting contracts for 17,500 workers, mainly miners. Botswana also provides labor for the mines.

All four governments are under pressure to sign new contracts that would give more leverage and power to South Africa, providing an opportunity for destabilization while countering plans for economic independence by the Southern Africa Development Coordinating Conference (SADCC) - consisting of Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

On the migrant labor front, the nine SADCC nations have been negotiating jointly through the Southern African Labor Conference (SALC) since 1980. They have tried to standardize their agreements with Pretoria. These accords regulate aspects of the labor flow, including pay and conditions, recruiting and quotas, family support and compulsory savings plans, documentation, health considerations and transport.

Since 1980, SALC's aim was to eliminate labor export in the long run, and to improve income and conditions for governments and migrants alike in the interim.

Far from forming a labor cartel, the SALC has become a symbol of weakness. Despite a series of 10 conferences during the 1980s, the SALC has failed to take any concerted action. At first, the group widened its mandate several times. Then, at the 1989 meeting of SALC-member ministers, it voted to transform SALC into a tripartite body with representatives of governments, trade unions and employers. That decision effectively ends SALC as an association of migrant-sending countries.

The four governments on the frontline of the migrant labor battle have been left to deal with South Africa on their own. And Pretoria is in a good bargaining position with its swelling labor force and the prospect of a significant labor reduction in the mines due to mechanization.

AIA

NIGERIA

Mangroves Celebrate: It's a Gas

If the rich mangrove forests that so abundantly line more than three-quarters of Nigeria's 920-kilometer coast of marshland and swamp could celebrate, they would hail the new move to explore what government officials in Lagos fondly call "the gas alternative."

The debt-burdened Nigerian government moved last year to harness the country's rich natural gas deposits. It signed a US$300-million, five-year contract with European gas interests, who will soon begin lifting natural gas in the first phase of Nigeria's new multi-billion dollar venture into the world's gas market.

Official estimates have put Nigeria's gas reserves at about 2,500 billion cubic meters - three times more than the country's crude oil reserves, which rank first in Africa.

Over the past 25 years, petroleum prospectors flared away natural gas to get rid of it and reach the oil. No large projects to make use of the gas existed in the country. Initial moves to harness the vast gas deposits for export to Europe in 1965 floundered when gas was discovered in the North Sea. The local market was not developed enough to sustain commercial investment.

In the early 1980s, oil prospectors in Nigeria found more than 17.5 billion cubic meters of natural gas. Some 3.1 billion cubic meters - about 18 percent - was burned off. Corrosive fumes filled the air, choking trees to death, while searing flames killed sensitive seedlings.

Since then, however, gas prices have been rising on the world energy market. This, together with a strong new local domestic and industrial demand for gas, indicates natural gas may become Nigeria's prime product in the next five years.

This is good news for mangroves. They originally spanned some 50,000 square kilometers - five percent of Nigeria's total area. Estimates are still vague about the amount of mangrove forest lost because of gas flaring.

The Nigerian Conservation Fund - affiliated with the Worldwide Fund for Nature - estimates as much as 20,000 square kilometers of the mangrove have already been lost.

O'uevn Ogunseitan (Panos)

The results of war and drought

SUDAN

Famine

After 250,000 people died of war-induced famine in southern Sudan in 1988, the western regions of Kordofan and Darfur are now also threatened with starvation.

Reports coming in from the two regions say famine is threatening at least six million people. Rainfall has been sparse in northern Kordofan and northern Darfur. In the southern parts of the two regions, the rains that have fallen have not been evenly distributed, leadding to a drastic reduction in cultivatable land. In some areas, a third of the land is now useless.

Swarms of grasshoppers continue to plague the area. There are also security problems in the south of the two regions and many people have abandoned their farms in search of safety.

Alfred Taban (Panos)

GHANA

Baby Show

Mothers and their babies are on parade in hospitals and clinics in the West African nation of Ghana. A panel selects the healthiest babies, whose mothers win awards.

This is one novel method devised by Ghana's Ministry of Health to promote primary health care and immunization. Toddlers between the ages of nine and 11 months are eligible.

"We hold these baby shows to find out the health conditions of children," explained Sister Janet Ahenkorang, a nurse in Accra. "We also want to find out if the children have been immunized against the six child-killer diseases – diphtheria, polio, measles, whooping cough, tuberculosis and tetanus. This will help us reach our target of immunizing at least 80 percent of children in the country."

Panelists – health professionals, educators, child psychologists and local social engineers – examine the general appearance of the children and take their vital health statistics. They also consider factors like whether the child was delivered by trained and qualified health personnel and if the child has been immunized against the six child-killer diseases at the appropriate times.

In Ghana, child welfare clinics teach mothers the fundamentals of child care. And the Baby Shows are also a final exam of sorts. Mothers answer questions on subjects like the preparation of oral rehydration salt, the importance of breastfeeding, the right weaning period, as well as basic hygiene and family planning. Test results are factored into the judges' results.

Community leaders such as chiefs, politicians and women leaders are included on the panels to win local support.

The baby lunch boxes, cups, spoons, towels, powder, oral rehydration salts and family planning contraceptives awarded to the winners may appear to offer little incentive. But the mothers of winning babies reap social benefits, and most enter the competition well-prepared.

Daniel Mensah Brande.

ROMANIA

Last but Not Least

Romania was the last Eastern European country to follow in the footsteps of the Soviet perestroika. Supporters of the now deposed and executed Nicolae Ceausescu boasted that Romania had remained aloof from reform because of the regime's widespread support. Critics pointed instead to the government's particular version of authoritarianism, which stifled popular protest. The latter were proven correct.

The violence unleased by Ceausescu's police in the regime's waning days was reminiscent of the worst Stalinist outbursts.

The reforms in Eastern Europe are not the work of reactionaries or the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency – though such folks are surely near the scene. Rather they reflect the desire of the people to guarantee that certain actions are not taken in the name of socialism – the suppression of liberty, the violation of human rights, nepotism, corruption, etc. – things that have nothing to do with socialism.

The Romanian government practiced these vices – as did others of the region. And tanks could not keep Ceausescu in power forever.

The authoritarian socialist model has been condemned to death, falling along with its most persistant adherent. The revolution touched off by Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev is not a capitalist one, but an effort to strengthen socialism by adding an important component – democracy. An element essential to social justice.

Neiva Moreira

Sweeping away the Ceausescu regime

Ecological kiss in Brazil

ENVIRONMENT

Earth Day

In Ghana, children are preparing to plant trees. In India, a mass kickoff rally attracted 50,000, and the country is in a flurry of activity. In Taiwan, professional environmental engineers are mobilizing. Costa Rica's President Oscar Arias has joined the board of directors. The Colombian National Coffee Federation is spreading the word to its 15,000 members.

Why all the ruckus? It is part of the global recognition of the world's environmental plight. It is Earth Day 1990, scheduled for April 22.

Through January, over 1,000 organizations in more than 115 countries had pledged their support and participation. Many are local groups that will sponsor seminars or small-scale tree-planting outings. At the same time, they are coordinating their actions in national and international umbrella groups that will, in many cases, have a life after Earth Day.

Information on activities in your area can be obtained from: Earth Day 1990, P.O. Box AA, Stanford University, California 94309, U.S.A.

ISRAEL/CHINA

Censoring the FAX

Facsimile (better known as fax) machines were first conceived for the rapid and accurate transmission of financial and business documents. But, as always, liberation movements have found a way to adapt technology designed to serve the powerful to fit their own particular needs. And, of course, those ever-vigilant representatives of the powerful – repressive governments – are doing all they can to quell this high-tech turn to information democracy.

Israel made the first move. Muzzling the Palestinian people is all in a day's work for the Israeli military, so nobody was too surprised

Baloons but no FAX

when it banned the use of fax machines on the Gaza Strip. It seems that a growing network of Palestinian news correspondents were using them to get out the facts on the intifada.

Then China, where leaders are still digging trenches to prevent a resurgence of any pro-democracy movement, blatantly declared nationwide censorship of messages sent by fax. Chinese leaders are still working on the "Big Brother" technology that will permit them to capture all of the country's fax messages for review. In the meantime, they have banned faxes and are requiring registration of already existing machines.

LATIN AMERICA

Common Cinema

Eleven countries have formed the Latin American Cinematographic Common Market. The signatories of the accord hope to increase the showing of Latin American films in the region. Co-productions and the creation of a financing body are also planned.

The participants are: Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, the Dominican Republic and Venezuela. Each country will have the right to exhibit four films a year in each of the other participant countries that will be exempt from legislation covering imported movies.

Latin America's common market

Penang: radioactive beauty

MALAYSIA

Rad Stadium

A huge tin slag dump near the maternity clinic in the town of Butterworth and the Penang City Stadium built on top of 20,000 tons of tin slag at Penang have been silently leaking radiation for years. The slag contains small amounts of thorium and traces of uranium and radioactive potassium. Radiation levels are eight times above the safe level laid down by the Atomic Energy Licensing Board.

Tantalum, a rare metal found in small quantities in tin slags, hit the headlines in 1979 when it suddenly was in great demand in Penang Island. Tantalum is a heat resisting metal used in aerospace and electronic industries. The slags are buried in various parts of the island by a local tin smelting company. Over in Province Wellesley, opposite the island, a Butterworth smelting company dumped huge quantities of tin slags near its premises.

Tin slag also contains small amounts of thorium and traces of uranium and radioactive potassium. According to Dr. Chong Chon Sing, physicist and lecturer of the University of Science in Penang, rays emitted by thorium and radon, which are gases from elements associated with tantalum, can damage internal body tissues.

APPEN Features

Invading the streets of Lima: street vendors and dealers in black market dollars

Critical Condition

The stage for Peru's April elections is set with an economic crisis and guerrilla violence

By Cláudia Pires

Downtown Lima has been invaded. Not by the guerrillas of the Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path), but by a multitude of street vendors and young men in the *ocoña* business, the black market dollar trade. Red lights mean "go" for the dozen or so children who lie in waiting at various street corners for the drivers who become captive customers for their odds and ends – from chewing gum to handmade toys. The only sector of the formal economy that has kept pace with the informal is that of private security agents.

The statistics are just as shocking. Sixty-five percent of the Peruvian work force is unemployed or underemployed. Between 30 and 40 percent of the urban population and 20 and 25 percent of the rural population survives thanks to the informal economy, which pays no taxes; according to economist Javier Iguiniz of the United Left (IU) coalition, the informal sector represents between seven and 15 percent of the country's gross national product. Inflation for 1989 topped 2,600 percent.

In short, Peru leads the critical list of ailing Latin American economies.

And, of course, there is the Sendero. Even if the guerrillas have not invaded the capital, they have made enough incursions into cities to create an ambiance of anxiety. The Sendero Luminoso began its armed struggle in 1980 in the Andean provinces. Between January and October of last year, 2,638 Peruvians died from political violence, while another 1,060 fell victim to murders, arson and traffic accidents.

Coupled with the spiraling inflation that is rapidly eroding real wages, the Sendero's actions have brought Peru to the brink of social explosion. This combination is exacerbated by a flourishing drug business from which some 300,000 Peruvians earn their keep. Politicians fear an imminent military coup. "The country has short-circuited," says Senator Henrique Bernales, who chairs the Senate's Committee on Violence and Pacification. "We are in the midst of a deep depression, we no longer know where we are headed, our institutions are in a crisis. Two-thirds of the country is in a state of emergency."

Not exactly an ideal setting for peaceful presidential elections, yet balloting is scheduled for April. On the right, candidate author Mario Vargas Llosa prescribes orthodox liberalism as the shock the country needs to get back on its feet; on the left, former Lima Mayor Alfonso Barrantes proposes a broad social pact as the only road to national salvation.

The Sendero – And then, once again, there is the Sendero Luminoso. Originally a Maoist-inspired movement, formed in 1970, it broke with all international Marxist trends as early as 1976, when the Chinese Cultural Revolution disintegrated. The group is virtually hermetically sealed: no one knows what its leaders look like – except for Abimael Guzmán, a former university teacher

who went underground in 1979 and is referred to as *Presidente Gonzalo* by his followers. His whereabouts is the subject of daily speculations in the press.

Since their first actions in the Andean district of Ayacucho, the guerrillas have maintained a series of terrorist operations: sabotaging banks and public buildings, murdering police and army soldiers, and executing local authorities and politicians, especially those of the United Left. Branded as *revisionist*, the legal, traditional left is seen by the group as its main obstacle to grabbing power.

"The goal of Sendero terrorism is to undermine the morale of our institutions", says archaeologist Manuel Jesús Granados, who graduated from the same University of Huamanga, in Ayacucho, where Abimael Guzmán taught in the 1970s. "There is a kind of widespread paranoia in the country. Nobody feels safe. This uncertainty works as a psychological weapon in favor of the Sendero. It destroys the emotional stability of the members of the armed-forces, making them apt to commit excesses during confrontations with the population."

Understandably, private security personnel are constantly evident, heavily armed with rifles and machine guns – in front of hotels, businesses, political party headquarters, and even at study centers where economists and social scientists meet to discuss the country's problems. In Lima's Plaza de Armas, where the presidential palace is located, troops and tanks maintain permanent vigilance. Pedestrians are kept at a safe distance from the palace gates.

The Sendero's tactics are part of a logical strategy aimed at destroying the current order. They also sow confusion and wreak havoc among the armed forces and the police. Since few Sendero militants and sympathizers have access to the inner circles of the movement, repression is often indiscriminate and tends to breed hatred among the population at large.

"Right now", says Granados, "rural peasants and the people living outside Lima fear the police and armed forces more than they fear the Senderistas. The opposite is true of Lima's middle and upper classes." This dichotomy stresses an old trait of Peruvian society, which is the prejudices and economic gap separating the indigenous population and *cholos* (mestizos) from the *Spanish* (whites).

Whites vs. cholos: a continuous clash

"Ever since the Sendero went into action", adds Granados, "the urban population has identified as subversives anyone who looks like a *cholo*, a poorly dressed mountain peasant. Yet this stereotype is not exactly accurate. Since it began, the Sendero has slowly and increasingly recruited members among students in private universities."

Although rejected by many as totalitarian, akin to the Khmer Rouge (which, under Pol Pot, killed thousands in Cambodia in the 1970s), the Sendero continues to grow. Its membership is now estimated at 5,000.

Raúl González, a journalist and researcher at the Center of Studies for the Promotion of Development (DESCO), considered Peru's number one *Senderologist*, argues that the absence of state action is the characteristic shared by the areas and populations where Sendero is strongest. "The Sendero is most active in the Andes, where peasants have the lowest per capita income in Peru; in the Upper Huallaga, where coca leaf growers and coca paste producers have the highest income in the country; and among the youth whose major concern is finding a job when they leave school. All of these groups see the government as either prejudicial, inoperative or repressive."

At least one Colombian-style, paramilitary group has already emerged to launch a vigilante battle against the guerrillas: the Rodrigo Franco Commando, whose aim is to kill subversives or suspected subversives throughout the country. Yet, the commando has failed to frighten the Senderistas, whose motto is: "The worse things get, the better they are." González warns, "The Senderistas believe that the social and political radicalization resulting from a violent military coup would help them solve their problem of consolidating support, since large segments of Peruvian society would have no choice but to join them."

Sendero's dirty work: assassinating a leftist mayor

García and the social crisis – Since Peru's return to democracy in 1980, no government has managed to solve a social crisis whose

VARGAS LLOSA: Latin Liberalism

"I write because I'm not happy. I write because it is my way of struggling against misfortune."

This outburst from Peruvian writer and right-wing presidential candidate Mario Vargas Llosa is contained in a book/interview by Brazilian journalist Ricardo A. Setti, which is being published in France.

Vargas Llosa talks about his life, his friends, fame, sex, family, drugs, money – and especially politics. He recalls his journalistic career, citing its importance in his development, and maintains that his fame has been inconvenient.

The writer/candidate also notes that occasionally he desires to return to his alma mater, Lima's San Marcos University, but he has decided that this would be impossible, that he would run the risk of being lynched by students who, he says, are convinced that he is an agent of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency or a Nazi. The writer maintains that this lack of popularity has its roots in a systematic campaign carried out by some sectors of the press.

Literature and politics are Vargas Llosa's favorite topics. Regarding the former, he cites 19th century romantic Europeans, principally Flaubert, and 20th century North American authors, especially William Faulkner, as his favorites. In Vargas Llosa's opinion, the two greatest Latin American writers of all time are still Argentina's Jorge Luis Borges and Chile's Pablo Neruda.

In the book-interview, the Peruvian writer-politician briefly discusses Gabriel García Márquez, the Nobel Prize-winning Colombian author. While recognizing the talent of the author of *100 Years of Solitude*, Vargas Llosa put off for another day an explanation of the break between the two erstwhile friends, in Mexico.

He adds that it was the French writer and philosopher Jean Paul Sartre who helped steer him away from communism, given that Vargas Llosa always valued the aesthetics of literary creation and intellectual independence.

Two other books by Vargas Llosa are also being published in France: *Against the Wind and the Sea*, and *The Man Who Speaks*. The former is a selection of articles, speeches and essays on politics and culture. The two works are considered veritable handbooks on Latin American Liberalism.

major symptoms are a seriously unbalanced income distribution – the poorest 60 percent receive but 23 percent of the national income – and uncontrolled urban growth, a result of rural unemployment, which is helped along by the drop in international commodity prices for main crops like copper and cotton. The Alan García administration, taking the reins from conservative Fernando Belaúnde Terry's government in 1985, ruled over an especially traumatic period. Following the initial euphoria, the country became submerged in the worst crisis of its history.

Many explanations have been proposed for García's failure. Few see it as a result of the moratorium on a US$16-billion foreign debt, one of García's first measures after his inauguration. Right-wingers, now united behind Vargas Llosa, argue that the president should have reduced the size of the state apparatus, rather than increase the number of public servants by 21.3 percent and steadily intervening in the economy. In turn, the left says that García talked like a leftist and a nationalist but acted like a rightist and authoritarian leader.

Economist Félix Giménez, of the social-democratic-leaning Center for Studies on Participation and Development (CEDEP), says that García tried to use the foreign reserves made available by the moratorium to expand the domestic market by increasing production. Since Peru does not produce such industrial goods as electric saws and ovens, the government heavily subsidized imports and thus generated a balance of payments deficit.

"García's mistake was to indiscriminately grant low-interest credit and tax exemptions to large, medium and small businesses," says Giménez. "Peruvian businessmen traditionally lack initiative, as they are accostumed to living at the expense of the state. When the time came to reinvest the profits they made thanks to government incentives, thus creating new jobs and new enterprises, most of them preferred to invest in dollars or to send their money abroad." When, in 1987, García attempted to check capital flight by nationalizing the banks, it was too late.

The failure of the economic policy introduced by García's party, the People's Revolutionary Alliance (APRA), did serious damage to the Peruvian left. The economic crisis and Sendero actions eventually helped produce a schism among the United Left (IU),

which until 1985 was the country's second largest electoral force. The social-democratic faction led by presidential candidate Barrantes has split from the IU, accusing some leftist sectors of banking on political radicalization. "The United Left had its chance to take power, and we believed that all participating groups should give up their ideas of armed struggle," says Barrantes.

Senator Rolando Ames, who remained in the IU, claims that Barrantes has embarked on "a personalistic project," but he admits that "There are groups inside the IU who have more faith in popular struggle than in elections. They believe that it will be difficult for the left to take power without a military coup, and that a process of popular insurrection is inevitable in Peru."

Under the circumstances, it is no surprise that author Vargas Llosa is the favorite in the April 14 elections. He hopes to win a majority in the first round and avoid a runoff that would unite the left behind a single candidate. He is promoting the "self-healing" qualities of a market economy, and plans to trim the state apparatus. He has little fear of labor unions and their supporters – whom he sees as a minority – and promises to dismiss public employees, raise taxes, privatize most state-owned enterprises regardless of their profitability, change labor laws to include low productivity as just cause for firing, and change strike regulations to limit work stoppages to those approved by a majority decision in a secret ballot by members.

In a recent meeting with business leaders in Lima, Vargas Llosa proclaimed: "The collectivist utopia is not dying. It is already dead and decayed. We watched it die, and it made us increasingly confident in contemporary democracy."

The measures proposed by Vargas Llosa are controversial, but his constituency appears unconcerned. His supporters are convinced that the international prestige of the famous writer will attract foreign investment. "I'll vote for Mario," says taxi driver Miguel Reales, calling the candidate by his first name, "because, with him, the businessmen who sent their money abroad will bring it back and foreign companies will again invest here." Actually, things are not that simple. During recent trips to Japan and Europe, Vargas Llosa was told by potential investors that money will flow only if he manages to eliminate the Sendero threat. And the candidate has asked his advisers to prepare a plan to do just that.

Barrantes: the option on the left

Long lines for simple demands: "All we want is food and jobs."

García: administering disaster

That project would include the adoption of periodically renewable identity cards, that among other things would indicate a person's employment status, the creation of politico-military committees in all districts, and the distribution of weapons for the "self-defense" of the peasant populations. His opponents fear that such measures could turn Peru into a police state. "Vargas Llosa's economic program will generate further unemployment, and his political program will lead to increased polarization. This will make his administration unviable and create a vacuum of power which may be filled by the Sendero in a first stage, and by the army in a second stage," predicts economist Carlos Amat y León, Barrantes' vice-presidential running mate.

For Senator Ames, only the IU can defeat the Senderistas. "We are active in the popular organizations which they are trying to infiltrate. Only the organized population knows who is or isn't a member of the Sendero," he says. The IU has nominated Henry Pease for president.

None of the three candidates – Vargas Llosa, Barrantes or Pease – is likely to be able to solve Peru's myriad of problems. The needs of the Peruvian people are at the same time complicated and simple. As a street vendor, selling smuggled music tapes on a Lima sidewalk, put it: "All we want is food and work." •

Shadowy Path

Nobody seems sure about the program of the Sendero Luminoso guerrillas, but the social conditions are ripe for revolt

By Beatriz Bissio

Its full name: "By the Shining Path of José Carlos Mariátegui." Its aim: to topple the Peruvian government. One of its effects: complicating the strategy of the country's legal left.

The Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) guerrillas have little in common with the guerrilla movements that emerged in the valleys and cities of Peru in the 1960s. Nor do they resemble other armed groups active today, like El Salvador's Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front. Yet, it is wrong to dismiss the Senderistas as a mere band of thugs or a terrorist group, despite the nature of its violent actions.

The Sendero's political orientation remains a mystery – though Peruvian observers often compare it to that of the Gang of Four, associated with China's Cultural Revolution. The Senderistas defend the ideas of three famous men – Marx, Lenin and Mao – who represent three of their "swords". To that trinity they add a fourth, their leader Abimael Guzmán.

Guzmán, the movement's founder and ideologue, is a former philosophy professor at San Cristóbal University, located in the rural district of Ayacucho, the Sendero's birthplace. "Comrade Gonzalo," as he is also known, is a mestizo advocate of indigenous culture who received a Western-style education. He never participated in the guerrilla movements of the 1960s, nor did he have a reputation for political militancy prior to the emergence of the Sendero. Throughout the administration of General Juan Velasco Alvarado (1967-1975), he quietly taught his courses, patiently and clandestinely recruiting participants for the military-political apparatus he was constructing.

The Sendero began its operations in three of the country's 24 districts – specifically those areas still plagued by *gamonalismo* a quasi-feudal system, and semislavery. Authorities now admit that they have cells throughout the country – penetrating urban areas and even the capital, Lima.

The three original districts in the Andes – Ayacucho, Huancavelica and Apurimac – are among Peru's poorest. The largely indigenous population has a per capita income of under US$30 a year. Most people remain outside the market economy, relying on subsistence agriculture and shepherding. They speak Quéchua and Runasimi, own a few llamas and goats, and fight hunger and cold by chewing coca leaves. Their isolated communities have no access to electricity or sanitation facilities. Some of their communities may be reached by horse, some only by foot. Their links to the central government are tenuous, if they exist at all.

Life in such communities is ruled by ancestral custom and law. Justice is meted out by a mayor, usually elected from among the village elders. Sentences are often carried out by community members themselves.

Decades ago, José Carlos Mariátegui, the Peruvian Marxist thinker referred to in the Sendero's full name, wrote that "Two forms of feudalism have survived in Peru: unfair land distribution and slavery. It is impossible to put an end to the form of slavery that has been imposed on indigenous people without correcting land distribution. Our brand of socialism would not be Peruvian – in fact, it would not even be socialism – if it did not, first of all, address indigenous claims."

When Alvarado declared Quéchua as Peru's official language, along with Spanish, he said that peasants deserved to defend themselves in court using their own language. Until then, the judicial system used only Spanish, and indigenous people were often unjustly convicted of crimes, sometimes without even understanding the charges against them.

In the more fertile and more easily accessible valleys, indigenous communities have greater ties to the coastal society and economy. But just like their mountain-dwelling counterparts, they have been gradually robbed of their land since the Spanish conquest.

Social injustice in the Andean region inspired students to organize a series of guerrilla movements in the 1960s. One by one, they were defeated, but some of the military officers who participated in these campaigns finally recognized the need for social change. This shift was at the roots of the move to install Alvarado in power in October 1968.

As early as 1965, Colonel Gallegos Venero, an intelligence officer assigned to the Urubamba River valley in the department of Cuzco, was calling attention to the appalling conditions in the region. In his book *The Peruvian Model*, Neiva Moreira quotes a Gallegos report: "The mortality rate is 300 per 1,000 a year; infant mortality for children under the age of one is 70 per 1,000 and below the age of five it is 294 per 1,000. The major causes of death

Suffering indigenous people are fertile ground for the Sendero

are tuberculosis and parasitic diseases. Seventy-eight percent of the population shows signs of malnutrition and anemia.Eighty-five percent of all houses are unventilated thatched huts where entire families are squeezed into one or two rooms." Gallegos also denounced what he called "medieval working conditions."

Alvarado introduced a land reform program in June 1969. Four years later, over one million peasants had benefited and over 1,000 cooperatives were in operation.

The land reform program addressed some of the needs of the indigenous population, but those efforts are now at a standstill and in some cases the process is being reversed. Former landowners, who organized themselves to retrieve their properties, are putting on the pressure, and the majority-rule "Social Property" sector of the economy remains weak and is becoming increasingly powerless.

But even a comprehensive, fully implemented land reform program would not address the needs of all peasants. Peru consists largely of rugged terrain, thus strickly limiting the amount of arable land. Other supplemental efforts are necessary.

In terms of the Sendero campaign, the land reform program has left an instructive legacy. Peasant reactions to the Senderistas depend on their land tenure situation. In the valleys of Ayacucho and neighboring departments, those with land titles are likely to be indifferent to the Sendero's proposals; but where the land reform program was left hanging, the guerrillas make greater headway.

When we visited those areas in the 1970s, we found that the more isolated communities were reluctant to join the land reform process. Alvarado had expected such a reaction, and his response was to promote educational programs that he hoped would revolutionize Peruvian culture. But in the end, little changed.

It is difficult to judge the extent of the Sendero's real support, yet it is evident that the movement has its strongest outposts of support in those isolated areas where even Alvarado's pro-peasant programs had little effect. •

The Comrades

Following the lead of their mentor Mao, the Shining Path guerrillas are mounting armed struggle among the disenfranchised poor. Two anthropologists take a rare first-hand look at this insular organization

*By Kim MacQuarrie and Keefe Borden**

Early in September, more than two dozen bodies – minus heads, hands and feet – floated slowly past a new U.S.-financed police base located deep in Peru's coca-leaf growing jungle. To some of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) men and Peruvian police stationed there, the bodies served as an ominous warning from the mysterious Maoist insurgent group known as the Shining Path (*Sendero Luminoso*).

The incident, only the latest in the brutal revolutionary war begun in 1980 and which so far has claimed 15,000 lives, heightened fears in the U.S. and elsewhere that the DEA may soon become engaged in battles with the rebel group. The Shining Path, meanwhile, has remained relatively unknown to the outside world, shunning publicity and granting few press interviews.

To speak directly with them, we traveled to a high-security prison in the slums outside of Lima where over 200 militant guerrillas are interned.

Inside a separate prison wing we find dark-skinned guerrillas performing military maneuvers and undergoing political instruction. The cell locks have long been broken and the prison guards rarely enter. Red flags emblazoned with white hammers and sickles line the large patio with high brick walls. A huge mural painted in red portrays the heads of Marx, Lenin and Mao.

"Comrades," a young woman shouts addressing the troops, "today communists are united together all over the globe. The Communist Party of Peru is like a torch in the world!" she cries. "We are fighting to serve the international war and we are not alone!"

Guzmán: first among comrades

The guerrillas clap. Estimated to have between 2,000 and 5,000 armed troops in a nation of 21 million, the Shining Path has traditionally relied on the Indian peasants of Peru's Andes for support. Exploited since the Spanish Conquest, Peru's Quechua-speaking peasants have spent the last five centuries scratching out a meager existence on tiny plots of land. The average life expectancy in many parts of the Andes is 49 years. The literacy rate is 50 percent; running water, electricity and medical care are virtually unknown.

Trailblazing among the poor – It was into this environment that the Shining Path moved in the early 1970s, offering the solution of armed conflict and an orthodox Marxism-Leninism-Maoism to the often ignored and disenfranchised poor. Shining Path leaders saw Peru as a sort of prerevolutionary China: a colonized, semifeudal country whose Indian peasants have long been forced to produce wealth for the country's notoriously non-Indian elite.

Led by Abimael Guzmán – a 56-year-old Peruvian philosophy professor who visited Maoist China before founding the movement in 1970 – the Shining Path began its patient, 10-year attempt at proselitization. The plan was two-pronged: to create a strong party and to organize peasant support bases in rural areas. In 1980 Guzmán launched the revolution's second stage following Mao's

successful strategy in China: armed struggle, the takeover of the countryside, and the eventual encirclement and invasion of the cities.

As the guerrillas shout "*viva*" to the revolution, we are introduced to "Javier," a 30-year-old former economics student. The Shining Path conducts classes in prison and Javier is one of their teachers. Javier mentions the Paris Commune, the Bolshevik and Chinese revolutions. We ask him if there are currently any communist countries in the world the Shining Path wishes to emulate.

"For us there are no communist states," Javier says. "There was one in China and in the USSR, but there is none any longer." After the coup d'etat which ousted Mao, he says, China returned to being a capitalist ("revisionist" is his term) country. "We are totally against communist revisionism," he states emphatically. Indeed, the Shining Path has the unusual distinction of having bombed not only the U.S. Embassy but the Soviet and Chinese embassies as well. The group receives no aid from abroad.

We ask about peasant massacres by the Shining Path. In the bitterly contested Andean zones, the Peruvian army, unable to distinghish between guerrilla and peasant, has been known to wipe out entire villages. In others it has formed peasant "civil defense" patrols. The Shining Path, in retaliation, has often resorted to the wholesale massacres of such groups.

"When we attack the civil defense patrols, the (government) reactionaries say that they are innocent peasants," Javier says. "Yet the army forces them to fight against us." Therefore, he says, the defense patrols have become allied with the government and must be "dealt with accordingly."

In the Andean village of Lucanamarca, "dealt with accordingly" meant that the Shining Path hacked 67 men, women and children to death. Peasant support for either the guerrillas or the army is one built largely on fear.

Why does the Shining Path aid drug traffickers in the jungle, we ask? As the world's largest producer of coca-leaf – the raw material of cocaine – Peru has seen an unusual alliance between communist revolutionaries and capitalist drug procurers which recently forced the U.S. and Peru to suspend their joint coca-plant eradication project.

"The narcotics traffickers are wretched people," Javier says. "They enrich themselves based on the destruction of human beings." The ones who use these drugs, however, he says, are the elite countries such as the United States. "Our aim," he adds, "is to crush North American imperialism."

Polite and fanatic – We speak with a number of guerrillas, all of whom are invariably clean, neat and polite. What is troubling is their complete lack of doubt, their fanatic sense of possessing the truth. Theirs is the truth according to Marx, Lenin and Mao and they will politely or impolitely kill any who question it. That is why many observers fear that a takeover by the Shining Path would mean the murder of tens of thousands, a sort of Latin American version of Pol Pot's Cambodia.

On the way out Javier shows us a large mural painted on the wall. It is a guerrilla artist's vision of the Shining Path's coming to power. urging towards the spectator is a giant sea of peasants carrying machine guns, their mouths opened in a silent roar. Towering above them is the Shining Path's founder and leader, Abimael Guzmán, frowning sternly and wearing a brown suit. In his right hand Guzmán holds a red flag with a white hammer and sickle and in the left a book across which is written "Develop the Popular War Serving the World Revolution."

Javier points to the three hills, each spiked with a communist flag, rising behind the masses. Each hill on the mural represents stages of the revolution that the Shining Path has already achieved: the formation of the Party; the initiation of armed warfare; the spread of warfare throughout the country.

At the gate we stop and shake hands. "Mao said it would take 500-1,000 years to install communism worldwide," Javier observes. "In Peru it will take less. Within the next two years," he says, "we will have defined the question of power."

Although many observes think that the Shining Path will be unable to gain massive support, few doubt that it is one of the most deeply entrenched guerrilla insurgencies on the continent. The irony is that while 12,000 miles away thousands of Chinese youth have been imprisoned and executed for pulling down statues of Mao and protesting the results of his Cultural Revolution, in a fledgling democratic nation a small but ruthless revolutionary group currently reveres Mao as a God. •

A police casualty: the Senderistas expect to be in power in two years

A Country Divided

The new president represents the status quo, but the progressive opposition emerges bolstered and begins to set its sights on the 1990 congressional and gubernatorial races

Brazil's first presidential election in 30 years was won by a previously little-known politician named Fernando Collor de Mello, the former governor of the small northeastern state of Alagoas. The youthful president-elect ran on the ticket of the National Reconstruction Party (PRN), a grouping he formed to further his presidential ambitions. Collor could best be described as a traditional right-wing populist who effectively uses modern media and polling techniques.

The December balloting marked the culmination of the country's gradual redemocratization process, slowly instituted by the military in the late 1970s after it took power by force in 1964. In 1984, Brazil entered a new period of civilian rule, as an electoral college gave the presidential nod to Tancredo Neves and, after Neves' death, his running mate, current President José Sarney, was inagurated the following year.

In March, Collor will assume the leadership of a divided country. He received some 53 percent of the valid votes in the second round of the two-stage election process. The other 47 percent opted for his leftist rival Luis Ignacio "Lula" da Silva, a former autoworker and labor leader, now a member of congress representing the Workers Party (PT).

One thing that the two candidates had in common was their youth: Collor is 40, Lula is 44. That youthfulness helped them earn berths in the runoff, as voters in the November first round rejected veteran politicians linked to the Sarney government – especially Ulysses Guimarães of the Brazilian Democratic Movement Party (PMDB) and Aureliano Chaves of the Liberal Front Party (PFL). Together these two received less than five percent of the first round votes. That was a rude turnaround from 1986, when these two parties swept the gubernatorial elections (the PMDB won in 22 states, the PFL in one) and obtained a joint congressional majority. (Interestingly, Collor won his governor's race on the coattails of that victory. He was then with the PMDB.)

Popular frustration with the so-called New Republic, which emerged out of military rule, facilitated growth among the leftist opposition. Right-wing forces, including those who supported the military dictatorship, were forced to back newcomer Collor, who appealed to poor Brazilians with his anti-establishment, anti-Sarney and anti-corruption rhetoric.

Collor: modern right-wing populist

The strategy proved effective, but Collor has a difficult task ahead to build

Lula: unity on the left nearly overcame Collor's conservative power base

a congressional majority. His PRN controls but 22 of 487 seats in the House of Deputies and two of 72 in the Senate. Congressional elections are slated for October 1990.

Collor's biggest challenge will be inflation, which by the end of 1989 was running at about 50 percent a month. But Brazilians want this without recession or higher unemployment. Collor will also need to address the foreign debt problem, agrarian reform, health, housing, corruption, and a host of other issues. His vague campaign platform - combining social democratic visions with neo-liberal rhetoric - offers few clues as to how he will proceed in terms of specific measures.

A Jânio clone? – Collor's political career began in the late 1970s, when the military government appointed him mayor of the city of Maceió, the capital of the state of Alagoas. He was later elected to Congress on the slate of the pro-military National Renewal Alliance (ARENA) party and then governor of Alagoas on the PMDB ticket. His family owns most of the major media outlets in Alagoas.

Sociologist Herbert de Souza, director of the Brazilian Institute of Social and Economic Analysis (IBASE), compares Collor to former Brazilian President Jânio Quadros, a right-wing populist who, in 1960, was the last Brazilian president elected democratically. After a few months in office, the audacious Quadros resigned from office, setting off a crisis that eventually led to the 1964 coup.

"Progressive forces need to wake up to the fact that, once again, democracy is in question," said Souza. "The young president-elect purports to be a man without political compromises, which is reminiscent of Jânio." Souza warned that Collor's temperamental behavior, evident during the campaingn, could exacerbate crises during his administration.

Collor's triumph represents a victory for reactionary forces, in the opinion of journalist Edmundo Moniz of *Correio da Manha* and the Brazilian Historical and Geographic Institute. Moniz, also author of an authoritative book about the Brazilian military dictatorship, noted that Collor "was chosen, molded and built to impede the country's march toward democracy." He added that despite claims to the contrary, Collor represents large businessmen, bankers and large landowners - the same forces that have dominated the country's economy for the past 25 years.

According to Souza, there are serious contradictions between his links to the country's centers of power, expressed in his neo-liberal economic program, and the campaign promises he made to win votes among Brazil's poor majority. "It's impossible to address the needs of both sides," he observed. "He will have to decide, and I think I know what his choice will be. And to justify that choice, he will be counting on the support of the major media."

At the same time, Souza called attention to what is new about the Collor phenomenon. He is the first Brazilian candidate to take full advantage of modern polling services, and - more importantly, perhaps - he enjoyed the support of the Globo Television Network, the world's fourth largest privately-owned TV network, which provides the staple diet of news and culture for over 50 million viewers a day in a country of 145 million.

Despite a daily serving of free advertising for each candidate, which varied according to congressional representation in the first round and was evenly divided in the second, Lula was never able to overcome Collor's early and consistent support from TV Globo. Consequently, Souza argues that "Democracy and the Globo network are incompatible." He maintains that progressive forces would have easily won if the electoral campaign had been limited to the free television time.

Moral victory – Souza goes as far as to say that progressives should consider themselves victorious, given that Lula's clearly leftist candidacy nearly obtained a majority. "This had never happened before," he noted, "and the progressive block grew as a social and political force."

Both Souza and Muniz were buyoed by the coalition of leftist forces that rallied behind Lula and the PT - a party with its strengths among the labor movement, the progressive Catholic Church and intellectuals. In the runoff, the PT enjoyed the support of several parties, including: the Democratic Labor Party (PDT), a member of the Socialist International; the Brazilian Social Democratic Party (PSDB), with its strength among the progressive urban middle class; the Brazilian Communist Party (PCB); and the left-leaning wing of the PMDB.

According to Leonel Brizola, the PDT's candidate in the first round, "The runoff coalition was very important. My impression is that neither the PDT nor the PT will be the same from now on due to this relationship. This intense and decisive coordination allowed us to get to know each other better, and we put to rest a number of prejudices on both sides."

Leftist parties are already looking forward to the October elections, when the makeup of the Congress will be decided and new governors elected. Most leaders on the left hope to maintain the unity and momentum of Lula's campaign into 1990. •

Brizola: "The left put its prejudices to rest"

One of the 2,000 guerrillas who converged on the capital San Salvador

Lebanonization

Permanent, seemingly endless conflict may be El Salvador's fate if peace talks are not resumed in good faith

By Jayme Brener

If the government of El Salvador and the country's leftist guerrillas fail to sit down and talk peace, the embattled Central American nation may be on the road to *Lebanonization*. Its territory could become irreparably divided into areas controlled by armed groups and hope for a peaceful solution could be lost.

That analysis is not new, but it won adherents folowing the two-week offensive launched in November by the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN). Combat in the capital San Salvador and other major cities during that period left at least 2,000 dead, counting soldiers, guerrillas and civilians. The offensive demonstrated that, while unable to overthrow President Alfredo Cristiani's government, the FMLN is capable of undertaking military operations in downtown San Salvador that mobilize upwards of 2,000 heavily armed and uniformed combatants.

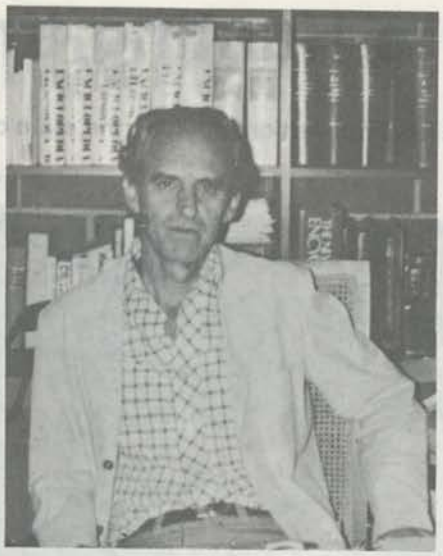
An already radicalized El Salvador became increasingly polarized as a result of the offensive. When the FMLN left the capital, right-wing death squads – impotent against the rebels – unleashed their fury against labor, student and community leaders. Many labor leaders have been forced underground or simply joined the *muchachos* (boys), as the guerrillas are known, as a life-saving measure. Leaders of the Democratic Convergence, the legal political coalition with formal links to the FMLN, were obliged to seek asylum in foreign embassies – even though Guillermo Ungo, the Convergence's unsuccessful presidential candidate in last year's elections, appears to have been critical of the offensive.

In essence, those who occupied the middle ground between the death squads and the guerrillas are being thinned out. One of the most important of such figures, Father Ignacio Ellacuría, the rector of the Catholic University, was assassinated, along with five others, by a death squad in October.

This polarization has already had repercussions in Cristiani's actions. Although a member of the ultra-rightist National Republican Alliance (ARENA) party, Cristiani was elected on a platform advocating negotiations with the guerrillas. He maintained that ex-President Napoleón Duarte, of the Christian Democratic party, did not seriously address the question of peace. Cristiani campaigned as a modern politician, attempting to minimize his party's truculent image, symbolized by ex-Major Roberto D'Aubuisson, the alleged mastermind of the 1980 assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero. Now, however, Cristiani has abandoned his campaign position favoring talks, saying he will negotiate only if the FMLN first lays down its arms.

No way out – The declared objective of the guerrilla offensive, which began November 17, was to force Cristiani to negotiate in good faith, implying his willingness to make tangible concessions. The two sides met twice in 1989, and the FMLN had agreed to transform itself into a legal political party by February of this year. But the talks got bogged down on the question of military organization. The FMLN demanded that the *tandona*, the Salvadoran military elite, be dismantled, charging that it was in command of the death squads. The guerrilla's main concern was Army Chief of General Staff Colonel René Emilio Ponce.

Cristiani rebuffed this demand and death squad activity multiplied. In early November, a bomb exploded in the headquarters of the leftist labor confederation FENASTRAS, killing eight individuals – among them Febe Elizabeth, one of the country's most popular labor



Right-wing death squads eliminate moderates: priests (left) and Ellacuría

leaders. At that point, the FMLN resolved that it was wasting time in worthless negotiations while the death squads eliminated its supporters.

That is what prompted the offensive.

The attack itself took army intelligence by suprise. The movement of thousands of guerrillas went undetected. Some FMLN combatants arrived disguised as members of a circus. There was also a wedding reception where the bride, the groom, the priest and the guests were all rebels. Waiters carried arms inside food containers.

The most impressive element of the offensive was the guerrilla's ability to coordinate its military activities. First, important poor neighborhoods of the capital, like Mejicanos, were occupied. The government responded ruthlessly, as helicopters and airplanes mercilessly bombed the communities.

The bombing had little military effect. Witnesses told how the guerrillas only left their strongholds when they were prepared to and took with them a slew of new recruits – generally sympathizers fearful of death squad retaliation. Days later, rich neighborhoods had their turn. The focal point became Paseo Escalón, with its tree-lined avenues and spacious mansions. Many of the neighborhood's homes have been fortified with high walls and armed guards since the FMLN's failed "final offensive" in 1980.

The army did not hesitate. It immediately began bombing Paseo Escalón. This decision sparked protests from the Salvadoran economic elites, many of whom live in Escalón and support ARENA. Ironically, many executives and their families were suprised by the guerrillas' polite demeanor. "I thought they would line up everybody against the wall," said one woman, who had expected the worst.

The high point of the offensive was the occupation of the luxurious Sheraton Hotel, where the guerrillas held dozens of guests captive for a day. Among them was João Baena Soares, the Brazilian secretary-general of the Organization of American States, and a half dozen U.S. military advisers. Using sophisticated military tactics, the rebels received their orders by telephone from Commander Facundo Guardado, a high-ranking guerrilla leader. Though surrounded by hundreds of government soldiers, the guerrillas left the hotel without incident, while the flustered North American soldiers scampered down the stairs shouting, in search of guerrillas.

Cristiani: rhetoric blown to pieces

Crisis – The FMLN attack came during a period of crisis in the Salvadoran economy, which remains above water only due to the US$5 billion that the White House has funneled in since 1980. U.S. aid now tops the national budget. Nearly a third of public monies are earmarked for military expenditures, compared to 7.5 percent for health care. Over the past few years, guerrilla actions against economic infrastructure targets (electric power systems, roads, etc.) have destroyed the country's export economy based on coffee and sugar. More importantly, social inequality continues. Reform efforts, especially a land redistribution program, were blocked by the oligarchy during the Duarte administration's term in office.

The rising level of fear in El Salvador is also helping to undermine the already weakened Esquipulas II peace process, which encompasses all of Central America. But international developments are increasing external and internal pressures on Cristiani to negotiate.

Domestically, former President Duarte appealed to Cristiani to accept "real peace negotiations." And the Archbishop Arturo Rivera y Damas of San Salvador, leader of the conservative wing of the Catholic Church, has continually complained about the sluggishness of investigations into crimes linked to the death squads.

Still, Cristiani continues to refuse to negotiate, arguing that the guerrillas "are being defeated." But during the news conference in the capital at which he reaffirmed this position, the president was interrupted by an explosion that shook the rafters. •

UNGO: "They're Hunting the Opposition"

Guillermo Ungo, a leader of the legal opposition, outlines the state of post-offensive El Salvador

The government of El Salvador "has implanted a fascist-style military dictatorship and is carrying out a large-scale persecution campaign – literally hunting down humans – against all of those on the other side, in the opposition." Those are the words of Guillermo Ungo, the principal leader and former presidential candidate of the Democratic Convergence, a legal political coalition which works directly with the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN), the guerrilla organization. Ungo spoke to *third world* in Santiago where he was part of the International Socialist's delegation observing the Chilean presidential elections.

"I confess that I feel much more secure here in Chile, where a peaceful process of transition is taking place from dictatorship to democracy, than in my own country, where violence is widespread," Ungo observed.

How do you evaluate the political situation in your country after the FMLN offensive?

It is difficult to make an objective evaluation, since I'm much involved emotionally. But the ultra-rightist government of Alfredo Cristiani is carrying out a fascist persecution campaign against the entire opposition movement. This irresponsible and vile attitude on the part of the government, trying to attribute the crime to the FMLN, indicates the level of protection and authorization that Cristiani concedes to state-sponsored terrorism.

What was the role of the FMLN offensive in contibuting to the current state of affairs?

In the first place, the offensive made it clear that the government and Washington, the de facto powers in the country, had underestimated the FMLN's strength. They believed that the guerrillas were weakened, and that's why they used the tactic of prolonging the peace negotiations indefinitely until they could militarily defeat the FMLN.

It is clear that the guerrillas are strong militarily and that there is no way the army can win. It is true that the intensity of the FMLN offensive has been reduced, but the armed forces are, in practical terms, on the defensive all over the country. By concentrating its forces in San Salvador and other large cities, the army is allowing the guerrillas more space in rural areas.

But, unfortunately, this new balance of strength on the military plane is not carrying over to the political plane, with real negotiations between the two sides, which would allow us to attain peace. Before, we had dialogue without negotiation. Now we have neither dialogue nor negotiations. We hope that soon we'll have dialogue with real peace negotiations. As long as this doesn't happen, the oligarchy and the armed forces are growing increasingly afraid of the guerrillas. And so they lash out left and right, in all directions. The legal social and political opposition organizations are the first to suffer from this increase in violence.

Did the FMLN consult the Democratic Convergence prior to embarking on the offensive? And how are the relations between the two groups after the attack?

We have points in common, but the military aspect is never discussed between the guerrillas and us. It is worth remembering, however, that this is a story of an announced offensive. People had been feeling for some time that something was about to happen. Colonel (René Emilio) Ponce himself, the head of the Army Chiefs of Staff, even announced a few weeks prior to the action that the FMLN was organizing a pre-insurrectional offensive.

As far as we – the legal opposition – are concerned, my party, the Nationalist Revolutionary Movement (MNR), criticized the methodology of the offensive from the beginning. We thought that there was still room to insist during the negotiations.

Do you think that the political polarization in El Salvador has become permanent?

It is true that now there is no room to negotiate. But I think this is temporary. Labor and human rights activists are suffering under the government's repression, but soon it will again be time to reopen the negotiations. •

Jayme Brener

Part Way There

A civilian president is ready to assume office, but uncertainties loom for the new administration, shackled with restrictions inherited from Pinochet

*By Roger Rodriguez**

With the support of industry and the misgivings of left-wing parties that supported him, Christian Democrat Patricio Aylwin will be inaugurated as president of Chile in March, ending 16 years of dictatorship. But lurking in the background are a series of constraints imposed by the outgoing military government.

Aylwin collected 55.2 percent of the vote on December 14, thus averting a February runoff against Hernan Buchi, General Augusto Pinochet's former finance minister, who finished second. Francisco Javier Errazuriz (known by his nickname, *Fra-Fra*) came in third. Within hours of the victory, the Chilean stock exchange gained five points while the dollar plummeted 18 – indicating confidence among the business community that the country's economic stability would continue despite the opposition victory.

At the same time, however, in the capital of Santiago, protestors from left-wing parties and human rights organizations, demanding freedom for political prisoners and an inquiry into human rights violations by the military, were repressed by police using water cannons, tear gas and clubs.

Pressure from Chile's leading business and banking sectors to stay the economic course, and from popular and left-wing forces for investigations of and prosecution for human rights abuses, are two visible threads of a knot tied tightly by General Augusto Pinochet to bind Chile's first freely-elected government since that of Socialist President Salvador Allende was overthrown in 1973.

In 1978, the military regime amnestied itself for any "excesses" the armed forces committed in their operations to exterminate "Marxists" and, in 1980, Pinochet legally became interim president after a plebiscite, denounced internationally as fraudulent, approved a new constitution. In October 1988, however, the dictatorship suffered its first defeat, losing a new plebiscite seeking to legitimize Pinochet as candidate for the "free" elections he had scheduled for 1989.

After the victory of the "'No!" campaign, which launched an opposition alliance of 17 parties ranging from right of center to far left, the Pinochet military government began to spin a web around the future government, with the final touches emerging from the constitutional reform approved jointly by the government and opposition in mid-1989.

While, in the streets of Santiago, thousands celebrated the victory of *El Pato* ("The duck," Aylwin's nickname), two parties – the Democracy Party (PPD) and the Socialist Left Alliance Party (PAIS) – both sanctuaries for left-wing groups outlawed by the military regime, and both instrumental in the opposition, became the first victims of this spider's web. The unprecedented Electoral Law governing the ballot was rigged in such a way that some candidates won even though they received fewer votes than others.

The most notorious case was that of the president of the PPD, socialist Ricardo Lagos, who, despite receiving 399,408 votes, lost a Senate race to the leader of the Independent Democratic Union (UDI), Jaime Guzmán, favored

Patricio Aylwin: putting an end to the Pinochet era with a broad-based popular coalition

The specter of Pinochet will continue to haunt Aylwin and his administration

by just 244,302 electors. A similar fate hit leaders like Luis Maria (Democratic Left-PAIS) and all the Communist Party candidates.

Despite winning 22 of the 38 Senate races, and 68 of the 120 in the Chamber of Deputies, the Christian Democrat-led coalition will not have the parliamentary majority it needs to govern. There is, of course, a catch: the outgoing regime has reserved the right to directly appoint eight senators. These can be added to the eight successful candidates of the UDI and National Renovation (RN) parties – the government-backed coalition behind Buchi – and to another nine, elected as independents but clearly aligned with the military government. Without a majority in the Senate, Aylwin's administration can never achieve the two-thirds needed to amend the existing constitution and revoke some of the laws decreed by the military junta.

Even should Aylwin manage to reach an agreement with the center-right RN, led by former Interior Minister Sergio Onofre Jarpa, and achieve a parliamentary majority in exchange for moderating his program of government, there will still be economic, political, judicial and military issues in which he cannot intervene. A recent law granted autonomy to Chile's Central Bank in financial policy, currency issues, and negotiation of foreign loan agreements. Another law, approved three days before the elections, eliminated congressional power to investigate actions of state officials – in effect awarding an amnesty for all past misdeeds – and, finally, the present constitution prevents the government from replacing existing judges, and confirms Pinochet as army chief-of-staff for the next eight years.

Pinochet's continuing presence is directly tied to the human rights issue. This was confirmed by the general himself days before the elections. In response to questions from the international press, he proclaimed that he would use his constitutionally guaranteed position in order to block the prosecution of any of his officers. While acknowledging he would submit to the incoming president, Pinochet flatly denied he was retiring, with the words: "I'm not to sit at home reading the newspaper."

Even Aylwin began to admit indirectly that his promises to investigate and bring to trial those responsible for human rights crimes are running into difficulties. Hours before his election, he declared that, once the truth is known, "then will be the time to grant pardon." The words brought criticism from left-wing leaders but, in view of the scanty parliamentary representation they had won, they preferred not to force a showdown with the candidate they themselves had nominated.

During a speech near Chile's National Stadium at a post-election rally, Aylwin was greeted with a storm of derisive whistles when he made a similar declaration. The Christian Democrat stressed that he wanted to be the president of all Chileans and called for reconciliation among all sectors, something which many observers read as heralding an amnesty similar to those approved during the transitions in Argentina and Uruguay.

Obliged as he is to negotiate with right-wing parliamentary groups, and without any countervailing group of left-wing legislators to hold him back, Aylwin may be tempted to follow the examples of neighboring transition presidents: Argentina's Raul Alfonsin and Uruguay's Julio Maria Sanguinetti – both of whom were punished by voters in 1989 elections, as their parties' candidates to succeed them were soundly defeated.

Aylwin is receiving a stable economy – in macroeconomic, if not social, terms – something his Rio de la Plata neighbors lacked. Local observers expect him to benefit from this fact. Moreover, they argue, the same point could be taken internationally, given the credit the world will give Chile's new democracy, which has announced it will immediately join the group of non-aligned nations.

The armed presence of a section of the Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Front (FPMR), and another of the Revolutionary Left Movement (MIR), appears to be another crucial factor in the transition process. Although in disarray since losing their links with left-wing political parties (and possibly without external funding), these groups continue firm in their intention to wage a "National People's War" and to act as watchdogs on government compliance with its promises of freedom for political prisoners and justice for crimes committed under the dictatorship.

FPMR and MIR flags were evident in the streets of Santiago during the opposition victory celebrations and in the demonstrations that brought the police repression.

The conditions and challenges facing the new government during the transition stage do not appear to worry Chileans who received the return to democracy as if it were a Christmas present, while not losing sight of its limitations. Anonymous hands had sprayed one Santiago wall with the eloquent slogan "Now that the Pato's won, it's time to free the streets." •

* Miren News Agency.

Change Without Change

The century-old predominance of the Colorado Party appears over, but the new president won't shake things up. Meanwhile, the left advances

The results of last November's elections in Uruguay revealed a clear desire for change. The president-elect is Luis Alberto Lacalle of the opposition National Party (the *Blancos)*, while the leftist Frente Amplio (Broad Front) won the mayor's race in Montevideo, the capital and largest city.

The double whammy struck a serious blow to President Julio María Sanguinetti and his Colorado Party. While many voters were expressing their frustration with the lack of effective redemocratizaton during Sanguinetti's five-year term, the long-term effects appear to be more significant. The outcome heralds a new era in Uruguayan politics, ending the century-long predominance of the Colorado Party, which generally held forth within a virtual two-party system that included the National Party.

The rejection of the ruling party parroted electoral outcomes in other countries emerging from military dictatorships. The Colorados "paid a high price for (their role in) the transition process and adjustments that were necessary to overcome the legacy of 12-years of authoritarian rule," noted Uruguayan sociologist Juan Rial. He compared the Uruguayan results with those in Argentina, where former President Raul Alfonsin's Radical Party was defeated, and Brazil, where the parties most identified with the government fared poorly.

But Rial pointed out one important Uruguayan peculiarity: polls show that the Colorado Party electorate is aging, while the National Party and the Frente Amplio appeal more to younger voters who are more open to change.

In terms of economic policy, however, Lacalle will remind a lot of people of his predecessor. The grandson of former Blanco strongman Luis Alberto de Herrera, the president-elect is expected to make cosmetic rather than real changes. That elicits little surprise, as both parties encompass broad and similar ideological spectrums: their differences stem from a 19th century rivalry in which the Blancos represented traditional agrarian sectors and the Colorados the urban commercial and manufacturing interests. During the military regime, the previously more conservative Blancos were radicalized, and they rejected the 1984 accord with the military that reinstituted civilian rule – charging the Colorados with "continualism."

Lacalle's campaign platform varied little from that of his Colorado rival Jorge Battle. Both promised to encourage foreign investment, maintain the country's floating exchange rate, continue to allow deposits in foreign currencies, ensure the free flow of capital in and out of the country, and to maintain Uruguay as a financial center. The only substantial difference is that Lacalle promised to regulate the constitutionally-guaranteed right to strike.

But the Blancos will have a tough row to hoe through the country's bicameral legislature. The ruling party will control less than 40 percent of the seats, meaning that the Lacalle administration must forge alliances.

Thus, Lacalle's obvious first move as president-elect was a series of talks with political opponents. Ironically, these began with leading figures within his own party – partly due to Uruguay's unusual electoral system under which each party can nominate an unlimited number of candidates. The winner is the top vote-getter among the candidates of the party receiving the highest number of votes overall.

Lacalle: new president with old policies

There were three Blanco nominees: Lacalle, the most conservative; Alberto Zumarán, a centrist who represents a line associated with the late Wilson Ferreira Adunate; and Carlos Julio Pereira, the most progressive of the three, and the only National Party candidate who backed an unsuccessful referendum that would have overturned an amnesty decree that bars prosecution of those accused of human rights abuses during the 1973-1984 military dictatorship. If he achieves internal unity, Lacalle's next task will be to try to build a coalition or at least attract additional supporters. Failing this, he will be forced to follow on a path blazed by Sanguinetti – the extensive use of the presidential veto power.

The National Party also won 16 of the country's 19 mayoral races, but this impressive performance can hardly be considered a sweep as the Nationals lost in Montevideo, the nation's capital and sole large urban center. Montevideo is home to some 47 percent of the country's population, which barely tops three million; no other city can boast over 100,000 inhabitants. And in the capital, the leftist coalition Frente Amplio emerged victorious. The Frente consists of Communist Party, the Socialist Party and several smaller groups.

The mayor-elect is Tabaé Vásquez, a medical doctor who derives much of his popularity from a stint as president of the football team Progreso, a perennial loser that broke a decades-long string of poor performances last year. In many Latin American countries, football clubs play a social as well as an athletic role, and Vásquez went even further than usual. Progreso became involved in a number of community activities, most importantly in the construction of a child care center and health clinic in a poor neighborhood on the outskirts of town. Vásquez intends to use this experience as a pilot project for municipal programs. •

Reading, Writing... and Reaction

The three R's will become four if reactionaries are able to establish virtually white-only private schools with public assistance

The pawns in a reactionary counterattack

Debate in Namibia, especially within the South West African People's Organization (SWAPO), is focusing on the country's new constitution, which will guide the country into indpendence. Meanwhile, groups of conservative whites are maneuvering to protect as many of their privileges as possible.

One early battlefield is education. Leading the onslaught is the moderator of the "whites only" Dutch Reformed Church in Namibia, Reverend Cobus de Klerk. De Klerk heads a group of five German and Afrikaans churches which are trying to ensure the continuation of apartheid education after independence.

The group has formed a private company, the Interdenominational Association for Christian Education, that will run 16 schools using the German and Afrikaans languages to teach a curriculum modeled on a neo-Nazi system employed throughout South Africa's white-only state schools. The group wants to lease school facilities from the state.

South Africa's Colonial Administrator General Louis Pienaar gave the go-ahead to the project. De Klerk says lawyers have assured the company that the contract would be binding on any post-independence government.

De Klerk says the company is aimed at ensuring that Afrikaans and German children receive "mother-tongue" education. But a 1982 survey of languages used in Namibian schools, conducted by the South African colonial administration, puts the lie to this ploy. The breakdown of classroom use of various languages showed that only 24.1 percent of all instruction was in Afrikaans and 3.7 percent in German.

While the survey turned up virtually no instruction in English, 89 percent of respondents to a parallel questionaire declared that English was preferred for "self advancement" as well as for a national language. More than 50 percent expressed a desire for English-language instruction.

One of SWAPO's first pronouncements after the constituent assembly election was that education in independent Namibia would be conducted in English.

Consequently, supporters of SWAPO and independence say the real agenda of the new educational company is to preempt the move to English and the implied equal (non-racial) school system while at the same time securing separate facilities for white children.

A SWAPO spokesperson stated that "We have no problem with private schools, but they must build their own facilities – not appropriate resources from the state. They must also follow the broad terms of the new national curriculum."

Under apartheid colonialism, primary education was downgraded. State schools for black children were few, poorly serviced and staffed by teachers with little or no training.

The only alternatives for black children were church-run schools and a few cooperative institutions sponsored by development agencies like Oxfam. Secondary and university education was essentially closed to blacks.

SWAPO has called for a completely new educational system, based on a new nine-year primary school program, which would be compulsory and free. The aims would be to provide basic literacy and mathematics, introduce practical education to counter years of colonialism, and offer some professional training. Primary education could be conducted in a "home language" – including Afrikaans and native African languages.

Secondary school education will be in English, with optional classes taught in "home languages." Unlike the current South African white-only system aimed at preparing students to continue onto college, secondary education will strive to provide what SWAPO says will be "general education and occupational competence within the context of a national development framework."

The select few who continue onto college will be encouraged to fill technical and professional niches important to the nation: medicine, engineering, fisheries, mining, etc.

In opposition to this post-independence vision, De Klerk and his company offer "Christian-based mother-tongue education." He maintains that the initiative is "definitely not an attempt by Afrikaans speakers to perpetuate a system of apartheid."

But local observers see the move as the first in a series of tactics by reactionaries unwilling to accept the end of colonialism. "By their move they are implying that in the future there will be an intolerance for Christianity by an independent government and that English will be the official language to the exclusion of all others," said one observer. • *AIA*

Back with the IMF

A new economic program has the IMF seal of approval, but before any new loans begin to flow, the country must resume payments on its debts to that body and the World Bank

President Kaunda: toeing the IMF line in search of new loans

*By John Mukela**

Zambia, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank appear to be approaching a reconciliation. Two-and-a-half years ago, a disagreement over economic reform policies led to an end of IMF balance-of-payments support for Zambia. The country also suffered a loss of aid for development programs.

Now, however, the government has drawn up a policy framework paper (PFP) which has received a nod of approval from the IMF and the World Bank, establishing the basis for renewed cooperation. According to Finance Minister Gibson Chigaga after talks in Washington with the IMF and the World Bank, the two institutions reviewed the PFP and found it acceptable.

The program tackles issues such as exchange rates, liberalized import regulations, reductions in money supply and budget deficits, the decontrol of consumer prices and a lifting of subsidies. To reduce dependence on the country's reliance on copper exports, the government plans to increase growth in non-metal sectors from this year's 1.9 percent to 5.5 percent in 1993, and to reduce inflation from this year's 95 percent to 15 percent in 1993.

President Kenneth Kaunda's main preoccupation at present is to woo more loans from donors and to bail out an economy close to collapse.

His latest strategy has included far-reaching measures, chief among which are a 47 percent devaluation of the kwacha, the issuing of new currency and moves towards ending government subsidies on almost all commodities. The last time the government tried to reduce subsidies on maize meal – the staple food – rioting broke out.

Showing renewed confidence, Western donor governments have begun dangling aid carrots, promising more assistance if Zambia demonstrates the will to press ahead with its reforms.

As part of the PFP, a program of investment in the public sector is also under way. Projects have been carefully selected with an emphasis on completing those already underway and those aimed at badly needed rehabilitation. Plant, machinery, roads and general infrastructure are given top priority. New projects will no doubt be undertaken but must have a high economic rate of return.

Some of the changes are already yielding results. The currency reform has brought excess money down to manageable proportions and traders now bank most of their money for fear of further government action. In the last change, many were caught unawares, and those who had hoarded money in their houses wound up having to pay a 50 percent withholding tax.

Discrepancies, however, still remain. For instance, while a quarter of the government's total budget is swallowed up by military expenditures, spending on health services and education has dropped alarmingly. Twenty-five years after independence, the government has turned away from electoral promises based on Kaunda's humanistic society of "free health and education and an egg a day for everyone."

The government recognizes, however, that it will have to retain some protective measures for the most vulnerable groups of people. At present it intends to retain coupons for maize meal for the benefit of the lowest income groups, provisionally retain the fertilizer subsidy for small-scale farmers, and provide financial incentives to encourage the resettlement of urban dwellers in rural areas.

Other potential social projects are under consideration, but Zambia needs to borrow more to finance these efforts. Although the rift with the IMF appears to be resolved, new monies from that body and the World Bank will only begin to come in when Zambia begins to once again repay its debts to the two institutions. Zambia currently owes US$900 million to the IMF and US$150 million to the World Bank. Zambia also needs IMF backing to reach an agreement on new terms of repayment on its US$7 billion foreign debt.

It is clear that even with the best of intentions, Zambia cannot fully service its debt on a regular basis without a serious impact on the economy which could result in renewed unrest. •

* Panos. The author is a development journalist in Lusaka, Zambia.

Crumbling Country

A decades-old struggle between the Ethiopian government and several insurgent forces is rapidly coming to a climax. What is left of Ethiopian unity depends on its army, which has been suffering major military reverses

*By A. M. Babu**

Ethiopia could soon become the first modern African country to disintegrate.

Reports indicate that government forces are retreating in disarray in the face of a large-scale offensive by the Ethiopian insurgents. Their advance forces are said to be approaching the capital, Addis Ababa.

This dramatic turn of events came soon after the government received the largest single shipment of military equipment ever provided by the Soviet Union to its African ally.

The strategic aim of the guerrilla offensive is to cut Addis Ababa from the port city of Assab on the Red Sea. The road to Assab is the last remaining link between the capital and the northern part of the country where the government for 28 years has been waging a bloody war against Eritrean secessionists.

Although the Ethiopian army in Eritrea is reported to be digging in, its position is now highly vulnerable. Troop morale is already low following the crushing defeats the army suffered in 1988 at the hands of both Eritrean guerrillas and insurgents from Tigre province. These defeats led in turn to an attempted military coup last year which Ethiopian strongman Haile Miryam Mengistu crushed by executing nearly 115 generals and senior officers. Some 500 soldiers were also imprisoned.

The current offensive by anti-Mengistu Ethiopian forces – the new Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Movement (EPRDM) which includes the Tigre People's Liberation Army (TPLA) – has already cost the government army an estimated 20,000 men. Western observers report large-scale desertions to the guerrillas.

The EPRDM has gained popular support throughout Ethiopia. That fact, plus their recent impressive victories, is prompting speculation here on the possible disintegration of the Ethiopian state.

In fact, it is only the government army that is keeping Ethiopia intact. If riding on the successes of the Ethiopian insurgents the Eritrean rebels now manage to destroy the backbone of government forces on the Eritrean front, Ethiopia could degenerate into warlordism.

Unlike the Eritreans, the Tigreans are not fighting for secession. But their goals do not extend beyond Tigre province. Despite their alliance with other Ethiopian opposition forces, notably the Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement, they would never be able to govern Ethiopia as a whole.

The potential breakup of Ethiopia is viewed with alarm throughout Africa because its consequences would spill over throughout the region. Observers believe this is why President Daniel Arap Moi of Kenya has agreed to mediate between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

But with Mengistu still in power, the chances of settling the Eritrean question in Nairobi are remote. Despite his willingness to talk to the Eritreans, Mengistu is still reportedly under the illusion he can win the war in Eritrea, especially with the recent infusion of supplies from the Soviet Union.

Even the Eritreans worry about the prospect of Ethiopia's disintegration. While they want independence, they don't want to live next door to a country that is unravelling. That is why they are making every effort to cooperate with the mediation efforts of former U.S. President Jimmy Carter.

The Soviet motives on the Horn of Africa remain unclear. While Cuba has already withdrawn its military personnel from Ethiopia, the Soviets still have 3,000 military operatives in the country. Yet Moscow has paired its massive new supplies to the Ethiopian army with calls for a peaceful solution and even the appointment of a special envoy to the EPLF.

The one certainty on the Horn is that the decades-long struggle between Ethiopia's central government and a variety of insurgent forces is coming to a climax and it doesn't look as if the government can hold. •

Mengistu: administering disintegration?

Nairobi talks: Al-Marin of the EPLF, Ethiopia's Ashagre Yiglety and Carter

Wearing Down

The destabilization war continues to take its toll

*By Jane Springer**

Kids are hard hit by destabilization

The arrival of the new year brought little reason to rejoice in Mozambique, a country suffering from a war of destabilization which has ravaged its people and economy for 10 years.

Extrapolating from 1988 U.N. estimates, over one million people – half of them children – have died due to the effects of the war since 1980, when the country's population stood at 12.1 million. And that figure excludes soldiers killed in combat.

Most killing and starvation takes place in the countryside, but no Mozambican is untouched by the war. Everyone has at least one relative, friend or workmate among the victims. Many urbanites have taken in their rural relatives who left the land, fleeing from attacks carried out by the National Resistance Movement (MNR), popularly and officially known as "bandits."

War-ending strategies were the main item on the agenda of all discussions leading up to the Fifth Congress of the ruling Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO) last July. President Joaquim Chissano announced a week prior to the congress that his government had asked Mozambican church leaders to meet with MNR representatives in Nairobi, Kenya. Chissano also outlined a set of 12 preconditions for direct negotiations.

A feeling of euphoria overtook the country in anticipation of peace talks, but the party congress came and went. Most people overlooked the facts that the FRELIMO party left Marxism-Leninism out of its statutes and program and reformed its party membership policy – permitting applications from previously banned groups like religious people, polygamists, and business people.

Talks between the MNR and Mozambican church leaders and between the MNR and mediators President Daniel Arap Moi of Kenya and President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe were held in great secrecy during August.

Then the MNR's own 16-point document appeared, an impossible attempt to set itself up as a legitimate political party.

Although news of the discouraging results of the talks and the MNR's policy document were not published in the local press, people knew that the talks were getting nowhere.

The army, aided by Zimbabwean troops, scored a number of military successes in July and August, the most important being the overrunning of the MNR headquarters at Maringue, in Sofala province. Mozambican government troops also managed to recapture several small towns.

But attacks near the capital increased, notably against power lines linking Maputo to South African energy sources. They were sabotaged seven times between July and November, forcing periodic rationing that had a devastating effect on industry, essential services, and daily life.

In spite of the desperate state of much of the country's population, most people continue to support the government's stand on peace talks. They want the government to talk but do not accept the MNR as a political party. "How can someone who destroys schools and hospitals be a minister?" a woman in Manica province asked the president at a rally in November.

The second issue on the tongues of Mozambicans is the government's Economic Recovery Program (PRE) and its negative effects, especially on the poor. Now entering its fourth year, the structural adjustment program put in place with the support of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund had devalued the Mozambican currency, the metical, by 2,025 percent by the end of 1989.

Foreigners may be struck by how much wealthier the country is – there are goods in the stores and food in the long dormant cafés and restaurants. Yet the wealth belongs to a privileged few. The minimum industrial wage buys only half of a six-person family's nutritional requirements, not to mention other needs. But these workers are doing well compared to the impoverished majority.

Few were encouraged by Prime Minister Mario Machungo's November announcement that the World Bank and international donors had agreed to fund a new program to aid the urban poor – offering school lunches in the cities, job programs and aid to the elderly and disabled. "It will probably take months before it starts, and then imagine the lines!" commented a woman who sells peanuts and gum on the street. People earning more than the minimum wage will not benefit from the program.

Mozambique's emergency program (in large part supplying food aid to displaced people in the countryside), generously supported by the international community in its first two years, was critically underfunded in 1989. The willingness to fund the economic recovery program rather than the emergency program appears to signal an increasing amount of foreign influence over an ever weaker Mozambican government infrastructure.

Although some see hope in the continuing pressure on South Africa's President F.W. de Klerk to reform the apartheid system, most Mozambicans believe that only with the end of apartheid will there be a genuine opportunity to eliminate the MNR and begin the monumental task of national reconstruction. •

*AIA

The Unmaking of a Nation

After nearly a decade, the Senegambia confederation appears to have disintegrated

By Daniel Mensah Brande

The death of a nation has been announced in Africa. That is, the West African confederation Senegambia, which joined Senegal and Gambia, has disintegrated.

In an official statement in Dakar, the Senegalese capital, President Abdou Diouf said, "There is no serious prospect for progress with regard to the Senegambian integration. Senagambia is for tomorrow and not for today." In a diplomatically-worded declaration in Banjul, Gambian President Dawda Jawara noted that "the special and the privileged relations" that his country has with Senegal would "have to be reviewed."

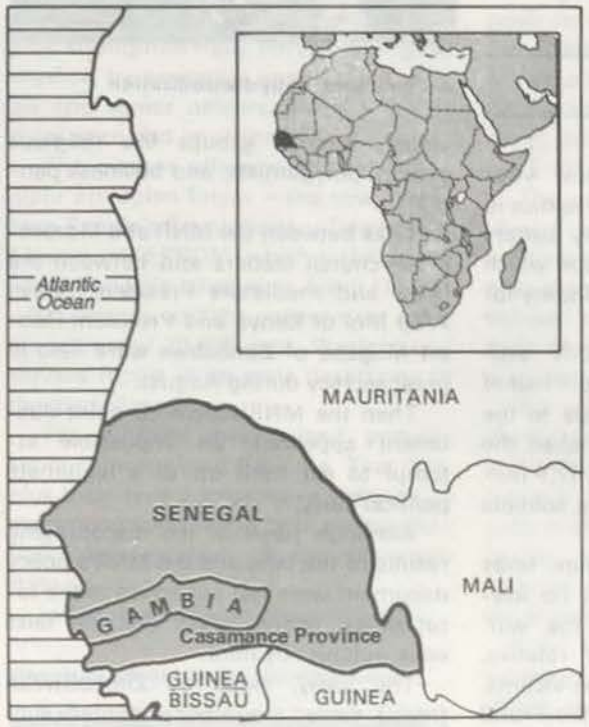
The confederation embracing the two neigboring states was created eight years ago but was unable to withstand a series of recent strains in the relationship between the two countries.

Gambia, Africa's smallest independent state with an area of 11,369 square kilometers and a population of about 700,000, is a narrow sliver of land located in the belly of its larger neighbor Senegal, which has an area of 196,000 square kilometers and a population of about 7.5 million.

Events in the two countries have long been linked. An old saying goes, "Whenever Gambia gets convulsion, Senegal suffers from a stomachache."

In 1981, when the 28-year-old Marxist Kekoi Samba Sanyang staged an abortive coup attempt in Gambia, Senegal nearly suffered a "political heart attack." It dispatched troops to defend the government in Gambia, a country that lacks regular armed forces.

The incident led to the birth of Senegambia later that year. The confederation was based on the integration of the countries' armed and security forces, economic cooperation, a single monetary unit, and coordination in the areas of foreign policy and communications.



Three institutions were responsible for administering this agreement: the presidency, the Council of Ministers, and the Confederal Assembly. The accord stipulated that the president of Senegal would double as the president of Senegambia, and that the vice president would be the Gambian head of state.

The union was consumated despite the countries's different colonial legacies. Senegal threw off the yoke of French colonialism in 1960; Gambia won independence from the British in 1965.

Until 1981, Gambia was considered an "oasis of peace" in an otherwise chaotic African desert. The coup attempt prompted its entrance into the confederation. The union was proposed by Senegal, which was motivated by both economic and political factors. First, it wanted to prevent its farmers from smuggling groundnuts into Gambia. Both Dakar and Banjul relie on groundnut exports for foreign exchange, but the domestic price is better in Gambia. And maybe more importantly, Senegal wanted to assure political stability in its "belly," especially since any changes there would surely have repercussions at home.

Two additional factors helped seal the union. The largest ethnic group in both countries speak the Wollof language. This fact helped attract popular support for the idea. Also, the two countries are among the few in Africa that practice Western-style multiparty democracy.

But the 1981 treaty that wrought the union was vague and even seemed dated at birth. Senegal considered it to be a binding agreement, while Gambia argued that it was merely a statement of intent. There was even disagreement over the the date of the confederation's founding. Senegal insisted that Senegambia was created on December 14, 1981 – the day the treaty was signed; meanwhile, Gambians decided they would commemorate January 1, 1982. A compromise founding date was finally agreed upon: February 1, 1982. However, some Senegalese still complained; they said it was too close to Gambia's February 18 independence day.

All of this served to undermine the working of the confederation. But recent events struck the fatal blows: the communal violence between Senegal and Mauritania; the maritime dispute between Guinea Bissau and Senegal; the

Diouf: "No prospects for progress"

separatist movement that is fighting for the creation of a sovereign state in the Casamance Province of Senegal; and the signing of a military pact between Nigeria and Gambia.

Under the Senegambian treaty, aggression against either of the two countries is considered as an attack on both. But during the Senegal-Mauritania crisis in early 1989, Gambia refused to stand behind Senegal and condemn Mauritania. Instead the Gambian administration tried to play the role of mediator between the two states.

In contrast to Dakar's action in 1981, when 3,000 Senegalese troops helped put down the coup attempt in Gambia, Banjul ignored its confederate partner's request to send a token force to patrol the disputed Senegal-Guinea Bissau border last year. The dispute between Dakar and Bissau is over the rights to offshore oil that Senegal discovered along the countries' maritime border.

Senegal's President Diouf interpreted this refusal as a violation of the Senegambian treaty and accused his Gambian counterpart of siding with Guinea Bissau. Diouf is also worried that Gambia and Guinea Bissau will provide bases for separatist dissidents from the southern Senegalese province of Casamance. Both Guinea Bissau and Gambia share borders with Casamance.

Early last year, Gambia signed a defense pact with Africa's most populous nation, Nigeria. Gambia had found a new godfather and could be assured of security assistance independent of Senegal.

Around the same time, President Jawara proposed an amendment to the Senegambian constitution that would allow him to assume the presidency of the confederation. Poorly received in Dakar, this move combined with the other developments to put Senegambia on its death bed. •

Relentlessly Occupied

A visit to the West Bank by an Israeli solidarity delegation unveils the realities of occupation: restriction of movement, imprisonment and persistent harassment

*By Rayna Moss**

At the entrance to the al-Amari home in Abu Dis, a village a few kilometers east of Jerusalem, a group of Israelis is met by three-year-old Liana. Liana's story is symbolic of life under occupation.

While pregnant with Liana, her mother was placed under administrative town arrest and restricted to her village for six months. From sundown to sunrise, she was confined to her home. When the expectant mother inquired what she was to do if she went into labor at night, the military commander replied that she could call him at home to obtain special permission to travel to the nearest hospital some kilometers away.

At the time, Liana's father was serving an 18-month prison term as an alleged member of the Palestine Liberation Organization. An intensive solidarity campaign saved Liana from spending her first days behind bars. Her mother had announced that she would not ask permission to give birth, and so expected to be arrested for violating her town arrest.

Liana's mother has spent 18 months under town arrest during the past four years. A leader of the Palestinian women's movement in the occupied territories and a trade unionist, her requests for travel permits to attend numerous international congresses have been rejected by military authorities.

Ironically, her fruitful efforts to unite Israeli and Palestinian women activists seem to have made her a target. She is presently serving her fifth town arrest order, simultaneously with her husband. The terms are so harsh that they are prevented from escorting their daughter on her five-minute trek to preschool.

Israeli peace activists made a solidarity visit to another family member, Liana's aunt Fatma, also under town arrest. Not content with restricting her movements and effectively preventing her from reaching the school in a nearby town where she taught for 21 years, military authorities fired her, claiming that she abused her post by inciting pupils and teaching politics. Fatma's students are aged six and seven.

Authorities began to harass her in 1980 when she took part in a three-month public school strike for union recognition. Since then, her qualifications as an instructor of Arabic and literature were ignored, and she was relegated to a primary school. When authorities were unable to find fault with her professional performance, they admitted that she was fired for her "ideas and views."

Fatma calls even this a poor excuse. The real reasons, she states, are her trade union activities, her involvement in the women's movement, and the Israeli campaign against the nationalist leadership in the occupied territories.

How will this youngster remember the Israelis?

For some members of the Israeli solidarity delegation, the visit is their first taste of "enlightened occupation." Some find it hard to believe that a sweep of a military commander's pen can rob a person of the right to work or visit a relative a few minutes away. The extent of the military commanders' power over the lives of residents of the occupied territories is illustrated in the room in which the visit takes place. Despite its cracked and precarious roof, the house has not been repaired because occupation authorities have denied the family building permits.

The visitors ply Fatma with questions. How have her friends and acquaintances reacted to her town arrest? "Those who were always close and supportive of my activity became closer, while those who did not approve before moved further away," she responds.

What are the effects of the restriction on her social life? "With Arabs, it is customary to return visits, but now, people visit me and I can't visit them, so some just stop coming."

The members of the group offer to help contact human rights groups, write letters and organize protest actions. Fatma is pleased. A campaign has already been started by dozens of nationalist figures, her union, her women's committee, as well as by democratic trade unionists in Israel. Postcards bearing the demand that she be returned to work have been sent to the minister of defense.

This campaign is probably the best chance she has of getting her job back. If this fails, she is almost certain to lose any chance of teaching again, at least as long as the occupation lasts. Fatma expected her town arrest order to be renewed after the first six-month period. She was right.

The delegates leave, Liana joins her aunt to show us out. The visitors cannot help wondering which Israelis the child will remember when she grows up: those who come at night, with guns, to search her home and arrest her parents, or those who come by day, with messages of solidarity and friendship. •

* Third World Network Features/Middle East International. Rayna Moss was part of the solidarity delegation mentioned in this article.

Agricultural Resistance

Israeli occupation has disturbed agriculture in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, but as in other spheres, the Palestinians are organizing themselves to fight back

*By Ahamad Ashkar**

Tal, near Nablus (population 3,500), is considered by the Israeli security forces to be one of the West Bank's quieter villages. But in August 1988 a local youth threw stones at military vehicles entering the village to take down Palestinian flags and remove graffiti. As a result, the army cut off the residents from the outside world, laying siege for 35 days.

Like most villages in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Tal is agricultural, and people there raise cattle and plant trees, especially fig trees. One villager, a university student, stated that during the siege, the village lost over US$87,000 from fig sales and that cattle raisers lost US$52,000.

In September 1988 in Tulkarm, Israeli bulldozers uprooted 150 guava and citrus trees, charging that they provided cover for those throwing petrol bombs at the army. In Hebron, Israeli authorities bulldozed some land and in the process uprooted more than 30 grape vines belonging to a local farmer.

In the Gaza Strip, Israeli shovels damaged over 100 citrus trees, and demolished a guard's four-room hut where he lived with his large family. Again, the excuse was that the trees had been used as a shelter for those throwing petrol bombs.

These examples draw attention to the agricultural losses wrought by Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

In the 1940s, near the end of the British Mandate, Palestine's agricultural output amounted to 90 percent of total national production, distributed among all branches of agriculture, including cattle farming and fishing. By 1949, following the Rhodes Armistice Agreement, Israel took over 73 percent of Palestine, all but for 500,000 *dunums* (equal to 2.2 acres or 0.9 hectares) which are owned by Palestinians inside the green line.

During over two decades of occupation, Israel has taken over 3.4 million *dunums* of West Bank land, most of which was registered as state land in the name of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Because of the topographic conditions in much of the West Bank – the land is mountainous and stony – and the political situation under occupation, farmers depend largely on rain water rather than irrigation.

Olive and almond trees predominate, though grain fields are also in evidence. Most West Bank residents make their livings from agriculture, although accurate statistics are not available.

One-third of the land in the Gaza Strip – 120,000 *dunums* – has been confiscated from its owners and transferred to Israeli settlers. Together with population growth, this has caused the ruin of the agricultural sector where, nowadays, it is mostly composed of citrus trees.

Since 1967 Israeli authorities have confiscated land, restricted water supplies, prevented the establishment of independent national industries, and filled local markets with Israeli produce. Palestinians continue to cultivate their land while doing double duty in the Israeli labor market.

Since the start of the *intifada* (uprising), the approximately 100,000 who work inside the green line have suffered losses in income. And the army has resorted to economic attacks in addition to physical repression. This began in a haphazard manner, but has become increasingly more organized:

- Villages are placed under long periods of siege and curfew, during which crops are neglected. For example, when villagers in Tal tried harvest their figs while under curfew, their donkeys were confiscated – and some shot – by the army.
- Locally grown vegetables cannot be sold inside the green line. Violators have their produce confiscated or destroyed.
- Trees along main roads are uprooted. For instance last year in the Jenin area army bulldozers uprooted hundreds of olive trees belonging to the village of Silat al-Harthiya.
- Garden trees and shrubs are uprooted, allegedly because petrol-bomb throwers hide behind them. Among the places this has occurred are Qalqiliya, Tulkarm and Gaza.
- Farmers are arrested and prevented from harvesting their crops.
- Agricultural produce is damaged during raids on villages. For example, hay was set on fire in Ya'bad, near Jenin, and in Qabatiya.

Occupied harvest: watermelons for sale

* Third World Network Features/Middle East International. Ahmad Ashkar wrote this article for the London-based magazine "Middle East International," with whose permission it is reproduced.

Two specific Israeli actions in 1988 particularly harmed Palestinian farmers. First, the Roman Catholic monastery in Jerusalem, following Israeli requirements, stopped buying large quantities of grapes from Hebron for wine production. And, secondly, the government facilitated the import of chick-peas from Turkey, flooding the market at the time of the local harvest. The price fell by one third.

Farmers say that they can tolerate army actions but not the export prohibition. The Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza Strip used to export their produce via Jordan to the rest of the Arab world, especially rich Gulf states. This changed when King Hussein of Jordan announced the separation of the East and West Banks. Jordan now claims that it is no longer legally responsible for finding markets for such produce. Locals consider it just another of Jordan's maneuvers to put economic pressure on the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Things would have deteriorated anyway, maintained Abu al-Sadiq, head of the Jenin municipal agricultural and marketing department. "The Gulf war, the fall in oil revenues and the development of Jordanian agriculture, especially in the Ghur Valley, have all contributed to the decrease in the quantity of our goods which can be marketed in Jordan and the Gulf," he said.

"For instance, here it costs 140 dinars (US$400) to grow one *dunum* of citrus trees, whereas in Jordan the cost is only 50 dinars (US$145)," he noted. "Here a kilo of olive oil sells for 1.25 dinars; in Jordan it costs only 40 fils (0.4 dinar)." These figures reveal the extent of the competition. In the Gaza Strip farmers are able to export only citrus fruits.

After the European Economic Community decided to import produce directly from the occupied territories rather than through Israeli intermediaries, the Israeli Civil Administration authorized the export of 3,000 tons of citrus fruit to Europe. But in France, for example, citrus sells for about a third of what it does in the occupied territories. The Jenin area produces large quantities of onions for export, but they cannot compete with European prices: in Paris a kilo of onions costs five fils (0.05 dinar); in Jenin it costs 15 fils.

However, Palestinian farmers benefit from climatic differences that result in a citrus fruit harvest that comes two or three months earlier than Europe's. Prices for all crops are higher in Europe during this period.

During the rest of the year, Palestinians would like Arab states to pick up the import slack as a gesture of solidarity with the independence struggle. But no such move has been forthcoming.

The leadership of the *intifada*, sure of the capacity of the people to continue to make sacrifices, supervises and coordinates agricultural committees which organize production. The committees not only do planning and extension work, they also help farmers in cultivation and harvesting.

When Qabatiya was under curfew for almost two months, the agricultural committee gathered in the onion crop and put it in bags ready for sale – to cite just one example. This is proving to be the Palestinians' most effective way of challenging the authorities, bringing an end to occupation and planning their own future. •

Military Caldron

President Aquino survived the latest coup attempt, but the real victor is the military itself which continues to extract ever higher concessions as the price for its loyalty

Snuggling up with an ever influential army: Aquino reviews troops (left) and warmly greets Defense Secretary Ramos

*By Walden Bello**

The latest coup attempt in Manila failed. Aside from what one aide to President Corazon Aquino described as "the psychological demoralization" created among rebel forces by the intervention of U.S. phantom jets, a key reason for Aquino's survival was the marked absence of popular support for the mutineers. Despite the spread of corruption and continuing poverty, most Filipinos apparently still prefer to live under Aquino's bumbling democracy than under another authoritarian order, at least for now.

But Aquino's resort to North American intervention during the latest mutiny – the sixth in four years – is an admission that her formula for survival may no longer work. This strategy has been to cultivate the loyalty of the bulk of the Philippines Armed Forces (AFP) to fend off the ambitious minority that wants to impose direct military rule.

Aquino's dilemma is, to a great extent, her own making. In her struggle against dictator Ferdinand Marcos, it was the taking to the streets of hundreds of thousands of people that neutralized and eventually split the AFP. But her threat early in the current crisis to once more call on "people power" was hollow, since she had demobilized her popular following shortly after she began her presidency. Aquino chose instead to rely on Defense Secretary Fidel Ramos to keep the army loyal.

This strategy worked for a time, but it exacted a higher and higher price with every new mutiny. Early on, Aquino shelved plans to try officers for human rights abuses committed during the Marcos regime. And after the August 1987 coup attempt, she removed practically all civilian checks on the military's campaign against leftist insurgents, which had come under heavy criticism for widespread human rights abuses, including the extrajudicial execution of suspected communists.

The latest coup attempt is likely to reinforce this pattern. Many observers agree that the military as an institution is the only real victor. This uneasy and unstable coexistence of fragile parliamentary institutions and an increasingly dominant military has lent a schizophrenic Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde cast to the Aquino government, according to Philippines expert John Cavanaugh of Washington's Institute for Policy Stu-

 PNS analyst Walden Bello, author of "A Development Debacle: The World Bank in the Philippines" and a long-time human rights activist, is a research associate of the Institute for Food and Development Policy in San Francisco, California, U.S.A.

Two-faced: in 1986, Aquino decorated Honasan; in 1989, he led a revolt

dies. The recent developments indicate that "Mr. Hyde is now going to take over completely."

Like Aquino, the U.S. faces the same dilemma with the Philippine military. The image of F-4 jets buzzing mutineers armed with weapons from the US$100 million-a-year U.S. military aid program sums up this dilemma. Washington sees the 250,000-man armed forces as a key instrument in defeating the leftist New People's Army. Marcos, however, left behind a military that was heavily politicized and widely perceived as abusive and corrupt.

Thus, the Pentagon's policy in the last four years has been to "professionalize" the AFP while depoliticizing it and getting it to recognize civilian supremacy. Pentagon officials now regard this policy as a failure.

The biggest block to Washington's strategy has been the Reform the Armed Forces Movement (RAM), the shadowy military fraternity that was behind the latest mutiny. Led by the fugitive Colonel Gregorio (Gringo) Honasan and other Class of 1971 graduates of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA), RAM is popular among the AFP's 14,000-man officers corps.

RAM can be seen as the unwanted offspring of dictator Marcos. The Filipino strongman expanded the AFP to secure his personal power, but in the process the military developed a stronger sense of its own institutional interests. RAM led the military revolt against Marcos, but instead of producing a military junta, the events of February 1986 brought Corazon Aquino to the presidency.

Cory's allies move against the rebels

The most recent coup attempt may be seen as RAM's latest effort to write its preferred conclusion to the script of February 1986: the installation of the military as the country's directing elite.

RAM's ideology combines authoritarian and populist elements. Strong anti-communism is accompanied by disdain for the capabilities of civilian politicians, who are seen as weak, corrupt, and serving the interests of the oligarchy. One former RAM officer, Rodolfo Aguinaldo, who now serves as governor of a northern province, recently offered an interesting variant of RAM ideology. "For 15 years," he told one reporter, "I was after the wrong enemy (the Communist Party of the Philippines), but I came to learn that the real enemy are the corrupt politicians."

With the Aquino administration wracked by financial scandals involving the president's own relatives, it is not surprising that RAM's appeals resonate widely within the military rank-and-file. Honasan was, in fact, abel to convince at least two companies of Philippines Marines, supposedly the AFP's most professional soldiers, to lead the current mutiny. It was the Marines who put down Honasan's August 1987 coup attempt.

But even if a coup should succeed in the future, it will be difficult to maintain a stable military or military-dominated rule, and not only because of the stigma of illegitimacy that would accompany it. For the AFP is a seething caldron of factionalism. The generals now in top command positions distrust RAM, which finds its key supporters among colonels and other junior officers with field commands. Moreover, most of RAM's key members are PMA graduates, who are known to constitute a jealous in-group.

This has forced officers who entered the ranks via the reserve officers' training corps and other means to form rival fraternities to effectively jockey for key command positions.

Undivided loyalty from the AFP to a RAM dominated military junta is doubtful in the event of a successful coup. More likely, a military takeover will open the door to more coups as opposing factions of what the British magazine *Economist* has called "the world's worst army" act out their internal rivalries on the political stage. •

Based on a Special Relationship

The controversy over the U.S. bases in the Philippines continues apace as Presidents Bush and Aquino stress the "special relationship" between their countries

Absent from the formal agenda of talks late last year between George Bush and Corazon Aquino was the issue that now occupies center stage in U.S.-Philippines relations – the future of Clark Air Force Base and Subic Naval Base, two of the largest U.S. installations overseas.

While many Pentagon analysts regard Subic and Clark as the U.S.'s most important foreign bases, to a rapidly growing Filipino nationalist movement they constitute what the eminent nationalist Senator Claro Recto once described as "a dagger pointed at the throat of Philippine sovereignty."

So long as the bases remain, these influential Filipinos argue, Washington will be able to exercise undue influence on the Philippine political process.

The anti-bases movement is stronger today than it has been in decades. Filipinos remain deeply disappointed that the United States justified its 14-year support for former strongman Ferdinand Marcos on the grounds that he was vital to safeguard the bases. Now there is a widespread feeling throughout Southeast Asia that the bases are anachronistic in a post-containment era. Nationalists are further encouraged by Mikhail Gorbachev's offer to withdraw Soviet forces from Camranh Bay, 1,000 kilometers away in Vietnam, if the U.S. leaves Subic and Clark.

The nationalist argument has convinced a majority of the Philippines Senate. Recently, 15 out of 23 members called for the withdrawal of the bases when their lease expires in September 1991. A two-thirds majority in the Senate is required to ratify any new treaty extending the tenure of the bases.

Washington has indicated that it is willing to settle for less than ideal terms. It is offering the Philippines' Armed Forces joint use of the facilities. In fact, some U.S. officials are reportedly willing to turn Clark over to the Filipinos. The one thing the Washington national security establishment is determined not to surrender is Subic Bay, which served as a springboard for the U.S. naval intervention in the Persian Gulf during the "Tanker War" of 1987-88.

Washington is not without a game plan. The Philippine constitution provides for a national referendum on the bases if the government feels this is necessary. As Stephen Bosworth, former U.S. Ambassador to Manila, puts it, "If the Filipinos decide by a referendum, as provided for in their constitutional processes, that we should leave, then we shall."

But Washington hopes that pro-bases sentiment will be strong enough to guarantee victory on a referendum. In fact, despite the growing influence of anti-bases sentiment among the urban middle class and Filipino elite policy-makers, recent polls indicate that the majority of Filipinos continue to support the presence of the bases. With a pro-bases victory at the polls, the Manila Senate would then be under heavy pressure to ratify a new treaty.

In preparation for a possible vote, Washington is deploying a battery of economic weapons to insure voter approval. Glossy U.S. Embassy-produced booklets tell rural Filipinos that the bases pump more than US$500 million annually into the domestic economy. Bases authorities have apparently extended procurement of goods and services beyond the areas surrounding the bases to other regions of the archipelago. School construction projects, financed by the "Economic Support Fund" established by the recent bases compensation agreement, are being extended to most of the country's 73 provinces.

Sun screen: growing anti-base sentiment

But Washington's most effective leverage appears to be the Multilateral Aid Initiative (MAI), a U.S.-led effort to provide US$10 billion in economic assistance over a five-year period. Many Filipinos see the so-called "mini Marshall Plan" as linked to the maintenance of the bases.

And for those who do not see the connection between economic aid and the bases, U.S. Senate Minority Leader Robert Dole recently made it explicit. "That is not a threat or a club," he asserted. "That is a fact."

Anti-bases partisans charge that the U.S. game plan is already in high gear. They point to a recent resolution passed by the more conservative lower house of the Philippine Congress, calling for a national referendum on the bases. Despite her stated position of "keeping my options open" on the bases, President Aquino is playing her part in Washington's design, according to critics. Shortly before she departed for Washington, Aquino endorsed the Philippines House of Representatives' call for a referendum.

Walden Bello

Take the Money and Run

Tax evasion, smuggling, dollar salting, illegal exploitation of natural resources and corruption. Annual losses from these practices are greater than the public budget

President Aquino: facing capital flight

*By Juan V. Sarmiento Jr.**

The Philippine government is losing about US$14 billion a year in foregone revenues due to such economic crimes as tax evasion, smuggling, dollar salting, illegal exploitation of natural resources and corruption. The amount tops the estimated national budget for 1990 and equals about half the country's US$28 billion foreign debt.

The illegal exploitation of the country's natural resources – unauthorized logging and fishing, etc. – leaves public coffers some US$2 billion poorer annually. Moreover, the Economic Intelligence and Investigation Bureau (EIIB) estimates that each year the government loses about US$600 million from dollar salting, US$900 million from tax evasion and US$600 million from smuggling. And corruption drains about US$9 billion in public funds annually, says former Immigration Secretary Miriam Defensor-Santiago.

Dollar salting is the illegal transfer of foreign exchange out of the country. It is practiced mainly through the undervaluation of exports, physical transfer of foreign exchange to foreign countries, and diversion of foreign loans to other countries.

James K. Boyce, a North American economist at the University of Massachusetts, has estimated that about 60 cents out of every dollar the Philippines borrowed from foreign creditors from 1962 to 1986 left the country as capital flight.

These economic crimes, says the EIIB, weaken the government's economic health, erode confidence in the economy, and exacerbate social inequities.

If these economic crimes were cut by half, the EIIB says, the country's gross national product could potentially grow by an additional five or six percent.

But, ironically, public officials and executives of large companies are among the economic criminals. Defensor-Santiago charges, for instance, that in the agency of which she was commissioner, the CID, employees pocketed some US$90 million in public funds.

Some US$200 million, or about 30 percent of the country's infrastructure budget, is squandered yearly through "ghost" payments and padded payrolls, according to Ernesto Maceda, vice-chairman of the Senate Committee on Finance.

And Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) chief Jose U. Ong maintains that over half of potential revenues are lost due to so-called "package deals" – special arrangements between corrupt BIR personnel and big taxpayers, mostly corporations and businessmen.

Banks also have their hand in the cookie jar. Representative Hernando Perez said 36 banks, accredited by BIR and the Central Bank to receive tax payments, are diverting part of those funds. In 1984 alone, Perez says, this practice skimmed US$14 million off of public revenues. Estimates show that losses since 1975 could total US$100 million.

Other economic crimes affect poor Filipinos as much or more than the government. They include minimum wage law violations and mishandling of social security funds.

The Department of Labor and Employment stated that thousands of businesses in Metro Manila violate the minimum wage law, but are not penalized. The minimum wage law stipulates that workers in Metro Manila receive US$4 per day, but thousands receive less.

The failure of many businesses to remit employees' social security contributions has prompted many unions to strike.

Emigration is an appealing option for desperate or ambitious Filipinos, many of whom fall victim to illegal recruiters. Hopeful emigrants are often swindled out of "placement fees," money they raise by selling their plots of land or other valuables.

That is just one of a number of scams that have proliferated in the "get-rich-quick" environment that permeates the Philippines. Some two million Filipinos from 25 provinces reportedly lost about US$90 million in so-called "pyramid" schemes over a recent eight-month period. By promising high yields on investments, the schemes attract small farmers, subsistence fishermen and underpaid government employees in the provinces.

Gambling is also on the rise. *Jueteng* and other illegal games of chance are estimated to be raking in between US$1.4 million and US$2.4 million a day, amounting to about US$500 million a year. Although jueteng is illegal, casino operations have been legalized in an attempt to generate funding for social programs.

Some non-criminal activities clearly work against the poor. These include the regressive taxation system under which, according to the World Bank, poor families pay 27 percent of their incomes in taxes, while better off families pay only 18 percent.

Meanwhile, the Commission on Audit has ruled illegal the budget department's practice of automatically allocating huge chunks – currently about 44 percent – of the national budget for debt repayment. That may be the biggest crime of all. •

* *Third World Network Features/Philippine News and Features.*

Losing a Sure Thing

Rebels: Washington and Islamabad's tools?

Although Soviet troops have pulled out, the Afghan rebels aren't winning. U.S. and Pakistani interference has played a major role in their failures

*By Eqbal Ahmad**

The United States and Pakistan have managed to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory in Afghanistan. Victory had seemed certain for the U.S.-backed rebels early in 1988 when Moscow agreed to withdraw from Afghanistan – on a tight schedule and under U.N. supervision. Unfortunately, Washington raised the ante.

The Geneva Accord of April 1988 stipulated that the U.S. and Pakistan would end their military support of the mujahideen when the Soviet withdrawal began. When Washington continued arming the rebels, the U.N. and the USSR acquiesced. All parties expected a quick mujahideen military victory. By year's end the rebels' capture of Kabul appeared so imminent that for safety's sake, Washington withdrew its diplomatic staff from Afghanistan's capital.

But Kabul held out. This spring, so did besieged Jalalabad, which the mujahideen had hoped to turn into their interim capital.

Since the Jalalabad debacle, mujahideen failures have become ever more evident:

- They have not captured one Afghan town or government stronghold since the last Soviet soldier left Afghanistan;
- Rebel groups which had participated in the resistance coalition are increasingly making peace with Kabul.;
- The number of mujahideen volunteers has declined steadily;
- Infighting among rebel organizations has become bloodier, often coinciding with ethnic and tribal divisions that raise the spectre of civil war between the rebel groups themselves;
- Far from providing cohesion, the rebels' interim government now exists only on paper, concedes its foreign minister;
- Intellectuals are deserting in growing numbers, signalling the loss of legitimacy and the moral isolation of the mujahideen;
- The Jihad (Holy War) has now lost its meaning, says Hassan Kakar, a prominent Afghan scholar who spent years in Kabul's prisons.

These failures underscore one inescapable fact that was lost on Washington and Islamabad: popular support for the resistance arose out of nationalism, not out of the Islamic ideology of mujahideen organizations. When the Soviets withdrew, the resistance lost its nationalist rallying point and its Islamic fervor was unable to fill the void.

Moreover, after the Soviet withdrawal, Afghans everywhere wanted an end to the bloodiest war in their history and a return to almost any kind of peace. Instead, the mujahideen pushed for total victory. Prodded by the U.S. and Pakistan, the quarrelling rebels launched their disastrous siege of Jalalabad. While the resistance remained ideologically frozen, Kabul gained support by moderating its posture.

The appearance of independence from foreign control is as crucial to modern resistance movements as it is to governments. While the Kabul government lost its legitimacy 10 years ago with the Soviet occupation, it is the mujahideen who now appear increasingly to be the tools of Washington and Islamabad.

Just after the Soviet withdrawal, two events dramatized U.S. and Pakistani control of the rebels.

In February, a divided and under-represented rebel assembly met in Islamabad and, under obvious tutelage by U.S. and Pakistani officials, elected the Interim Islamic Government of Afghanistan – "Afghan government, made in the U.S.A.," was one merchant's quip.

On March 5, Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and Robert Oakley, the U.S. ambassador to Pakistan, decided at a high level meeting to launch the assault on Jalalabad that month. No Afghan leader was present. According to reports, anger filled the refugee camps, which are short on everything except pride.

From a grassroots perspective, the rebels also have neglected certain basic tasks. A rebel movement can only win when it out-administers the government. Yet aside from religious shibboleths, the mujahideen have offered no positive position. Their "Islamic policy" has not materialized in the country's liberated areas. Rather, their behavior has become positively un-Islamic. In the provinces captured by the mujahideen one hears shocking stories of corruption, indiscipline and excesses.

A more recent shift in Washington's preferences has further undermined the mujahideen. Last spring, the U.S. undercut Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence which had until then managed the Afghan covert operation and guided it towards its own "Islamic agenda" for liberated Afghanistan. The North American intervention confused and demoralized the mujahideen without creating a moderate alternative.

The mujahideen's problems are now fundamental. They cannot be overcome by streamlining the operation run by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, circumventing Pakistani intelligence, or by supplying more and better weapons – as is being recommended by U.S. Congressional hawks.

Afghans want peace. With missile warfare replacing guerrilla warfare, the bloodletting has worsened. The immediate need is for all the signatories to the Geneva Accord to honor their commitment, cease supplying arms to both sides, and seek a political solution. •

Rockets Red Glare

The Afghan war has degenerated into a high-technology missile battle between the Soviet-supplied regime and the U.S.-supplied mujahideen in which the primary victims are inevitably children

*By Ahmed Rasheed**

At the foot of nearby snow-covered mountains Kabul's inhabitants are struggling to survive against the barrage of U.S.-supplied rockets being fired by mujahideen and a shortage of food supplies. Children are the primary victims of the rockets and malnutrition.

On a single weekend recently, the mujahideen fired 22 rockets that killed 40 people and injured 136 others. A single Egyptian-made Sakr rocket that crashed into a crowded tea stall in a downtown bazaar on a Saturday afternoon killed 20 people and injured 45. Arriving minutes after the explosion, I watched hundreds of women, who had been attending a wedding party, clutching their children and running out of the area in panic.

Afghan army and militia units, ambulances and fire engines were immediately on the scene in what is now routine for them. They closed off the area, fearing the Sakr had a cluster warhead which could litter the ground with delayed-action bomblets that explode, sending slivers of shrapnel. Later, crowds gathered outside hospitals to locate missing relatives on the casualty lists.

The thud of exploding rockets rattles windows across the city all day now. In retaliation Soviet-made Scud missiles are fired at night from Kabul on mujahideen positions around the besieged towns of Jalalabad and Khost, close to the Pakistan border. At US$1 million each, the Scuds roar upward like a NASA moon launch, their afterburners glowing in the starry night.

The war in Afghanistan has become a high-technology missile battle between the Soviet-supplied regime and the U.S.-supplied mujahideen in which most of the victims are inevitably civilian. The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency has supplied guerrillas with Chinese and Egyptian made rockets that have a range of 45 kilometers or more enabling the guerrillas to fire them from outside the security perimeter that the regime has set up around Kabul.

Twenty children were admitted to the pediatric Indira Gandhi Hospital after the Saturday afternoon rocketing. Faradin, five years old, was playing by the Kabul river with his two elder brothers when a rocket struck. His brothers were killed instantly and Faradin now lies in hospital with his right thigh bone shattered by shrapnel, surrounded by his distraught sisters while his mother is elsewhere burying her other sons.

When he came out of shock Faradin cried for 12 hours with the pain. "He asked me why this had happened and I could not answer him," said orthopedic surgeon Dr. Ashraf who has amputated scores of injured children's limbs.

Hanifa, 10 years old and a stunningly beautiful girl, has already lost one leg, and will probably loose the other. She is severely traumatized by seeing four of her relatives killed by rockets.

The injured children, some lying two to a bed, have faces of utter despair, total incomprehension and agonized beauty. The scene is similar to hospitals in Peshawar where children of the mujahideen are treated after they have stepped on mines or been caught in an air bombardment by the government's air force.

However, Kabul's children face a new nightmare after the first winter snow fell on the mountains of Paghman outside the city. Afghan doctors say 60 percent of the city's children already suffer from severe malnutrition and the advent of winter means even more acute food and fuel shortages. "Thousands of children will freeze to death this winter because there is no fuel to heat their homes," predicts Dr. Azizullah Saidali, vice president of the hospital.

In the malnutrition ward at the Indira Gandhi Hospital even comparatively well-off Kabuli mothers bared their children's matchstick limbs and collapsed bodies. There is no fresh milk in the city; fresh vegetables are sporadic and expensive; meat is out of reach of most home budgets. Seven kilos of rice – a staple food – now costs 2,300 afghanis, compared to 800 afghanis a year ago, or the equivalent of the monthly salary of a junior doctor.

Some Afghans fear that the U.S. and Pakistan may urge the mujahideen to starve the city into submission during the winter because their basic foodstuffs must be trucked in from the Soviet Union and Pakistan. Others are optimistic, hoping that the winter snow will bring an end to the "fighting season," a phrase coined by the guerrillas. This country's few optimists hope that the U.S. and Pakistan will now reconsider their Afghan policy and go for a peace settlement, but there is little sign of that at present. •

Soviet-made, government-fired rockets return the favor to the rebels

* Pacific News Service (PNS). PNS correspondent Ahmed Rasheed, who covers South Asia for the Far Eastern Economic Review and the London Independent, reports from Kabul.

Sparkplug

Venezuelan artist Gladys Meneses does double duty: besides her own work, she passes her knowledge and experience onto children

By Bill Hinchberger

Maruska F. Rameck

Brazilian journalists at the São Paulo Bienal, one of the world's three top art shows, behaved like a bunch of 10-year-old girls outside Menudo's dressing room. During the event, held in Brazil's largest city from October to December 1989, they went bonkers for North American and European "superstars" like Frank Stella.

But when the Venezuelan Consulate held a press conference and reception for its representative at the Bienal, Gladys Meneses, only *third world* showed up. The would-be press conference became a one-on-one interview.

Meneses is a short, unassuming, 51-year-old mother of two – in sum, a quintessential sparkplug. At first, her etchings at the Bienal seemed the antithesis of her personality: large, dark, imposing. But on closer examination, one could spy a river-like ebb and flow. Her works proved as full of spunk as she is.

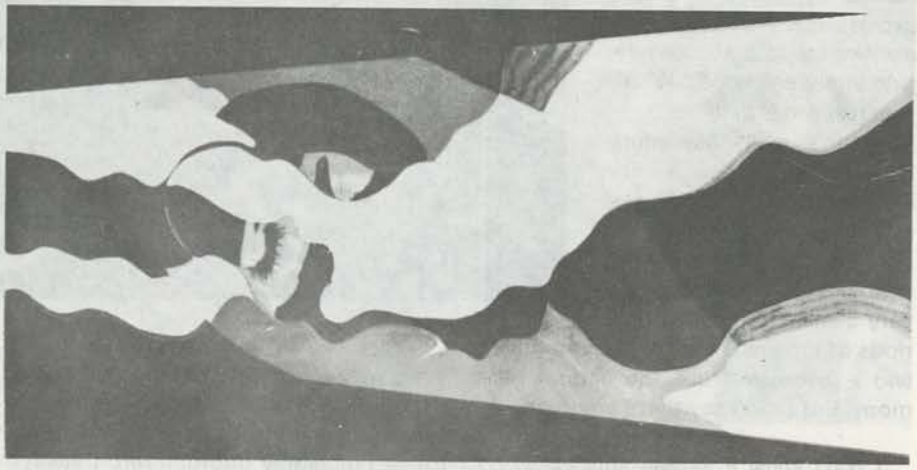
Her exposition also exuded a neo-oriental flavor, belying the three years she spent studying in Japan, where she says she learned discipline as well as technique.

But Meneses is not so disciplined as to ignore the world around her. Concerned with poverty and education, she organizes art workshops and baseball teams for Venezuelan children and urges her fellow artists to give a hand to youngsters as well. "If this generation has to attack everything by itself, it will be sad," she notes.

The catalogue for your exhibition calls you a "cultural promoter" and a social activist. You work with children, teaching art, and have even organized baseball teams. And you were a candidate for political office. Can you elaborate on these activities?

I always say that if I were North American, European, or even Japanese, I would only be an artist. That's what really attacts me. But when you live in a country like mine – well, I can't close my eyes and isolate myself. There's nothing left to do except participate – even if it interferes with my artistic production.

Maruska F. Rameck



I lived in Japan – where I dedicated 16 hours a day to my artistic work – for three years. When I returned, I was struck by the severe contrasts, the social conditions. How could I think about engraving?

Almost all of the children in my neighborhood had virtually nothing to do. In Venezuela, school lasts only half a day – the other half they have no orientation. Since where I live the most popular sport is baseball, we invited qualified people to organize teams for the kids.

I took the opportunity to work with these children on cultural projects. Together with my own children, I organized a workshop – two afternoons a week for children who paid tuition and two afternoons for children unable to pay. I tried mixing them up, but it didn't work. It's hard to believe, but there was a feeling of superiority on the part of the poor neighborhood kids.

Today, we work with 700 children a year in three parts of Venezuela. We're doing the best we can to stimulate – and this is fundamental – children aged four and five. We divide the work into four areas: color, lines, form and space. The teachers, or "facilitators," try to help the children, but they are not taught concepts – they are merely encouraged.

We also have a musical program along the same lines.

I also wanted to work with local traditions. I live in an area that has lots of tourism. People come in and invest, and the locals stop doing things the way they always have. They admire the way outsiders do things.

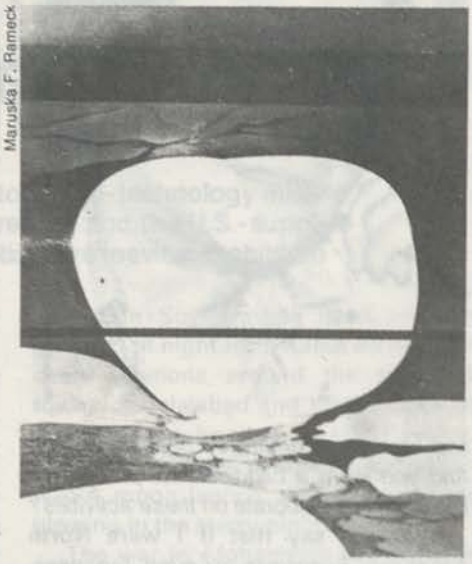
So we have started working with an old tradition, an agricultural feast, called *La Cruz de Mayo* (The May Cross). Venezuela is not as big as Brazil, but there are many regional differences among crafts, painting and folklore. For *La Cruz de Mayo*, we bring together the traditions of the West, the coast, the center, the Andes...

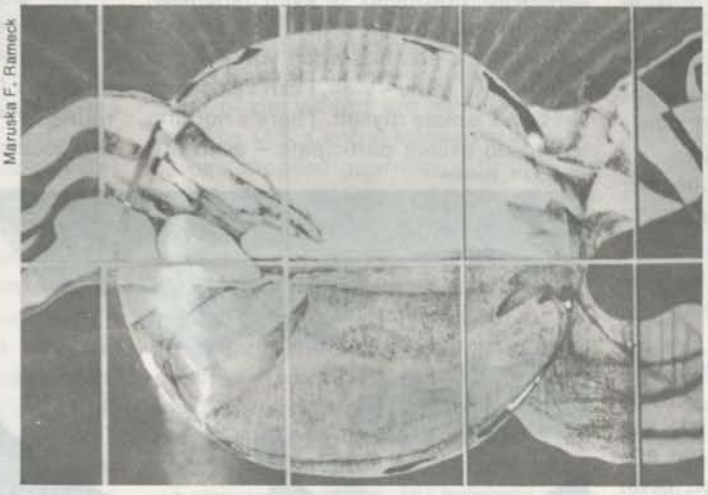
In terms of direct political activity, some people in my region work with the Communitst Party, and they asked me if I wanted to do something. And it ap-

peared that I might be able to. But as a politician, you can't do very much. There was a period when I played a role, but the work I do now is also political – and it addresses what is within my reach.

Does this activism affect your art?

Conceptually, I can't say that it improves it or makes it worse. I don't think these things are absorbed into my work or are directly evident. But I believe they nourish me as a human being. And that cannot be separated completely from the person you become when you work, although I am increasingly conscious of the fact that nothing disturbs me from the moment I take up my work. You become one with your work, its evolution.


Maruska F. Rameck


Maruska F. Rameck

In the catalogue for your exhibition, curator Graciela Pantin says that "There is no melancholy in these artistic expressions. They are merely a reference to a shadowy region in her childhood." What's your reaction to that?

I can't really say much because I'd become a critic of my own work. But the fact is that I return periodically to sites to be reunited with certain apparitions that are very dear to me. I spend periods of time near the river – a month or two – because I like the natural harmony. But I can't say that's anything...

I don't know if its has anything to do with the idea of melancholy, but you use heavy, dark colors.

My training was in ethching, and what attracted me within etching was a technique that uses nitric acid, which traditionally produces works in black and white. It seems false to me to kill one thing to impose another, because you superimpose things on the etching to create colors. The benefits are so limited that it's unnecessary. Not that I have anything against it – or because I think black is better – but it's my language.

Why the attraction to etching?

When I was in school, in the third year, we came to the etching workshop. I thought I was in love. Maybe it's because I needed to discipline myself, because I'm highly unorganized. I always want to do a lot of things at the same time – take the order out of things. But in etching, you have no other options. You have only one color to work with: either it comes out well or not. I liked this because it gave me discipline. And I liked it at first because it was a process of self-analysis – like looking into a mirror.

You lived in Japan from 1970 to 1973. Why did you go there? How was that experience?

I was married to a sculptor at the time, and I accompanied him. At first, though, I was going to stay behind because it was for a short period of time.

In terms of ethching, I had a professor in Italy who deeply admired – and taught me to admire – the Japanese system and technique. But when I arrived in Japan, I enrolled in a course at the university. I only took one semester of wood etching, which is the traditional Japanese technique, because of the wide body of knowledge they have about metal. It was so important that I had to probe deeper, and I stayed for three years.

One thing I especially liked about the country is the way they transmit knowledge. There is no egoism. The professor is there to pass along what he knows. And it is done with deep sensitivity.

Tell me something about young emerging artists in Venezuela.

Some countries are known for their music or their dance, and I think Venezuela is a center for the plastic arts.

But education is fundamental, and that's what's missing. Before, when somebody demonstrated potential, he or she could study outside the country. Today, that is prohibitively expensive.

No Venezuelan university offers a major in the plastic arts. And this cannot be. There is a program, but it is for critics and promoters. So when they say that they are going to build a museum, who are they building it for? There are galleries, but what are you going to put in them? If you don't produce anything, what are you going to put on the market? Of course, you bring things in from outside and create false values to maintain sales.

How can artists in Venezuela address this problem?

All Latin American artists – not just Venezuelans – have a double responsibility: their own work and education. We can't close ourselves off with our experience and knowledge because we have before ourselves a continent that must look within itself. We have to work with the coming generations. •

African Pop

Cultural imperialism is not what it seems after the African people are through with its products

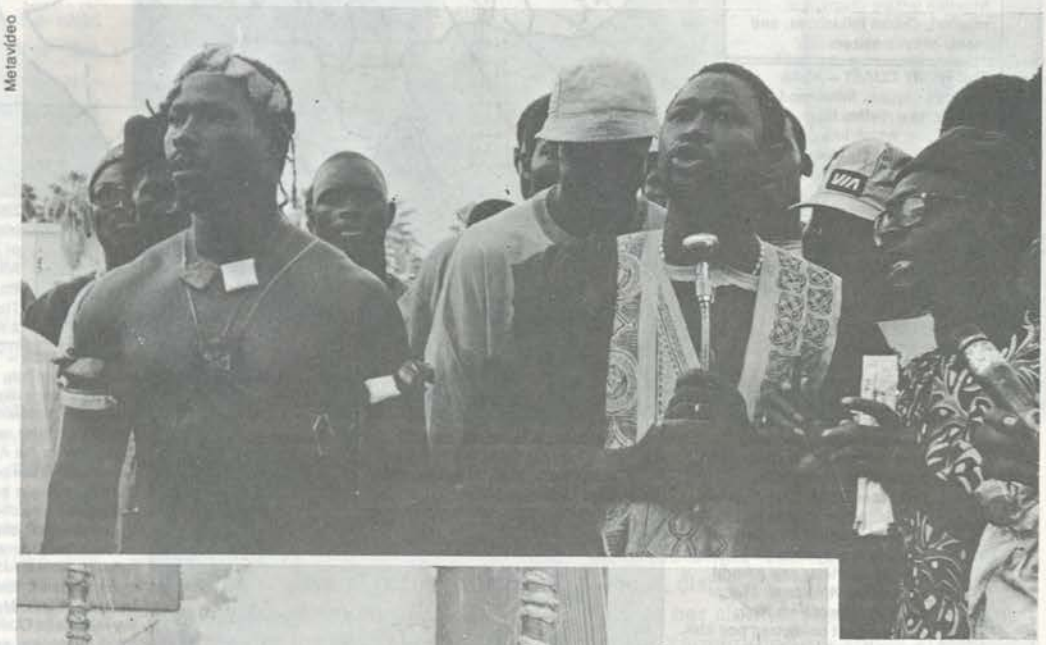
By Hermano Vianna

Third World advocates have never looked kindly on the culture industry. Instead, they have denounced the media as agents of evil, as perverse instruments bent on destroying anything authentic that's still left on the face of earth. These critics believe that the world is headed toward a dangerous and regrettable "homogenization," where cultural differences will disappear. And now, with things like fax machines, electronic mail, parabolic antennas and the like, that reality seems to be ever closing in on us.

A lamentable trend? Not exactly. This critique of the culture industry oversimplifies a phenomenon that has long been with us. What matters is not that the entire world drinks Coca-Cola, listens to Madonna or attends the Batman movie. Those things do happen, but that's only part of the story. Behind the mask of apparent global homogeneity, new differences are emerging. A less prejudiced, bolder observer can easily identify these changes.

One thing is obvious: listening to Madonna and drinking Coca-Cola in Bangkok does not mean exactly the same thing as listening to Madonna and drinking Coca-Cola in Los Angeles. The differences may seem too subtle, too insignificant, but they aren't. Imported cultural products are usurped by another lifestyle, immediately acquiring new meanings and uses. In some cases, a hasty foreigner will not notice the shift. Sometimes, however, the new meanings are so blatant, so "scandalous" that even the most naive Western tourist, unconcerned with such problems, will recognize that it's not *his* Madonna or *his* Coca-Cola.

Urban Africa provides a stark example of this cultural appropriation and the different uses of the culture industry. In large cities like Lagos and Kinshasa, this academic debate is, consciously or not, a part of daily life for millions of people. There, strategies to preserve old traditions (if this can still be seen as a desira-



Metavideo

Rather than decaying into global homogenization, Africa is creating a unique modern culture by appropriating Western influences on its own terms

MALI – The land of the Griots, a Mandingo caste of musicians and storytellers, with a tradition that goes back thousands of years. Instruments such as the kora (a 21-chord harp) and the balafon compete with electronic synthesizers and guitars. Salif Keita, a nobleman and follower of the Griot tradition, is considered by most critics as the owner of Africa's most beautiful voice. Mory Kanté, a Ghinean Griot, has led the top European charts with his Mandingo pop.

ALGERIA – *Rai:* The first electronic music in the Arab world. Synthesizers, electronic drums, disco music and reggae, all with a "Middle-Eastern" touch. Profane lyrics address topics that are proscribed under the Koran such as drunkenness, sex and automobile races. Main star: Cheb Khaled. Other stars: Cheb Mami, Cheba Fadela and Cheb Kader (Cheb means "young").

SUDAN – Nile River pop that's almost totally Arab, but still quasi-black. Big bands have begun to adopt electronic instruments. Reggae influence is apparent. Greatest star: Abdel Aziz El Mubarak.

SENEGAL – Each ethnic group has several rhythms. The *M'Balax wolof* of Yossou N'Dour, the *Peul yela* of Baaba Maal, and the *semi-Mandingo* mixtures of the group Touré Kunds and singer Ismael Lo are some examples. There are also Griot song, reggae, funk, local rhythms, Tama drums (similar to the Nigerian talking drums, but smaller), Cuban influences, and plenty of synthesizers.

ETHIOPIA – Black Africa meets the Arab world and the cultures of the Indian Ocean region. The Roha Band adds all these influences to jazz and rock, with some age-old Ethiopian traditional stuff thrown in. Mahmoud Ahmed is the biggest idol of electronic music in Addis Ababa. Newey Debebe is considered his successor.

THE IVORY COAST – Alpha Blondy's reggae. Influenced by zouk, a new rhythm from Martinique, which has produced a number of totally electronic local bands. Stars: Myanka Bell, Daouda, Jane Agnimel.

ZAIRE – *Zairean rumba:* Profuse use of guitars, accompanied by electric bass and drums. The most popular musical style in all of Africa. Major stars: Tabu Ley, Franco, Papa Wemba, Emeneya.

GHANA – The land of *Highlife*, of the first electronic sounds to emerge from Africa. Influenced by the calypso of Trinidad and Tobago and the Palm Wine music. Major stars: African Brothers International Band, A.B. Crentsil.

ZIMBABWE – *Jit*, Harare's main pop style, seems to be a mixture of Zairean rumba and the South African mbaganga. Main band: Bhundu Boys. There is also Thomas Mapfumo, in addition to a more politicized reggae.

CAMEROON – *Makossa:* Soul, jazz and local rhythms. Manu Dibango's seeds are still bearing fruit. He is the author of *Soul Makossa*, African pop music's first intercontinental hit single. Other stars: Francis Bebey, Moni Bile, Lapiro de M'Banga.

SOUTH AFRICA – The *mbaganga*, a Zulu pop rhythm from townships like Soweto, the soul of of *Graceland*, Paul Simon's popular record. It is an exception on the African pop scene as it is not polyrhythmic. Guitars, sinuous bass, accordions and choirs inherited from Protestant churches. The music is best represented on *The Indestructible Beat of Soweto*, collection on British Earthworks Records. Stars: Mahlathini and the Mahotella Queens, Ladysmith Black Mambazo, and Samaswazi Emvelo.

NIGERIA – *Juju:* Yoruban Christian music. Guitars, synthesizers and talking drums. Stars: King Sunny Adé, Ebenezer Obey, Dele Abiodun. *Fuji:* Yoruban Islamic music. A semi-Arab chant with percussion, eventually a synthesizer. Stars: Alhadji Barrister and Alhadji Kollington. *Afro-beat:* The musical style of Fela Kuti, Africa's most politicized pop idol. James Brown funk meets Yoruban polyrythms.

Fotos: Edson Alves (Metavídeo)

Zaire's Papa Wemba

Zaire's Franco

Mali's Salif Keita

ble cultural policy) must be reformulated.

Television, rock music and Western clothing are ever present. But the way Nigerian or Zairean ethnic groups use these products shows that the world is far from culturally homogenized – and that it may never be. In what follows, I will try to give a few examples of these "new differences." The reader should brace himself for a surprising safari through African modernity.

Elegance and rumba: the new rites of the Zairean youth – Early 1950s. The cultural industry in the United States is still infatuated with Cuban rhythms and has made them fashionable worldwide. Mambo, rumba, calypso, cha-cha-cha: the dance fevers surge one after the other, marketed in records, over shortwave broadcasts and even Hollywood films. African musicians soon become fascinated with the style of their Cuban colleagues and begin to copy the new arrangements. To be a success in Kinshasa, Lagos or Dakar, many of them sing in Spanish.

This is how African pop music was born – and nothing is more hybrid than African pop music. The new sound is the result of a series of cultural encounters, of several trips across the Atlantic and back. Africans of different ethnic origins, with their varied musical rhytms, first arrived in America as slaves, brought forcefully across the ocean. In Cuba, the United States, Brazil and many other countries, black musicality intermingled with European musicality, giving rise to the major styles which formed the pop music of the era – such as blues, merengue and samba. When they arrived back in Africa, these musical styles were mixed with other African styles, and so on. This story, the coming and going of cultural influences and mixtures, has no end.

Zairean musicians, when their country was still known as the Belgian Congo, paved the way in the appropriation of Cuban rhythms, transforming them into a local, immensely successful pop product. Tabu Ley and Franco invented a musical style known today as the Zairean rumba. They were also largely responsible for popularizing the Kinshasa rumba, undoubtedly the most listened-to rhythm on the African continent.

Kinshasa is known locally as Kinkiese and Kin-a-bela, a place where "life is beautiful." One might wonder: how can life be beautiful amid the chronic poverty of a country suffering for two decades under the rule of dictator Mobuto Sese Seko? To find out, I suggest that unbelievers spend a night in the Matonge, Kin's bohemian neighborhood. There is nothing comparable, nor more joyous.

There are some 500 bars and night-clubs in the Matonge, most with house bands that play into the early morning. The sound of several guitars soloing at once, a typical element of Zairean rumba, permeates the air. Here you can hear Emeneya in one bar, two doors down see the Empire Babuka show, and catch the Langa Langa Stars at the corner club. All are revered throughout Africa.

The Matonge's motto emerges straight from a French expression, oft used by Zaireans: *"faire l'ambience."* This basically means bar hopping, catching the best music, drinking the stupendous Kinshasa beer, engaging in ephemerous love affairs – and doing so in elegant style. Elegance is an obsession in the Matonge, whose bohemian elite has awarded itself with a nickname: SAPE, i.e., the Society of Ambianceurs ("those who make ambiance") and Elegant People.

Most Zairean rumba musicians are *sapeurs*, that is, they are part of the SAPE elite. And so is much of their audience. Becoming a member of SAPE is no easy feat. For that, one must be extremely elegant. Sapeurs are up on all the latest, most prestigious trends in the world of *haute coûture*. Sapeurs only wear clothes designed by people like Yohji Yamamoto, Jean-Paul Gaultier and Comme des Garçons – in other words, the world's most famous fashion designers.

Sapeurs worship a famous label on a garment. In certain SAPE contests in the Matonge, each contestant parades about, displaying the designer labels on his or her clothes. It's like this: "My suit is by Yamamoto, my shoes are by Tokyo Kumagai." The spectators root for their favorites as if at an athletic event. Everyone knows the "best" labels. When somebody announces that he is wearing a Comme des Garçons shirt, the public bursts out as if the home team had just scored a goal.

A Comme des Garçons shirt means something different in Kin-a-bela than it does in Paris. It is a prestigious symbol in both places, of course, but the prestige has a different quality. It is not a mere copy, not sheer cultural imperialism. The Comme des Garçons shirt may be the same, but only in appearance. And appearances can be misleading.

Metavideo

Forehead cash: barriers between the stage and the audience are few

Metavideo

The New Pop Boutique stands side by side with traditional garb in a stylized intertribal rhubarb

Juju music: Nigerian pop and the Yorubas – You can't discuss African pop music without addressing ethnic conflicts and cultural confrontations. I do not refer to conflicts between Africa and the West – rather to the political, religious, musical and linguistic differences among Africans themselves.

In Nigeria, these differences are enormous. The population is divided into over 250 ethnic groups with often incongruous habits. The largest groups are the Haussas, Ibos and Yorubas, and they compete for the top political positions and cultural hegemony. Nigerian pop music could never be insulated from this power game, and apparently the Yorubas are winning. The juju, fuji and Afro-beat, Nigeria's three most popular musical styles, are all Yoruba creations.

Juju is the oldest Nigerian pop rhytm. The introduction of electronic instruments, as in Zairean rumba, took place in the 1950s. Since then, juju has permeated everything – from rock to funk to reggae. Juju musicians mix synthesizers, drum machines, electric guitars and Hawaiian guitars with Yoruban percussion instruments, especially talking drums.

These innovations, while used by the biggest stars (including King Adé, Ebenezer Obey and Dele Abiodun), do not overshadow juju's role in traditional Yoruba ceremonies. It is common to hear juju synthesizers at wedding receptions and christening parties, at ceremonies that accompany the naming of a new chief, and even at funerals.

If the host is rich, one of the best known juju bands must be hired for the party. Yet the musicians, no matter how famous, play a secondary role in the ceremony. The party's host is the center of attention. The musicians are there to serve him.

In Nigeria, the barriers between stage and audience, star and public, new and traditional music do not hold as they do in the West. Audiences are adept at invading the stage to dance or throw money at the musicians. The public consists of people of all ages, proving that electric guitars themselves do not drive away older dancers. For the Yorubas, maintaining ethnic and religious unity (Christians prefer juju while Moslems go for fuji) overrides any generational conflict.

Senegalese wrestling – How can different (and often conflicting) ethnic groups live together in the same political space, in the same city? How can differences be allowed to surface in the right dosage, that is, without leading to social violence or being violently repressed? Each African country has found its own precarious way of dealing with these crucial problems. And the answers do not always come from the top. Often the ethnic groups themselves invent new rituals to "harmoniously" play out their conflicts.

In the 1980s, Senegal developed a curious approach to the issue: Senegalese wrestling. Here we are talking about a complete spectacle, held in a large stadium. All elements of modern Senegalese society are present. The wrestlers are accompanied by entourages replete with witch doctors, trainers, dancers and musicians. They are sponsored by corporations like the New Pop Boutique or Camel cigarettes. The events are broadcast on nationwide television.

Each wrestler represents a different ethnic group or a different neighborhood of Dakar. The public is divided in the same manner. Those who root for Manga II do so not because he is the current champ but because they, like he, are from the Serere ethnic group, for example. The wrestlers theatrically act out (violently, of course, but it's still theater) a conflict that could never be allowed to manifest itself on the streets.

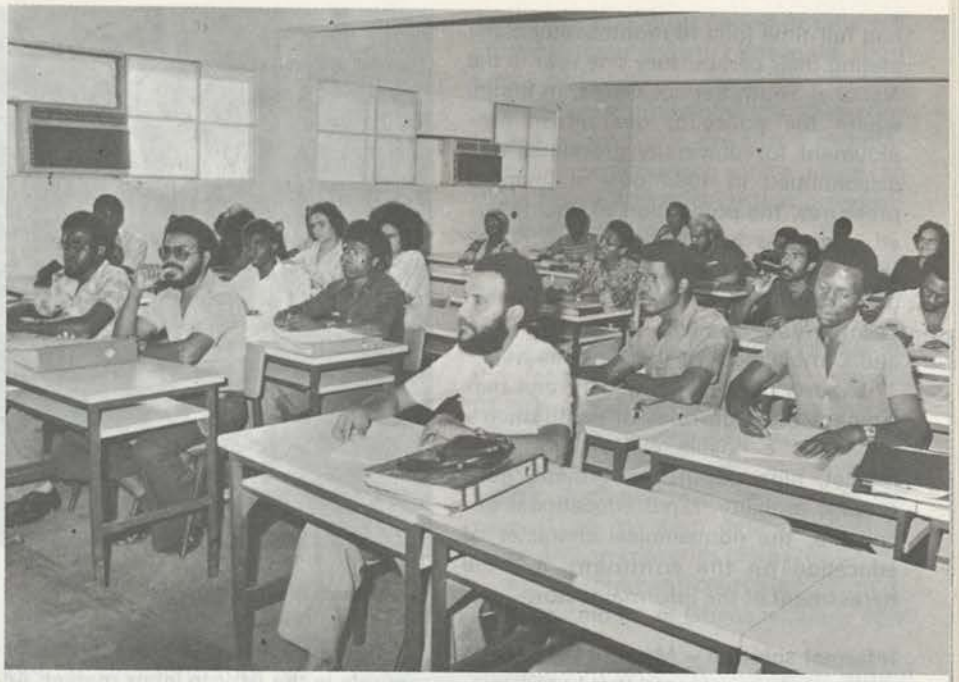
The match itself may last only a few minutes. But the preparations – especially those involving magic and music – may take hours. Witch doctors – each participant has several – prepare herb baths, burn incense and perform magic rituals. Symbolic markings of black magic spells come to cover the wrestler's half-naked bodies. Musicians highlight each stage of the show with changing rhythms. Spectators in the grandstands shout endlessly until the moment in which, after several blows, one of the wrestlers brings the other to the ground – marking the end of the contest.

Until the late 1970s, Senegalese wrestling was generally restricted to the poorer neighborhoods of greater Dakar. Now it is a national craze.

It is also a testimony to the creativity of the people. To solve their problems and produce new entertainment, anything goes: from Camel cigarettes to ethnic conflicts, from witchcraft to television. •

Hordes of Frustrated Job-Seekers

The employment picture is a depressing one for African youths



No future?: these students will face bleak job prospects upon graduation

In Ghana, youths loot graves in search of ornaments. In Nigeria, they carry out armed roberies. In the Ivory Coast, a ministry was formed to deal with youth-related drug problems. And in many African capitals, young women are turning to prostitution. Street begging is no longer a preserve of the disabled in Africa. Able-bodied young men and women are gradually entering this vocation.

These are all symptoms of the same disease: youth unemployment.

The lack of jobs for young Africans was the theme of a recent four-day international workshop organized in Accra, the capital of the West African state of Ghana by the African Center for Applied Research and Training in Social Development.

Workshop participants included representatives from each of the 16 member nations of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). They examined the youth employment environment in Sub-Saharan Africa and agreed that the lack of job openings is frustrating the current crop of young Africans – opening the doors to drugs, sex, robbery and other activites.

"Our future is very bleak," complained a 23-year-old Ghanaian who graduated from college three years ago and has yet to find work. "Most of us see ourselves as mere passengers in a sinking ship. So far as getting work is concerned, there is no future for us," he lamented.

There are 90 million young men and women between the ages of 15 and 24 in Sub-Saharan Africa – 19 percent of the region's population. However, according to International Labor Organization (ILO) estimates, 36 million youths are roaming the African labor market looking for nonexistent jobs.

The number of youths in the region is growing at an annual rate of 3.3 percent – twice the estimated rates in Asia and Latin America. The youth population of the industrial world is decreasing by one percent every year. All told, the youth population in Sub-Saharan Africa is expanding 2.7 times faster than in the rest of the world.

The problem of youth unemployment is exacerbated by the fact that the urban population of Sub-Saharan Africa is growing at the rate of six percent a year. In 1988 alone, about three million rural youths migrated to the urban centers of the region, thus putting more pressures on an already saturated labor market.

An unemployed majority – A paper presented at the workshop by Kodwo Ewusi of the University of Ghana identified three main features of youth unemployment in Africa. First, a majority of the African unemployed are between 15 and 24 years of age. In Zambia, 73 percent of the unemployed fall into this category; in urban Nigeria, the figure is 70 percent; in Kenyan cities, 69 percent. The statistics are similar everywhere: 62 percent in Mauritania, 61 percent in the Seychelles, 60 percent in Addis Ababa, 58 percent in Botswana and 52 percent in Togo. Adolescents between the ages of 15 and 19 years are the most vulnerable, that is, the least employable. In Kenya, the unemployment rate for adolescents stands 24 percent above that for young adults between 20 and 24. The trend is similar in other countries: 26 percent in Ethiopia, 36 percent in Botswana, 69 percent in Nigeria, 80 percent in Zambia, and 101 percent in Ghana.

The second feature of youth unemployment, according to Ewusi, is that young women fare worse than young men. On the average, female youth unemployment rates in the urban areas of Botswana, Ethiopia, Kenya and Zambia seem to be a third higher than those for their male counterparts.

The third feature is mass unemployment among the educated. In Nigeria, 1986 statistics show that only 58 percent of university and polytechnic graduates

had full-time jobs 18 months after completing their compulsory one year in the National Youth Service Corps. In Benin, where the policy of guaranteed employment for university graduates was discontinued in 1984 due to financial pressures, the population of unemployed graduates has been growing at the rate of 30 percent every year. University graduates in Cameroon, Guinea, Ghana, Lesoto, Mali, Somalia, the Sudan, Zaire and Zambia face job shortages as well.

Experts have pinpointed several reasons for the high rates of youth unemployment: a hostile world commodity market, high population growth, geographic mobility, rapid educational expansion, the nontechnical character of education on the continent, and the harassment of the informal sector.

Informal solution – Many of the experts at the workshop agreed that broad-based policy reforms in favor of the rural and informal economies would lead to the creation of more jobs in Africa.

Peasants file into the cities

The informal sector plays an important role in the African labor market. According to an ILO study, it accounts for most urban employment in many African countries: 95 percent in Benin, 73 percent in Burkina Faso, 65 percent in Niger and Ghana, 55 percent in Congo and 50 percent in Zambia, Togo and Nigeria. Moreover, the capital investment for the creation of a single job in this sector is very low. The ILO study says US$25.50 can create a job in Nairobi, US$42.30 in Freetown, US$355.20 in Yaounde and US$477.80 in Djibouti. The informal sector, however, needs financial and legal support from governments to expand.

Incentives are also needed to reverse the rural-urban migration trend. "We want to see the urban youth going to the rural areas to work," says Ewusi. The workshop called for educational reforms in Africa that would place more emphasis on technical and vocational education. It also asked African governments to encourage youth participation in developing and implementing youth employment programs. •

Daniel Mensah Brande *

* The author is a journalist from Accra, Ghana.

Privatized Wave

African leaders espouse privatization of state companies in return for more foreign loans. But Africa's basic economic problems will remain unsolved

*By Guy Arnold**

Few if any African countries have resisted the wave of privatization that has overtaken the continent in the past five years. During the independence era, most African states proclaimed belief in some form of socialism that carried with it a measure of state control. Now, battered by a decade of economic decline and desperate to apply remedies to their ailing economies, country after country has adopted privatization measures.

However, this is being done less in the hope that such measures will actually solve any problems than as a means of appeasing the Western donors who grant aid and assistance. They adore privatization as if it were a latter-day economic god.

Privatization has been applied together with the so-called liberalization programs that were introduced following donor and International Monetary Fund (IMF) pressures for reform – called structural adjustment or economic recovery programs. Various African countries, with varying degrees of reluctance, have accepted their medicine, got back onto paths of (Western) economic rectitude and so obtained the vital IMF "seal of approval" without which it is increasingly difficult, if not impossible, to reschedule debts or obtain more aid. Privatization has been part of the package deal.

A few random examples are illustrative. In mid-1986 Congo lauched an IMF-sponsored economic stabilization program. It included restrictions on both current and capital spending and the sale of government shares in all but seven parastatal firms.

Rwanda has recently published a new investment code. Despite ideological opposition, the government is moving away from public sector enterprises. It is selling off to the private sector a number of its state-run enterprises including a printing works, a PVC factory, a road haulage company and a number of hotels.

Back in 1981, the Ivory Coast adopted an IMF-World Bank inspired austerity program which has included "the reorganization of state companies," a euphemism for privatization measures.

Two West African countries deserve particular attention in the privatization game: Ghana and Nigeria.

Ghana: the IMF model – Ghana is currently privatizing most state-owned firms and has been so enthusiastic in the process that is has become the showcase for World Bank-IMF support and encouragement, receiving approximately US$1 billion in aid a year.

However, the country has had to put up with two unhappy outcomes, both currently emerging. The first concerns the need of the IMF to show that its policies are working. The second raises the question of just who gets control when privatization takes place.

Those Western agencies most determined to force privatization upon unwilling African or other Third World states must have some successes to prove that the process works. Ghana's economy, therefore, must reflect strength. Yet real improvement would require a long-term rehabilitation process to address years of neglect. Privatization alone cannot solve the problem. But large amounts of aid pumped into a country over a short period of time will obviously spur growth rates in the short term.

And if the predominantly state-controlled economy is privatized simultaneously, those backing such a policy can claim cause and effect – that privatization sparks growth.

The second question has even more dangerous long-term implications for African nations, with their small, weak economies that are easy to penetrate. In the post-independence years, most African countries adopted measures of state control as the only way to keep transnational companies at an arm's length. And this, arguably, lies at the root of the Western determination to make African countries privatize.

As government-controlled companies are sold off in Ghana, virtually only transnational companies have the funds to buy them. Privatization can only be successfully carried out on the present big scale because Japanese, British, French, West German, Swiss and other companies are waiting in the wings to buy into the most lucrative areas.

Loading up on Western privatization schemes

Nigeria: indebted giant – During the oil boom in the late 1970s, international bankers claimed that Nigeria was under-borrowed. Then, when oil slumped, Nigeria continued to borrow based on the mistaken assumption that the oil slump would be temporary.

Now the country has debts of US$30 billion and the same bankers insist it is

* Third World Network Features. Guy Arnold is an economics writer who contributed this article to the London-based monthly magazine "Africa Events."

over-borrowed and must accept IMF-style discipline. It is a familiar story except that Nigeria is the largest black African state with an economy of great potential.

Nigeria has always had a mix of private and state enterprise. But in the past few years, with its economy in serious disarray, it has been obliged to seek Western aid and has demonstrated its willingness to privatize if necessary.

In January 1988 Nigeria embarked upon a policy under which 49 of 107 enterprises would be wholly privatized while others, such as Nigeria Airways, would remain partly state-controlled. President General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida has become a convert to privatization, arguing that parastatals have been inefficient.

But privatization is not necessarily the only road to efficiency. Reforms could be instituted. Babangida appears to recognize this, though in a overly simplified way. Prior to a recent visit to the United Kingdom, he remarked: "We believe that the policy of privatization and commercialization, along with other reforms we have introduced, will return the economy to a path of self-sustaining growth."

If only it were so simple.

Instead, one must ask a crucial question: just what is privatization supposed to achieve? Neither state control of the main sectors of the economy nor private control is responsible for the dire straits of African economies.

The trouble has other roots: first, most African economies depend on a narrow base of one or two commodity exports whose prices are determined mostly by external factors; second, they were sent reeling by the oil price increases in the late 1970s, from which they have yet to recover; and third, in part due to petroleum prices, they are heavily indebted.

Thus, most African countries have little if any room to maneuver and are exceptionally vulnerable to forces from outside which they cannot control. Malawi suffers from the fluctuations of international commodity prices far more than from its considerable state controls. Privatization does nothing to solve the crisis in commodity prices.

Privatization is an irrelevant response to most of Africa's economic problems, such as dependence upon a small number of commodities, debt, and population growth rates that pour more prospective workers into the labor market than can be absorbed. And since it is irrelevant to such issues, privatization is not a strategy for economic recovery; instead, it is a move to please Western aid donors.

Western device – Indeed, privatization is a Western device which attempts to explain away the continuing vulnerability of the poor countries to growing Western economic penetration and control. The pundits say, "Privatize and you will discover the benefits of this Western economic approach, release your industry, earn more, and then be in a position to borrow more easily from us and pay us back." But privatization will not sell cocoa, tea or copper to unwilling buyers or at better prices.

It is true that Africa urgently needs more investment and perhaps the best argument in favor of privatization is that it will help attract investors. Then the question must be: what investments and in whose hands? If it is mainly further investment for transnationals as opposed to African-owned enterprises, the long-term advantages must be weighed with the utmost care.

The huge size of African debts, relative to small economies, lies at the root of the present privatization mania. Debt servicing obligations now account for 45 percent of Sub-Sahara's export earnings; it is this urgent problem that forces acceptance of IMF programs and privatization upon otherwise reluctant governments.

Most privatization, in fact, takes the form of lessening public control for reasons of efficiency by, for example, contracting out management of an airline to a private company while the state retains the airline (as in Zaire) or leasing public sector hotels to private sector operators (as in Sierra Leone). Very little has been sold domestically for the simple reason that few local buyers have the necessary cash.

That leaves foreign transnationals, who are waiting to buy into sectors from which they have been excluded. •

A Godsend or a Pact with the Devil?

Trading a portion of the foreign debt for a promise to protect threatened rainforest: ecologists are tantalized by the idea, but critics call such moves shortsighted

*By Louise Crosby**

Trade-offs: Deforestation (left) and Brazilian debt negotiations (right)

Debt-for-nature swaps are the newest thing in forest conservation, a creative way of reducing foreign debt and protecting vulnerable rainforest at the same time.

But critics say they don't address the bigger picture and that they legitimize the inequitable economic and social order that leads to rainforest destruction in the first place.

Deals that involve the exchange of small portions of foreign debt for promises to protect endangered tracts of land are becoming increasingly popular with conservation groups. While wiping out only a tiny fraction of the total Third World debt, they are making funds available to protect thousands of hectares of irreplaceable rainforest that might otherwise be exploited or destroyed.

At least eight debt swaps have been completed since the first exchange took place in 1987. Among the agreements: US$9 million to buy and manage parkland in Ecuador, US$3 million for conservation projects at nine sites in Costa Rica, and US$250,000 to protect a 135,000-hectare forest reserve in Bolivia. The Philippines have also gotten into the act. Additional agreements have been finalized with Madagascar and Zambia, and negotiations are underway with Peru, Mexico and Tanzania. Debt-for-nature swaps were endorsed by leaders of the Group of Seven most industrialized countries at their Paris, France, summit in July.

Parks at a discount – How do they work? Using its own funds, a nonprofit organization purchases, at a discount rate from a commercial bank, a portion of a country's foreign debt. Instead of paying the discounted debt to the conservation organization, the developing country agrees to set aside an equivalent amount in local currency for forest management, or to create new protected parkland.

Banks are not big losers in debt-swap deals. They get some repayment on what were considered bad debts, plus commissions and tax rebates on what are viewed as charitable contributions.

The debt swap idea was proposed in 1984 by Thomas E. Lovejoy of the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF). The first agreement was concluded in 1987 between the Bolivian government and Conservation International (CI), a nonprofit organization based in Washington, D.C.

CI purchased US$650,000 of Bolivia's foreign debt from an affiliate of Citibank at the discounted price of US$100,000. In exchange for CI's agreement to extinguish the debt, Bolivia agreed to set aside a fund worth US$250,000 in local currency to manage and protect the 135,000-hectare Beni Biosphere Reserve in northeastern Bolivia. The government also promised to create a 600,000-hectare buffer zone around the reserve.

A more recent deal, in April 1989, involved the WWF, the Nature Conservancy and the Missouri Botanical Garden. US$9 million was purchased from the American Express Bank and the Morgan Guaranty Trust Company at the discounted price of US$1.1 million. The amount will be converted by Fundación Natura, Ecuador's leading environmental organization, into US$9 million of local currency bonds that will generate interest and principal over eight years.

The money will be used to purchase parkland and finance park management at sites in the Andes, the Amazon, and the Galapagos Islands. It will also finance the training of local forestry workers and the setting up of an information database on Ecuador's biological diversity. The database will allow for more scientific conservation and development planning.

In another deal, finalized in January 1989, the Nature Conservancy in the United States purchased US$5.6 million of discounted Costa Rican debt for

* Consumer Lifelines. Louise Crosby is a journalist researching Third World issues under a program of the Canadian agency CUSO. She is based at the Organization of Consumers Unions (IOCU) in Penang, Malaysia.

US$784,000 from the American Express Bank. The debt is to be converted into Costa Rican currency bonds valued at US$1.7 million. Paying an average yearly interest of 25 percent over five years, the debt conversion is expected to generate more than US$3 million for the protection of 355,000 acres of Costa Rican land.

Costa Rica has the most extensive park system in the Third World, with 11 percent of its land in national parks and another 14 percent under protected status. But outside these parks, it suffers one of the highest rates of deforestation in the world, losing four percent of its total forest cover each year. At that rate, no productive forest will exist outside protected areas in 10 years.

The debt-for-nature deals, however, can relieve only a tiny fraction of world debt. Third World countries owe a total of US$1.3 trillion to financial institutions. Brazil, the largest debtor, owes US$111 billion, while Venezuela and Colombia owe US$22 billion and US$15 billion respectively. So far, debt-for-nature swaps have involved less than US$100 million.

Good for everyone? – At first glance, debt swaps appear to please everyone. "The banks are relieved of troublesome debt in a respectable manner," says a recent issue of the United Nations bulletin *Development Forum*. "The local government's foreign debt burden is reduced, and the conservationists are sometimes able to quadruple their money by buying at a steep discount. Most importantly, funds are made available to protect areas where irreplaceable rainforests and indigenous populations are threatened by unsound development."

But critics see several problems. They believe that getting involved in debt swaps compromises a nonprofit organization's ability to challenge the economic order that brought about environmental destruction in the first place. Debt swaps are a stopgap solution to larger, more fundamental problems, they say. What is needed is a farsighted, comprehensive strategy for long-term change.

Critics also say development swaps risk infringing on national sovereignty, as Third World governments are obliged to divert resources into areas or projects that they do not consider priorities. Such deals would rarely be initiated by the governments themselves.

Some economists also warn that converting debt into local currency encourages governments to print extra banknotes, thus fueling inflation. Yet conservationists argue that the inflationary impact of debt swaps has been negligible.

There is also the fear among bankers that selling debts at discount prices isn't fair to countries that have kept up interest payments and maintained their credit rating.

But regardless of the varying viewpoints, debt-for-nature swaps are catching on. •

Can't See the People for the Trees

Representatives of Amazon Indians from South America made an unprecedented call on U.S. environmentalists to focus their concerns on the indigenous peoples living in the rainforests and not just on the plant and animal life of the region. They also expressed concern over debt-for-nature swaps.

The Coordinating Committee of Indigenous Peoples Organizations of the Amazon Basin (COICA), a coalition of Indian groups, recently sent a delegation to Washington, D.C., U.S.A., to meet environmentalists, World Bank officials and members of the U.S. Congress to argue for the need to recognize the indigenous peoples' land rights. COICA, founded in March 1984, represents nearly 1.2 million people from Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, Brazil and Colombia.

The meeting between five COICA members and representatives of 18 U.S. environmental groups included observers from the U.S. Congress, OXFAM America and other entities.

U.S. environmentalists have carved out a special niche for themselves in Washington political circles and have begun to exercise considerable influence on the policy-making process. But they have also been criticized for becoming insular and for showing more interest in the rainforest itself than in the people who live there.

COICA President Evaristo Nugkuag believes that the best way to save the Amazon rainforest is to recognize the rights of indigenous peoples to the land. Control of the region should be returned to the native people who have lived there for hundreds of years, he said. He encouraged U.S. environmental groups to work directly with COICA.

"We are the first inhabitants and the first to be affected. The first step in conservation should be to support the indigenous peoples," he said.

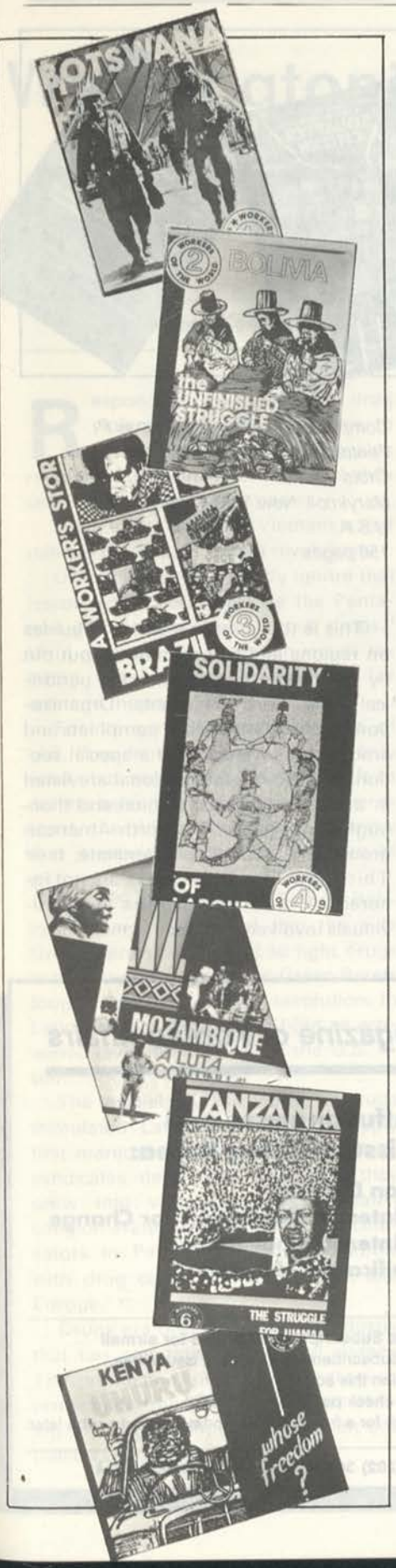
COICA also expressed concern about the debt-for-nature swaps by which some countries have converted part of their foreign debts into local currency to implement environmental protection programs.

U.S. environmentalists have hailed the debt-for-nature swaps as a major financial tool to reduce the Third World debt while protecting the environment. But in some cases – such as in Bolivia and Peru – indigenous peoples have seen their land threatened by the swap-related programs.

COICA complains that indigenous peoples had nothing to do with the foreign debt, yet they are being affected by its repercussions.

"We are just learning about the debt. We have always lived in the forest. We never got any foreign money from the government. Now suddenly they are talking about swapping our territory for that debt," Nugkuag said.

Seema Sirohi (TWNF/IPS)



THE WORKERS OF THE WORLD 1: BOTSWANA

THE WORKERS OF THE WORLD 2: BOLIVIA

THE WORKERS OF THE WORLD 3: BRAZIL

THE WORKERS OF THE WORLD 4: SOLIDARITY OF LABOR

THE WORKERS OF THE WORLD 5: MOZAMBIQUE – A LUTA CONTINUA!

THE WORKERS OF THE WORLD 6: TANZANIA – THE STRUGGLE FOR UJAMAA

THE WORKERS OF THE WORLD 7: KENYA – UHURU: WHOSE FREEDOM

International Labour Research and Information Group
Box 213
Salt River 7925
South Africa

Since 1984, the International Labour Research and Information Group has been publishing this series of primers aimed at boosting international labor solidarity by informing rank-and-file activists – especially in South Africa – about movements in other parts of the world. A primary concern of the series is building links between the South African labor movement and other trade union organizations as well as helping South African unionists cull lessons from the experiences of other labor activists.

Ranging from 40 to 110 pages, the booklets summarize the political reality of a given country and outline the history of labor organizing within that context. The style is straightforward and simple, and the booklets are amply illustrated. Foreign or complicated concepts are clearly spelled out, and many of the booklets contain suggestions for additional reading.

AND A THREEFOLD CORD

By Alex La Guma
Kliptown Books, 1988
Canon Collins House
64 Essex Rd.
London N1 8LR, England
112 pages

The re-release of this short novel, first published in 1964, brings back to life the stark reality of Cape Town's District Six in South Africa. While District Six no longer exists, "its winding, crowded streets, its jostling humanity, its smells, its poverty and wretchedness, its vivacity and infinite variety," and "the pulse of life (that) beat strongly in its veins" (as Brian Bunting notes in the preface) all flash before us. Bunting calls the work "a series of graphic prose-etchings."

While white South African writers have long held the literary center stage (even in antiapartheid circles), La Guma was a black who was born in Cape Town in 1925 and suffered house arrest and later exile for his activism. He continued to work with the African National Congress until his death in 1985.

THE ECONOMICS OF DRYLAND MANAGEMENT

by John A. Dixon, David E. James and Paul B. Sherman
Earthscan Publications Ltda., 1989
3 Endsleigh Street
London WC1H 0DD
United Kingdom
302 pages

As might be expected from the title, this book is a thorough academic analysis of the use of land resources where lack of moisture is a chronic problem. Over 20 percent of the world's population currently lives in such areas, and there is a trend toward the expansion of dryland areas. Thus, the authors' ideas contribute to the debate over a serious and growing problem.

FAMINE EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS: VICTIMS AND DESTITUTION

By Peter Walker
Earthscan Publications Ltda., 1989

3 Ednsleigh Street
London WC1H 0DD
United Kinddom
196 pages

This book might serve as a guide for governments and non-governmental organizations that must deal with famines or try to head them off. At the same time, it is an indictment of a world system that is mismanaged, one that leaves certain underprivileged groups vulnerable to famine. It is about the people who are caught up in the process of famine, how they perceive their situation and what they do themselves to avert mass starvation.

SQUATTER CITIZEN: LIFE IN THE URBAN THIRD WORLD

By Jorge E. Hardoy and David Satterthwaite
Earthscan Publications Ltda.
3 Ednsleigh Street
London WC1H 0DD
United Kindom

Two well-known urban scholars examine the realities of life in the illegal cities of Asia, China, Africa and South America. They look at the gap separating legal "citizens" and illegal squatters who have no basic rights and live with contaminated water, air pollution and toxic wastes. This book challenges common assumptions like the idea that city dwellers benefit from "urban bias" in government and aid policies.

HUMAN RIGHTS: A DIRECTORY OF RESOURCES

Compiled and edited by Thomas P. Fenton and Mary J. Heffron
Orbis Books
Maryknoll, New York 10545
U.S.A.
156 pages

This is the latest in a series of guides on regions and subject matters put out by the people who publish the periodical *Third World Resources*. Organizations, books, periodicals, pamphlets and articles, audiovisuals and a special section on Amnesty International are listed in a well-organized fashion and thoroughly indexed. While North American groups and sources predominate, their Third World counterparts are not ignored. A must for groups and individuals involved in human rights work.

Washington's Lost Cause

U.S. military might is being pitted against an economic revolution that is transforming entire countries. Just as in Vietnam, military might will be unable to defeat revolution

*By Merrill Collett**

Responding to Colombia's drug violence, Washington seems to have concluded that the cocaine revolution in Latin America can be successfully fought with fire power.

It can't. The lesson of Vietnam is that military might can't defeat revolution.

U.S. politicians perilously ignore that lesson when they pressure the Pentagon to "do something about drugs." Until recently, the Pentagon wisely resisted. Now it says it's ready to lay waste to the traffickers.

For its part, the administration of U.S. President George Bush is not only ready but eager. In sending aircraft to aid the beleaguered Colombian government, the White House let it be know that it would like to send soldiers as well.

The U.S. ambassador to Bolivia, Robert Gelbard, has urged that the elite Green Berets be allowed to fight drugs in that country. In Vietnam Green Berets fought against a political revolution. In Latin America they would fight an economic revolution set off by the U.S. itself.

The insatiable U.S. appetite for drugs stimulated Latin Americans to supply first marijuana and then cocaine. Drug syndicates developed. Over time they grew into vast, vertically integrated conglomerates, linking coca leaf cultivators in Peru, Bolivia and Colombia with drug consumers in the U.S. and Europe.

Drugs are now a specialized industry that has generated new social classes. The production, processing, packaging, protecting, transportation and marketing of cocaine employs more than one million Latin Americans.

The vast majority of them are poor. According to a model developed by Princeton political scientist Ethan Nadelmann, for every 300 cocaine exporters – the "Cocaine kings" of headline fame – there are 222,000 coca leaf farmers.

Driven by the need to survive in the impoverished Andes, these coca-growing peasants are an indomitable army that marches around any barrier that Washington erects, from coca eradication to helicopter raids to roadside interdiction. In the "War on Drugs," they are the equivalent of the Vietnamese peasants who sustained the Vietcong against U.S. troops.

At the opposite end of the industry, occupying its apex of opulence, are the cocaine capitalists who claim the lion's share of the estimated US$4 to US$10 billion earned annually.

These hugely successful businessmen are bent on boosting their earnings and legitimizing their social status. Their revolution is one of trying to get into the ruling class. The most aggressive are the Colombians who lead the two trafficking groups based in the cities of Medellín and Cali.

The extradition of these top traffickers has been Washington's big stick in Colombia for the last decade. But is extradition an effective weapon?

A case study is the extradition of Carlos Lehder Rivas, one of the founders of the Medellín cartel. Lehder was captured in February 1987 and almost immediately flown to the United States where he is now serving out a life sentence.

But cocaine smuggling is a transnational business with a hierarchy stronger than its individual leaders. Lehder's arrest simply created new room at the top for an ambitious trafficker, Gonzalo Rodriguez Gacha.

U.S. officials: drugs are their "Hot War"

Not only does extradition fail to deal serious blows to the cocaine empire, it strengthens the enemy's will to resist. Extradition enrages the traffickers because it ratifies in Colombia the U.S. definition that they are criminal deviants and not the successful businessmen they believe themselves to be.

In the current round of violence, gunmen working for the "Extraditables," the *nom de guerre* of the Medellín cartel, set fire in August to an exclusive country club which bars traffickers from joining. The message was clear: "We want respect."

Colombia's strange civil war is full of symbols. The U.S. has flown a plane to Bogota to pick up any traffickers who might be extradited. The plane provides the perfect image of U.S. determination to pursue the traffickers.

But in fact, the U.S. Congress complicated the extradition of Colombians when it passed last October an antidrug war act which imposes capital punishment on murderous drug traffickers. Colombia does not have capital punishment, so the country cannot extradite its citizens, traffickers included, on capital charges. And since all of the major dealers have blood on their hands, their successful prosecution in the U.S. is in doubt.

But such practical issues may not matter much to Washington. The "War on Drugs" has frequently been more symbolic than real, giving the White House a means to mobilize support for other agendas. •

Reading Under Wraps

Basic literacy is but one of the challenges faced by the poor, especially women, in their quest to read

*By Micere Githae Mugo**

Between 1979 and 1982 I experimented with a small voluntary literacy campaign project involving women from Kibera, one of Nairobi, Kenya's, huge slums. One day my best student, a mother of six, turned up at my house where I held the classes with a swollen face and badly damaged nose.

Her husband had come home and had been infuriated to find her reading a book. Describing the activity as a reflection of idleness and a sign of unwomanly conduct, the man warned his wife that she was never again to be caught, at any time of day or night, reading a book. This was the kind of thing done by schoolchildren and not by grown-up married women, he said. He had beaten her up thoroughly – just to drive the message home. In fact, with only two exceptions, all the students attended these private classes under strict secrecy.

In 1982, when the Kenyan government banned the drama activities of Kamiriithu Community Center near Limuru and then proceeded to raze to the ground the structures of the open air theater that the workers and peasants had built, the Kiambu District commissioner gave a speech in which he specifically singled out women for admonition. He ridiculed them for having participated in the drama productions and derided them for spending time idling and jumping around the stage like children, instead of working in their homes and cultivating their *shambas*, as all "respectable" married women should do.

Even though crudely extreme, these two cases reveal attitudes that would appear to look upon the world of books and literature as being quite antithetical to the proper aspirations of women. Women are painted as undignified and idle for daring to penetrate this world. But beyond this, such attitudes have a class bias. Women from the working and peasant classes are shown as having no business, indeed no right, to associate with books. The book world, then, becomes a special realm for the elite clsses and, of course, for school children – the future educational elite-in-the-making.

Depressing reality – The facts in front of us today are both depressing and tragic. Let us first look at the overall continental picture of illiteracy. We find that out of the 156 million illiterate people of Africa aged 15 and above, nearly two-thirds are women. Although these facts are from a 1979 source one can assert that except in a few African countries that have made considerable strides to combat illiteracy in the last few years (Tanzania and Zimbabwe deserve mention), the situation has hardly changed. Yet even in Zimbabwe, where things are certainly improving, 66 percent of the 2.5 million illiterate people are women. Needless to say, the majority of

* The author lives in Harare, Zimbabwe. Her article was originally published in Echo, the bilingual quarterly newsletter of the Association of African Women for Research and Development, and the IFDA Dossier. The original text was presented as a paper to the 1985 writers workshop at the Third Zimbabwean International Book Fair.

these are peasants, and the rest are mainly from the urban working class. This picture of Africa is, by the way, ironic, considering the fact that writing as an art was invented by Africans of the Nile Valley centuries before Europe knew that it was possible for human beings to communicate in this manner.

The problem of illiteracy aside, working-class and peasant women lead lives that strongly militate against their entry into the world of books. UNICEF's *News of Africa* cites the normal daily routine of a typical rural peasant woman as stretching from 4:45 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. I would argue that many rural village mothers do not in fact retire before 11 p.m. Between these hours, she is engaged in such physically and emotionally draining activities as taking care of infants and preschool children, cooking, washing and cleaning the home and compound, grinding cereals, mending and laundering clothes, fetching wood and water. These tasks might involve miles of walking, working in the garden, building, ferrying goods to the market, looking after cows and goats, breeding chickens, attending to family rituals, and catering to demanding husbands and relatives. In addition, it is this woman who best knows what it means to eke out a living from economically raped Africa. Africa is a continent of extremes: deserts, stone, drought, floods, swamps and, of course, a few acres of arable land out of which we cannot yet produce enough to feed ourselves. So how does a rural woman sit down to read a book after 11 o'clock at night, only a few hours to go before starting the daily routine all over again? What does she use for light? The tin-can paraffin lamp? The fire at the hearth?

For poor women in the cities, the picture is no better. Most of the so-called unemployed women from the working class lead a back-breaking life as well. Unlike her rural sisters, a poor urban woman may have tap water. But she may have to queue up for hours to get a bucket of it. Psychologically, this woman has to cope with all the usual pressures associated with urban existence. Divorced from the solidarity of the extended family circle, she often has to deal, single-handed, with most of the problems created by her suffocating economic circumstances. There are other women even lower down this ladder of poverty: the petty trader, the street woman, other members of the lumpen proletariat. Even if such women were miraculously to find leisure time for reading, the conditions they live under would almost certainly rule out the possibility of their getting much pleasure from books.

There are other problems. Even at the global level, except in socialist countries where the costs of publishing are subsidized, books have become so expensive that for a poor person, they remain out of reach. Soon, accessibility to books in the open market becomes the prerogative of the affluent classes.

Learning to read: a challenge for women throughout Africa

Yet another prohibitive factor is the size of most of the books that make good, imaginative reading. The average reader from the masses has neither the time, the favorable conditions nor the intellectual energy – let alone the reading skills – to handle a book that is more than a hundred pages in length. Fifty pages alone can be overwhelming and forbidding for most readers just on the literacy line.

Then, of course, there is the language problem. Perhaps with the exception of Zimbabwe, it is no exaggeration to say that 99.5 percent of our good, creative African outputs are in foreign tongues – mostly addressed to a foreign audience and the elite class at the domestic level. This automatically excludes from our readership the majority of peasants and workers. Even when literate, such people generally function only in their mother tongues. And, as Frantz Fanon says, "to speak a language is to espouse a culture, to assume a world, to carry the weight of its civilization."

Beyond the problem of language, we often have to deal with a literature that is full of alienating elitist images of Africa. Indeed, some of it embraces values that are so western and bourgeois that it makes us begin to appreciate how psychologically enslaving the ABC of the colonialist classroom is. The visions range from those that are paternalistic to those that are not only condescending towards and dismissive of the

Breaking barriers: many peasants are apologetic about intellectual aspirations

masses, but so unrepresentative and negative that their images of the poor and their world become nihilistic. How do the workers and peasants relate to such an oppressive literature?

The underprivileged positions of the peasants and workers produces yet another problem that is even more tragic: the attitude of self-debasement. This further alienates the oppressed from the world of books. Following years of exploitation, domination and degradation, the masses are conditioned not only to look upon the oppressor as being superior, but to be self-demeaning before him or her. Brazilian educator Paulo Freire articulates this position eloquently in his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

Self-depreciation is another characteristic of the oppressed, which derives from their internalization of the opinion the oppressors hold of them. So often they hear that they are good for nothing, know nothing and are incapable of learning anything – that they are sick, lazy and unproductive – that in the end they become convinced of their own unfitness.

A lot of peasants and workers tend to look upon the world of books and ideas as the natural, unique and private monopoly of the dominating classes. They are almost apologetic about their intellectual ambitions. Because of this, many shy away from books and writing.

In her moving autobiography, entitled the *Diary of Maria de Jesus*, a Brazilian woman tells us of the verbal persecution that she had to live through for daring to write a book. The sad irony is that the taunts and insults mainly came from members of her own class – especially her oppressed sisters, all of whom were living in dehumanizing, abject poverty. But, due to her crying urge to expose her oppressors, the world today has one of its strongest testimonies against the evils of capitalism, from a firsthand victim who was barely literate. The significance of Maria's straightforward, lucid account of human suffering and degradation lies in the fact that it is the oppressed person who best identifies, names and articulates her oppressive reality. Unfortunately, this insistence on penetrating the world of books and ideas by a member of the lumpen proletariat is rare. Especially in the Third World.

In *Let Me Speak, Domitila* – another Latin American woman, this time from the Bolivian working class – has placed into the hands of the reading world a powerful piece of writing that clearly illustrates the creative potential among the oppressed classes. This work provides a penetrating view of the oppressed as seen from a worker's perspective. It destroys the myth that workers and peasants cannot produce imaginative or scholarly books.

Even African elitist classes deliberately mystify books and knowledge as a means of preserving their prestige. I remember when I was small witnessing peasants suffer humiliation at the hands of a primary-school teacher. Illiterate, they used to go to him to have letters written or read. The teacher would visibly delight in seeing these men and women – some of them elderly – bow before him, acknowledging his superiority. He would take endless time to attend to them. He would strut across his compound, whistle, straighten his collar and drink his tea, creating suspense and mystery as well as a feeling of dependency in the waiting peasants. Meanwhile, they would have brought him eggs, chickens, fruits and other delicacies – a typical feudal lord in his little intellectual kingdom!

One must pay immense respect to the oppressed African woman for her determination, industriousness and optimism, reflected in her struggles to break through the walls of illiteracy and prejudice that imprison her mind. The majority of adult literacy students on the continent as we speak now are women. Defying age, restrictive customs, oppressive political institutions and crippling exploitative economic system, these women are advancing resolutely, determined to break the silence imposed upon them by illiteracy, insistent on naming the world for themselves.

Now what? – In the meantime, what happens? Who will create literature for these staggering multitudes? I wish to suggest several alternatives that we will need to discuss among ourselves. Writers and publishers for women are today faced with a formidable but challenging task: either to make literature "part of the common cause of the proletariat," as the Russian revolutionary Vladimir Lenin counseled, or to allow it to continue as a monopoly for the elite. As far as some of us are concerned, the luxury of a choice does not really exist. We know the limitations of our privileged class position and agree with Freire when he asserts: "Revolutionary praxis must stand opposed to the dominant elites, for they are by nature antithetical."

If we are to undertake the production of books for the oppressed masses, we must begin by identifying with their interests. In my opinion, the only kind of writing that will truly address their condition is liberation literature. In creating the authentic or true word, as Freire would put it, we will be providing the oppressed with just this. Liberation will become "an instrument that makes dialogue possible," leading to reflection and revolutionary action which will, in turn, ultimately transform the oppressive reality. As Freire argues: "Human

existence cannot be silent, nor can it be nourished by false words, but only by true words, with which men transform the world. To exist, humanly is to name the world, to change it. Once named, the world in its turn reappears to the namers as a problem and requires of them a new naming. Men are not built in silence, but in word in work, action-reflection."

However, hard as we may try, as members of a privileged social class we will find it impossible completely to transcend our class contradictions and produce authentic mass literature. It is important that we realize this, lest we become cultural invaders, like the colonizer who penetrates the world of the conquered in complete "disrespect of the latter's potentialities," thus imposing his own world view on them and inhibiting "the creativity of the invaded by curbing their expression." The danger of invading the world of female peasants and workers is not imagined, but very real indeed.

I will illustrate the point I am making. Towards the end of last year, I attended a seminar that was deliberating upon the legal rights of women in an African country. During one of the plenary sessions, I was struck by an irony that seemed too glaring to be left unchallenged. The panel of rapporteurs consisted of seven men and one woman. Further, the seminar delegates were exclusively drawn from elitist and petty bourgeois circles. I repeat: there were no working-class or peasant women at a seminar that was deliberating on women's legal rights. Considering that at least 90 percent of the women whose problems were being discussed came from these two classes, I sought to know from the gathering how authentically representative of mass interests it considered itself to be. I was promptly and rudely silenced by the chairman, whose action was endorsed by a number of angry petty bourgeois "researchers" and self-appointed oppressed women's representatives, who claimed the authority and right to speak for the masses because they had done a lot of research on them. One of the delegates actually said this. I could hardly believe that such paternalism and condescension were possible. All I could say was that there are far too many self-appointed petty bourgeois messiahs in Africa.

Thus the question needs to be raised: who are "we" to speak for the masses? Surely we can only speak in solidarity with them, not for them. Our task is to work with them as friends and comrades and not as their intellectual bosses. Let us join Paulo Freire, yet again, in seeking to explode "the myth that the dominant elites, recognizing their duties, promote the advancement of the people, so that the people, in a gesture of gratitude, should accept the words of the elites and be conformed to them."

Learning to speak for themselves: bypassing cultural "spokespersons"

Let us not deceive ourselves: only the oppressed can, in the final analysis, liberate themselves. Only they can transform the oppressive reality around them through their own labor. Only they can create new conditions under which to live as free people. For this reason, we must consider, as our ultimate goal, the creation – from among the masses – of an audience that can also participate in composing, criticizing and publishing the works of art that it consumes. That way we shall aim at encouraging creative producers and not just consumers. This will set an authentic dialogue into the liberation process. Indeed, "Dialogue, as the encounter among men to name the world, is a fundamental precondition for their true humanization."

And, lest we undermine the urgency of this liberating literature, let us look south and see what is happening in South Africa, in Namibia. Let us look around Africa and see what is going on. All over the continent, the masses are engaged in a life-and-death struggle to throw off the fetters of oppression that deny them their being. What reality can be more urgent to address than this? Unless we face this challenge, the existing economic structures will remain unchanged, and under them the opressed can neither produce nor consume books and literature. The continuing segregation of women and books can only be advantageous to economically and socially dominant classes of Africa.

Finally, men and women of books must face the challenge of producing, together with the workers and peasants, literary modes of expression that will capture the true rhythms of life, speech and thought associated with the masses struggle. This dynamic and dialectical approach should release books from the confines of glass shelves and bring them down to earth – where they belong – turning the messages the covers encase into sources of liberating activity. Poetry and drama – active genres that ultimately demand verbal articulation and actual performance – may well be two of these dynamic modes, suited to the masses' participation. •

GIFT OF LOVE

(India/Canada 1989)
20 minutes/Documentary
16-millimeter film
Directed by Meera Dewan
Available from Films Division
Government of India
New Delhi, India

This shocking, internationally-awarded film is a bold exposé of the murder of brides due to insufficient dowries.

SPICES

(India, 1986)
98 minutes/Narrative
35-millimeter film
Directed by Ketan Mehta
Available from National Film Development Corp.
New Delhi, India

Mehta, the director of *Holi*, offers the story of one woman's courage and the social and moral upheaval caused by her actions. Sonbai, spurning the amorous advances of a tax collector, takes refuge in the village spice factory, which employs mostly women. The factory is transformed into a veritable fortress and at the same time becomes a moral arena for these women, who have a rare opportunity to make their own decisions. Sonbai is played by the late Smita Patil, one of India's most respected actresses as well as a political and social activist. It was her last film.

REASSEMBLAGE

(United States, 1982)
40 minutes/Color/Experimental Documentary
16-millimeter film or 3/4-inch videotape
Directed by Jean-Paul Bourdier and Trinh T. Minh-ha
Available from Third World Newsreel
335 West 38th Street, 5th Floor
New York, NY 10010, U.S.A.

Filmed among diverse peoples in Senegal, *Reassemblage* challenges conventional anthro-documentary approaches to cinematic considerations of non-Western cultures. It explores the perceptions of cultures rich in images and information: women at work in villages, indigenous music, the ways people interact and communicate with each other. The film challenges Western ways of seeing and understanding.

MISS UNIVERSE IN PERU

(Peru, 1986)
42 minutes/Documentary
Produced by Grupo Chaski
16-millimeter film and videotape
Available from Women Make Movies
225 Lafayette St., Suite 211

New York, NY 10012, U.S.A.

Shot during the Miss Universe contest hosted by Peru in 1982, this film juxtaposes the glamour of the pageant with the realities of Peruvian women's lives, critiquing multinational corporate interest in the commodification of women.

UPDATE BRAZIL: WOMEN'S POLICE STATIONS

(Brazil/Canada, 1988)
15 minutes/Color/Documentary
Videotape
Directed by Nancy Marcotte
Available from Women Make Movies
225 Lafayette St., Suite 211
New York, NY 10012, U.S.A.

A fascinating and empowering look at Brazil's 25 police stations staffed by women and geared towards helping victims of family violence and rape.

BLACK WOMEN OF BRAZIL

(Brazil, 1986)
25 minutes/Color/Documentary
Videotape
Directed by Sylvana Afram
Available from Women Make Movies
225 Lafayette St., Suite 211
New York, NY 10012, U.S.A.

This fast-paced, subjective documentary produced by the Lilith Video Collective represents the emergence of women's popular video in Brazil. Women describe how they struggle against discrimination and racism and how they have traditionally validated their lives and experiences through music and religion.

WOMEN OF SOUTH LEBANON

(Lebanon, 1986)
71 minutes/Color/Documentary
16-millimeter film or 3/4-inch videotape
Directed by Mai Masri and Jean Chamoun Available from Third World Newsreel
335 West 38th St., 5th Floor
New York, NY 10010, U.S.A.

The 1982 Israeli invasion of South Lebanon is brought to life in stories told by women. They dramatize their struggle with tremendous gusto, reenacting scenes of resisting soldiers, smuggling bombs, laying out dynamite, and prison. The film presents the seeds of the popular resistance in the region, while revealing aspects of daily life and traditions that form its cultural heritage.

ELVIA: THE FIGHT FOR LAND AND LIBERTY IN HONDURAS

(United States, 1989)
30 minutes/Documentary
Videotape
Directed by Laura Rodriguez and Rick Tejada-Flores
Available from Global Exchange
2940 16th St., Rm. 307
San Francisco, CA 94103, U.S.A.

This engrossing documentary is based on he book *Don't Be Afraid, Gringo: A Honduran Woman Speaks from the Heart* by Medea Benjamin. Through the eyes of Elvia Alvarado, a Honduran peasant woman who has devoted 18 years to organizing, the film examines the lives of thousands of landless Hondurans who are tired of living and dying on the margins and are trying to change their lives.

Sterile Birth Control

The vogue for smaller families has spread from the urban middle class to the far corners of Brazil. And sterilization has become the most popular and most reliable method of birth control

*By Jon Christensen**

Euzamar Pereira Santos grew up one of eight children. But after giving birth to her second child recently, the 23-year-old joined a growing number of Brazilian young women who have opted for small families and sterilization.

Female sterilization is the most popular form of contraception in Brazil today. According to the Ministry of Health, every year more than 300,000 Brazilian women choose to have their fallopian tubes tied. Nationwide, four out of 10 women between the ages of 15 and 44 have chosen to be sterilized. In some regions, notably in parts of the Amazon and poor northeastern states like Maranhão, the figure runs as high as 70 percent.

Sitting in the bare living room of her rough brick house on the outskirts of São Luis, Maranhão's capital city, a pained Euzamar Santos wonders what options she had other than sterilization. "What was the alternative...to have another child year after year, a house filled with kids and misery, and us unable to feed and chothe them well?"

In recent years the vogue for smaller families has spread from the middle class in the urban south to the far corners of Brazil. A recent study by the Brazilian Geographical and Statistical Insitute (IBGE), UNICEF and the Pan-American Health Organization concludes that sterilization is "the principal factor" behind the spectacular decline in Brazil's population growth since the late 1970s.

Between 1970 and 1980, the fertility rate among women of child-bearing age dropped 25 percent nationwide. Just in the first four years of this decade, the rate fell another 20 percent, and shows every indication of rapidly continuing its decline.

The high rate of sterilization has provoked controversy in Brazil. In what remains the world's largest Catholic country, the church continues to oppose any form of birth control other than the rhythm method and abstention. There are also Brazilian nationalists on the left and right who claim an international conspiracy lurks behind the family planning programs.

"According to the ideology of control, the way to solve poverty is to prevent the poor from being born," says Eloni Bonotto, president of the São Luis Women's Union.

Bonotto was fired from São Luis's largest hospital, where she worked as an anesthetist, because she refused to participate in sterilizations. "I tried to tell the women that it was not the first option but the last," she says. "The directors said I was bad for business."

Like many others, Bonotto pins the blame for the high rate of sterilization on the absence of effective government-sponsored family-planning programs. Into the vacuum, she says, have come dozens of private organizations funded by international money.

From clinics and family planning posts throughout the country, Bonotto claims, these agencies distribute free and low-cost contraceptives and encourage women to be sterilized.

One of those agencies, the Brazilian Society for Family Well-Being (BEMFAM), has 44 family-planning posts in São Luis alone, from which it distributes information on family planning, birth control, and prevention of sexually transmitted disease. BEMFAM also gives out free birth control pills and sells other contraceptives at minimal cost.

Dinalva Alves dos Santos, an educator with BEMFAM, says, "The young ones who come in – around 16 and 17 years old – are interested in different methods. But almost all the others want the operation."

The choice: sterilization or pregnancy

BEMFAM educators try to discourage young women from sterilization, she says, urging them to use other methods at least for a few years.

"Marriages don't last these days," Santos tells them, "why sterilize when you're young, even if you have two kids already?"

Maja Rego Guttierez says that her friends each had a different version of the rhythm method. The same happened with the pill. Some said it should be taken every day and others said just when one had sexual relations. Her husband said condoms were just for women of the street and not at home.

"I learned from my aunt," says Guttierez. "She said she had a method that worked. And I saw it was true. She didn't have more kids. So I thought that must be right".

At 28, she has had two boys and had her tubes tied during the second birth.

"It's better to tie your tubes than to have undesired children," she says, "or abortions, which I'm against."

Euzamar Santos also learned about sterilization from a relative who had her tubes tied after bearing her eighth child. Santos says that if she had known about all the alternatives she might not have chosen sterilization. But she doesn't feel regret. She says that if she wants more children she'll adopt, but only after she finishes raising the two she has borne.

"A lot of women in this neighborhood have so many kids they give them away like dogs," she says. "Last week a girl offered me two kids. I said I couldn't take them. I'm already struggling to raise these two." •

In the Era of Realignment

The Belgrade summit highlights shifting relations between the North and the South as the Cold War melts away

NAM leaders at the head table (above), a Palestinian delegate with U.N. officials (upper right) and Argentina's President Carlos Menem with an aide

*By A. W. Singham**

When elephants fight, the grass gets crushed.

– traditional African proverb

When elephants make love, the grass also gets crushed.

– contemporary version, modified after Belgrade

When a nation is selected to chair the movement for non-aligned countries it is as a result of that country's firm commitment to the theory and practice of non-alignment. In September 1989, the movement held its 9th Summit in Belgrade and the chairmanship was transferred from Zimbabwe to Yugoslavia.

The movement chose Zimbabwe as its chair in 1986 to emphasize one of its major objectives: to isolate the apartheid regime and force South Africa to accept an independence plan for Namibia. Under Zimbabwe's leadership, South Africa was militarily, diplomatically and politically defeated. Militarily, the Angolan, Cuban and non-aligned forces ended the myth of Pretoria's invincibility. Politically, the foreign policy of Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe strengthened the frontline states and forced South Africa to negotiate. Diplomatically, Zimbabwe circumvented the plans of the gang of five (the Soviet Union, France, China, the U.S. and the U.K.) in the U.N. Security Council to scuttle resolution 435, the blueprint for Namibian independence. This is a major achievement for a small new nation. Mugabe has every reason to be proud of his country's role during the past three years.

The new chair, Yugoslavia, has impeccable credentials to lead the movement. Under Tito, it was a founding member and hosted the first summit in 1961. Yugoslavia was selected this time, however, only after a stalemate within the Latin American group over Nicaragua's candidacy. During the past few months, both Nicaragua and Indonesia decided they would postpone their candidacies and agreed to step aside for Yugoslavia. Each chair brings to the movement its own particular style of leadership and organizational skills.

* A.W. Singham is senior fellow at the Center on Violence and Human Survival, John Jay College, CUNY and professor of Political Science at the City University of New York. His most recent works include: *Non-alignment in an Age of Alignments* (Zed Press and Lawrence Hill, 1986) and *Namibian Independence: A Global Responsibility* (Lawrence Hill Co., 1985).

Throughout its history, the movement has selected countries with strong charismatic leaders who have left their personal imprints on the movement. However, as Yugoslavia has a system of rotating presidencies, no single person will head the movement during this period. This may be a good precedent contributing to greater decentralization and democracy.

Western media distortion – At the outset of the 9th summit, Yugoslavia attempted to establish its own priorities for the next three years. It prepared a draft declaration calling for "modernization" internally and the exploitation of a unique window of opportunity in world politics, that of improved relations between the superpowers. Many members reacted negatively to the term modernization as it implied the movement was backward. The term is associated with the views of European and North American social scientists who conceive of developing countries as backward and in need of modernizing (a code word for Westernization).

Non-aligned countries have historically called for a flexible internal structure responsive to changing needs. In fairness to the new chair, Yugoslavia was responding to the whole range of proposals for improving the efficiency of the movement's work which were presented at a special bureau meeting in Nicosia and other meetings thereafter. Many members argue that a machinery devised in 1961 for a small group of 25 countries ought to be revised to adequately serve a movement which has grown to 102 states. In this connection, Mugabe similarly proposed and later withdrew a recommendation for a secretariat to improve the movement's internal communication and office management.

For the first time in the history of the movement, the Western press gave a non-aligned summit a good review. It heralded the Yugoslav draft declaration as moderate and reasonable and noted with some pleasure that moderates had taken over the movement and silenced the radicals. In this naive interpretation of the summit, the Western media and its followers revealed a fundamental misunderstanding of the real nature of non-alignment.

Each summit issues a final declaration; at Belgrade there was a great deal of discussion about reducing its length. As is the non-aligned custom, a compromise solution was reached and Yugoslavia cleverly divided the declaration into two parts. The first part, which drew the attention of the Western press, is the kinder and gentler statement. It examines the current global situation exuding the spirit of East-West détente and avoiding naming names with regard to the various crises.

The second part is devoted to the complex problems that confront non-aligned countries in each region. The tone is grimmer and more militant as each regional grouping named names and outlined the situation in their respective areas. It is a more accurate reflection of the real state of mind of non-aligned leaders. In this section, the new relationship between the Soviet Union and the United States led to a creative and provocative debate about regional conflicts. The motives of the major poers were questioned, especially their recent efforts to appear as peacemakers, when the superpowers themselves had initiated regional conflicts. Many countries also warned that the Non-Aligned Movement should not adopt a posture which blames the victims for the state of world tensions.

In the end the final Belgrade document was as long as previous declarations. The Non-Aligned Movement must recognize that it is a large, ideologically plural grouping and their problems cannot be summarized for the convenience of the Western media's limited attention span. The significance of the final declaration is that it reflects the state of the world as seen by the globe's majority.

Over the years, the Western media and governments have viewed the Non-Aligned Movement as a group of countries that are at best irresponsible and at worst stooges of the Soviet Union. The West chooses to judge the movement by the number of references made to

In with the new: outgoing NAM head Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe (left) and the newly elected Yugoslavians.

the USSR and U.S. in its declarations. Historically, the vast majority of non-aligned countries have been victims of European colonialism and are currently dependent on a world economic system dominated by the United States, Western Europe and Japan. The Soviet Union is a relative newcomer entering the global arena as a consequence of the Cold War. As a matter of arithmetic those countries with a longer tradition of domination are named more often. Also overlooked is the strong, anti-communist movement within the non-aligned represented by such stalwart Western supporters as Zaire, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, and Singapore. What is remarkable is that these conservative nations share with other non-aligned nations a common world view condemning political, cultural and economic hegemony.

Shaking soldiers melt the Cold War: how should NAM react?

Ghana, Venezuela and India – A number of countries seriously challenged the assumption that the Cold War was ending and that regional peace was imminent. Ghana led the debate on this issue at the foreign ministers level and its intervention affected the tone of the final document. Ghana insisted that colonialism is not a relic of the past, but a permanent reality. Reflecting the concerns of Ghana's founding father, Kwame Nkrumah, its foreign minister raised the question of South Africa as the penultimate issue in colonialism. Ghana seems to be assuming a new role in the movement, particularly on issues related to Africa. A month earlier, Victor Gbeho, Ghana's ambassador to the United Nations, engineered a brilliant campaign and forced the adoption of new resolutions on Namibia in the Security Council. Ghana and Zimbabwe were able to circumvent the efforts of Western powers, notably Great Britain, to prevent the holding of such a Security Council meeting on Namibia. It was no accident that at the summit, Ghana was selected to host the next foreign ministers meeting in spite of efforts by its opponents to rally around Venezuela and Tunisia. Algeria also echoed Ghana's view of the question of colonialism and added to it the issue of Palestine.

Venezuela assumed the role of a major actor immediately upon being admitted to the movement in Belgrade. Previously, Guyana with the support of other English-speaking Carribean states had strongly opposed Venezuela's membership largely because of the border dispute between these two countries. In addition, the grand old man of West Indian politics, Eric Williams, had always warned of Venezuela's regional power aspirations. With the election of President Carlos Andrés Pérez, most of the Caribbean countries were persuaded, especially by Michael Manley of Jamaica, of the importance of involving Venezuela in the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM), a collection of small island states devoted to economic cooperation. Unfortunately, Venezuela may have assumed that the Non-aligned Movement is similar to CARICOM and hence failed to appreciate that the movement consists not only of major states but those with long experiences in multilateral diplomacy.

It is not common practice for a new member to present itself as a candidate to host a gathering as important as the non-aligned foreign ministers meeting. Venezuela also disturbed many countries by challenging Ghana's candidacy, a member held in high esteem within the movement. (Tunisia, the other African country that offered its name, quickly withdrew.) A number of African countries had to appeal to former Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere to have a word with his friend Pérez to persuade Venezuela to withdraw.

Furthermore, Venezuela startled the movement by opposing the consensus method of decision-making in the drafting of the Latin American section of the final declaration. The debate that ensued was not simply a matter of procedure, but of some fundamental differences between a number of countries within the Latin American grouping about Venezuela's position on the Panamanian question, especially support for the Noriega regime. Their primary concern was the new member's lack of understanding of the political process within the movement and of the larger implications in changing the consensus method of decision-making.

The entry of Venezuela remains an important moment in the history of non-alignment in Latin America. It opens the doors for Mexico and Brazil to cease being "permanent observers" and finally become full non-aligned members. There is a growing concern that these two giants have benefited in the economic sphere by having observer status in the movement without pay-

ing the price of political commitment to the principles of non-alignment.

India's Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi made a major intervention during the Belgrade summit by insisting that the central questions of the 20th century are global economic inequality and global responsibility for the protection of the environment. He insisted that until global negotiations are put back on the world agenda there will be no future for poor Third World countries. It was refreshing to hear Gandhi on these matters. In recent years, India seems to have lost the moral authority it once held in the movement. This may be a result of the government's preoccupation with regional matters such as the unpopular war in Sri Lanka and the tensions in Nepal.

India has a pivotal role to play in the Non-Aligned Movement at this juncture. The radical changes in the world political structure have had serious consequences for non-alignment. These changes include the demise of China, the economic, political, and environmental pillage of Africa leaving the continent exhausted, and the distortion of Latin American and Caribbean polities incapacitated by the debt crisis and now the drug war. In this context, India remains one of the few large non-aligned states with the capability of playing an independent role in world politics.

Because of former leader Jawaharlal Nehru's carefully crafted policies, India never joined the hysterical anti-communist and anti-Soviet politics of the right in the movement and has enjoyed the respect of the left and liberation movements. As a democracy resting on a capitalist economy, it also has the support of the movement's center. Rajiv Gandhi's arrival at the 9th summit breathed new life into the gathering especially with his strong support for the liberation of South Africa and Palestine. After its elections, hopefully, India can recapture the spirit of Nehru's vision of non-alignment.

Notable Absences – There were a few notable absences at the summit. Cuban leader Fidel Castro's absence was officially explained by developments in Panama and the region. Raul Castro attended in his place. It should be recalled that Cuba had sharp differences with Yugoslavia in the past which came to a head at the 1977 foreign ministers meeting in Belgrade. Yugoslavia's difficulties with Cuba's leadership of the movement increased after the 6th summit in Havana in 1979 particularly over their differing views of what should be the relationship between the movement and the Soviet Union and the United States. Ironically, Raul Castro noted at Belgrade that the United States attacked Cuba for many years for its close connection with the USSR and questioned Cuba's capacity to be a genuine non-aligned country. At present the Western countries, especially the United States, are condemning Cuba for acting independently and not following the Soviet Union's leadership.

Venezuela's Pérez: a central freshman

The other notable absentee was Michael Manley of Jamaica. An extremely popular leader in the early 1970s, he provided the movement with many new ideas for the future. Had he been present, Manley could have prevented his friend Pérez from Venezuela from making the unfortunate mistakes he did at the summit.

The Europeanization of Non-Alignment? – When the Non-Aligned Movement selected its venue for the 9th summit it did not reckon that Belgrade would open the door for a possible European realignment. Six of the seven Warsaw Pact members attended along with five countries from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and two from the Australia-New Zealand-U.S. Security Treaty group (ANZUS). In its 28-year history, the movement has been primarily an Afro-Asian movement with increased membership from the Caribbean and Latin America in the last decade. Only three members are from Europe: Yugoslavia, Malta, and Cyprus. But Yugoslavia enjoys a special place as a socialist country led for decades by a charismatic leader of a national liberation movement, Tito. It now appears that non-alignment could become an attractive alternative for a number of Eastern European countries looking for a movement that represents a non-bloc, independent force in world politics.

This large gathering of Europeans did disturb some older members of the "Bandung" family who saw the possibility of losing the militant anti-colonial and anti-racist posture of the movement if a number of these European countries were admitted. It should be remembered, however, that historically Eastern European countries were structurally the Third World within Europe. Thus European realignment in the North, South and East gives the Non-Aligned Movement an opportunity to become a genuine universal movement in the near future.

In addition to Eastern European countries, several Nordic states, Canada, New Zealand and Portugal attended as guests. Canada's foreign minister made it abundantly clear at a United Nations speech after the summit that his country's presence at the non-aligned meeting should not be misunderstood. He insisted that Canada remained a devoted, loyal and proud member of NATO. In this light, the movement will have to take greater care with its invitation list. In retrospect, it was quite appropriate for the chair of the Political Committee to announce that those with guest status could attend the plenary meetings but not participate in the specialized private meetings of non-aligned countries.

In previous summits, one was always aware of the powerful presence of China and its lobby. China's internal situation,

especially the student rebellions, and the new détente between the U.S. and USSR could lead to a reexamintion of its foreign policy. China has seen herself as a "fellow traveller" of non-alignment. It is likely that it too will be looking for a platform from which to conduct an independent non-bloc foreign policy.

Conspicuous in their absence: Fidel Castro (left) and Michael Manley (right)

Regional wars: non-aligned solutions – The effort to reduce the length of the Belgrade final declaration essentially failed. The second part of the document reveals the movement's primary concerns: regional wars and the global economic crisis. On regional wars, the movement is clear that while East-West relations are improving, the Cold War is alive and well in the Middle East, Southern Africa, Southeast Asia, Afghanistan, the Horn of Africa, Central America and throughout the globe. The central issue is that regional wars are being arbitrarily settled by the major powers without consultations with the parties involved, especially non-aligned countries. Furthermore, there is the grave danger of settlements being conduced with little regard for particular countries in the region and their domestic consequences.

The so-called settlement in Southeast Asia at the end of the Vietnam War, for example, plunged the entire region into chaos and no settlement appears imminent for Cambodia. In fact, another war seems to be looming with the prospect of the notorious Pol Pot sharing power in that tragic country. In Afghanistan, the withdrawal of Soviet troops has created internal anarchy and the prospects of a coalition government is nearly impossible. President Muhammad Najibullah left his capital to attend the summit in the midst of rocket fire and immediately called for another international conference to resolve a conflict which includes India, Pakistan, Iran, China and both superpowers.

In Southern Africa, the Namibian solution is very fragile. In Angola, counterrevolutionary leader Jonas Savimbi has been unleashed again by South Africa and that country appears to destined for a permanent civil war. In South Africa itself, newly elected President F.W. de Klerk appears to have read his mandate as giving him the right to maintain internal order through police brutality and violence.

In the Americas, the situation in Nicaragua is explosive. In spite of efforts by Central American leaders, El Salvador, Guatemala and the rest of the region continue to face the prospect of a protracted civil war. The so-called drug war can also lead to armed intervention throughout the continent beginning with Panama and Colombia.

With respect to the Middle East, U.N. Secretary General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar was actively involved at the summit trying to keep together the peace between Iran and Iraq. There is a stalemate in Palestine, and the Non-Aligned Movement's recommended international peace conference is becoming increasingly remote. One underlying fear of the movement is the possibility of many more nations facing the prospect of becoming dismembered like Lebanon, especially as ethnic conflicts spill over boundaries and become regional wars. Already the process of Lebanization seems to have begun in Sri Lanka, Sudan, Somalia, and now Angola.

The resolution of regional conflicts by the superpowers within the framework of the United Nations has caused enormous diplomatic and political difficulties for the movement. The Namibian question is a good case study. The United States, which recognizes neither Cuba nor Angola and has no treaty obligations in the region, has become the principal actor in devising a settlement. This settlement also involves the Republic of South Africa which enjoys no legitimacy in the global community and is well known for blatant violations ofinternational law. More importantly, South Africa has been given responsibility for implementing transition arrangements for Namibian independence. The Soviet Union has been invited through the back door by the principal actor to be a silent witness and signatory for the settlement. Finally, and most pathetically, the people of Namibia and their representatives, the Southwest African People's Organization (SWAPO), as well as the U.N. Council for Namibia, were excluded from participating in this process. Yet, SWAPO is held responsible for implementing some aspects of the resolution. This entire comic opera of international relations is now to be implemented by a constrained and financially disabled United Nations. To add irony to the insult, the gang of five in the security Council has financially crippled the implementation process.

If this type of regional solution is replicated in other areas, the Non-Aligned Movement should insist on a permanent membership in the Security Council. If nothing else, the movement can represent the victims of regional wars.

The details of the economic analysis undertaken by the summit were no more comforting. Regional wars have wreaked havoc on development pros-

pects. The debt crisis is slowly eroding the sovereignty of all debtor countries. Africa faces one of the most severe economic crises of this century with hunger and famine as part of the permanent reality. Yet, North American, European, and Japanese superpowers seem in no mood even to entertain the notion of global negotiations.

A condominium of superpowers – It was for these economic and political reasons that the heads of state proceeded to modify Yugoslavia's original draft declaration. While they welcomed the new East-West relationship, they were not convinced that the Cold War on the political or economic front had ended. They also felt that the world faced a new threat: the maldistribution of the world's wealth and resources that could lead to a dangerous war for global control and the concentration of this economic power amongst a few industrial nations which could destroy the global environment.

One major change in world politics since the founding of the movement in 1961 is the shift from a bipolar world to a multipolar superpower world consisting today of the U.S., the USSR, the European Community, and Japan. In the political realm, the USSR announced recently that it was rejecting the Brezhnev doctrine. It is difficult to comprehend the real meaning of this announcement, especially since the doctrine was never clearly articulated. What concerns non-aligned countries is whether the Soviet Union plans to extricate itself entirely from all regional conflicts in the Third World. During the summit, a Soviet foreign policy spokesperson pronounced that the USSR was abandoning its policy of seeing the Non-Aligned Movement as a "natural ally" and that it recognized the movement as an independent force in world politics. This was seen at best as a gratuitous statement because the movement has always seen itself as an independent force in world politics. Many agree with Ranko Paetkovic, a Yugoslav theoretician of non-alignment, who proposes that the debate about "natural ally" and "equidistance" be put to rest and that the more concrete issues facing the movement be addressed.

One major underlying issue at the summit was the proper understanding of the consequences of the changes in the Soviet Union, both internally and externally, for the global community. Internally, the reemergence of ethnic nationalism and new demands for secession are seen as a dangerous warning to national sovereignty, not only for the Soviet Union, but many non-aligned countries with similar situations. Externally, there is the possibility of the Soviet Union becoming so obsessed with its internal problems that it could become the weaker partner in the global power structure. In strategic terms, non-aligned countries have always understood that as long as there are two powers with nuclear hegemony neither could dominate the globe.

What troubles the movement is the possibility of the Western world becoming a new condominium of superpowers with the European Community, Japan, and the United States creating a fortress around themselves to protect their economic and political interests. A weakened USSR and China would become junior global partners with the new condominium as the only hegemonic power. This would turn non-aligned countries into client states of the condominium. This is particularly critical for the large number of small states in the movement with weak economies. One of the issues that confronts the movement internally is the growing tension between large and small states, particularly in the context of global economic negotiations. A fortress mentality will have severe consequences for the movement, especially in the areas of security, cultural domination, development, and political sovereignty. It should be noted, however, that it will be difficult for Western condominium powers to live in isolation in the fortress as they are dependent on raw materials, labor, and markets from outside. Sooner or later, the dwellers inside the fortress will have to come to some accommodation with the barbarians ouside.

This grim assessment of global conditions simply means that the Non-Aligned Movement has an even greater role in protecting its populations than in previous decades. As a trade union of the poor and representative of the wretched of the earth, it has no alternative but to maintain internal unity and to look for new allies both inside and outside the fortress. It is for this reason that non-aligned countries have come to the firm conclusion that the United Nations remains the only organization that can enable them to survive under conditions of international anarchy. •

Cambodian peace talks: what is the non-aligned solution?

Life During Wartime

Parts of Beirut are reduced to rubble. Others have become permanent battlefields. Yet daily life adapts and goes on

Subscribe to *third world*

☐ I'm interested in an alternative source of information on Third World affairs. I'd like to subscribe.

Enclosed is a check for _____

Subscription Rates

One year (6 issues)	US$9
Two years (12 issues)	US$15
Institutions (1 year, 6 issues)	US$20
Third World Schools (1 year, 6 issues)	US$7
Subscriptions in Brazil (2 years, 12 issues)	NCz$ 305,00

☐ I'd like more information about your editions in Spanish and Portuguese

☐ I am enclosing the names and addresses of friends who would be interested in learning about *third world*.

Name _____

_____

Institution _____

Address _____

_____

City _____

State/Province _____

Country _____

Fill out this coupon and mail it to:
Third World (Subscription Dept)
Rua da Glória 122 gr. 105
Rio de Janeiro CEP 20241 RJ – Brazil

Distributing Bodies for UNESCO Coupons

third world *magazine can be purchased with UNESCO coupons. Coupons are available in national currency at the rate of exchange on the day of purchase. Below is a list of some coupon distributors.*

For countries not listed, contact UNESCO:
7, place de Fontenoy
75700 Paris – France

• **Algeria**
Commission nationale algérienne pour l'Unesco
Ministère de l'enseignement supérieur
23, avenue de la Robertsau – Bd Salah Bouakouir – Alger

• **Angola**
Commission nationale angolaise pour l'Unesco
Ministère de l'éducation
C.P. 1451 – Luanda

• **Bangladesh**
Bangladesh National Commission for Unesco
Ministry of Education
1 - Asian Highway
Palassy, Nilkhet
Dhaka 5

• **Burma**
Burmese National Commission for Unesco
Dept. of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Office of the Ministers,
Theinbyu Street
Rangoon

• **Burundi**
Commission pour l'Unesco, Ministère de l'éducation
Boîte postale 1990
Bujumbura

• **Chile**
Conicyt
Canadá 308 - Casilla 297, V
Santiago de Chile 9

• **Colombia**
I.C.E.T.E.X. Oficina de Relaciones Nacionales y Internacionales
Apartado Aéreo 5735, Bogotá D.E.

• **Congo**
Commission pour l'Unesco
Boîte postale 493
Brazzaville

• **Cuba**
Comisión Nacional Cubana de la Unesco
Avenida Kohly 151, Esq. 32,
Nuevo Vedado, La Habana

• **Egypt**
Unesco Representative Egypt
8, Abdel Rahman Fahmy Street
Garden City – Cairo

• **Ethiopia**
Ethiopian National Agency for Unesco
P.O. Box 2996, Addis Ababa

• **Gambia**
Gambia National Commission for Unesco
Ministry of Education
Bedford Plac eBulding – Banjul

• **Ghana**
Ghana National Commission for Unesco
Ministry of Education
P.O. Box 2739 – Accra

• **Guinea**
Commission nationale pour l'Unesco
Ministère de l'Information et de la Culture – Boîte postale 964, Conarkry

• **Guinea-Bissau**
Commission nationale pour l'Unesco
C.P. 353 – Bissau

• **Guyana**
United Nations Development programme
P.O. Box 10960 – Georgetown

• **India**
National Commission for Co-operation with Unesco
Ministry of Human Resource Development
Department of Education
Room 203, 'C' Wing, Shastri Bhavan
New Delhi 110001

• **Iran**
Iranian National Commission for Unesco
1188 Enghelab avenue (Rostam Building)
P.O. Box 11365-4498 – Zip code 13158
Teheran

• **Iraq**
Iraqi National Commission for Unesco
Ministry of Education, Baghdad

• **Ivory Coast**
Commission nationale pour l'Unesco
Ministère de l'éducation nationale chargé de l'enseignement secondaire et supérieur
15, avenue Nogués (Immeuble Nogués, 2o. étage)
B.P. 297 – Abidjan 01

• **Jamaica**
Jamaica National Commission for Unesco
25 Dominica Drive
P.O. Box 202 – Kingston 5

• **Kenya**
Kenya National Commission for Unesco
Ministry of Education, Commerce House (4th Floor) - Moi Avenue – P.O. Box 30040 – Nairobi

• *Liberia*
Liberian National Commission for Unesco
Ministry of Education (Room 413)
Broad Street – Monrovia

• **Madagascar**
Commission nationale pour l'Unesco
11, Naka Rabemanantsoa
Behoririka
Boîte postale 331
Tananarive - Antananarivo (101)

• **Malawi**
Malawi National Commission for Unesco
Taurus House – P.O. Box 30278
Capital City
Lilongwe 3

• **Mongolia**
Commission nationale pour l'Unesco
Ministère des Affaires étrangères
Oulan Bator

• **Morocco**
Commission nationale marocaine pour l'éducation, la science et la culture,
24, rue du Sénégal-Océan
Boîte postale 420
Rabat

• **Nepal**
National Commission for Unesco,
Ministry of Education
Kaiser Mahal, Kantipath, Kathmandu

• **Nicaragua**
United Nations Development Programme
Apartado postal 3260, Managua

• **Nigeria**
National Commission for Unesco
Federal Ministry of Education,
14 Broad Street – PMB 2823 Lagos

• **Pakistan**
National Commission for Unesco
Plot No. 30 Sector H-8
Unesco House
Islamabad

• **Peru**
ITINTEC, Apartado 145, Lima

• **Philippines**
United Nations Development Programme
P.O.B. 7285 ADC, Mla Rd., Pasay City
Metro Manila

• **Rwanda**
Commission nationale pour l'Unesco
Ministère de l'enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche scientifique
B.P. 1326
Kigali

• **São Tomé-et-Príncipe**
Commission nationale de pour l'Unesco
Ministère de l'éducation et de la culture
São Tomé

• **Sierra Leone**
National Commission for Unesco
Ministry of Education, Cultural Affairs Sports, New England
Freetown

• **Somalia**
Somali National Commission for Unesco
Ministry of Culture and Higher Education
P.O. Box 1182
Mogadiscio

• **South Korea**
Korea Exchange Bank,
I.P.O. 2924 – Seoul

• **Sri Lanka**
National Commission for Unesco
Ministry of Justice, Transworks House
Lower Chatham Street
Colombo 01

• **Sudan**
United Nations Development Programme
P.O. Box 913, Khartoum

• **Syrian Arab Republic**
Centre d'études et de recherches scientifiques
Boîte postale 4470, Damas

• **Tanzania**
Unesco national Commission
Jengo la Umoja wa Vijana
Morogoro Road
P.O. Box 20384
Dar-es-Salaam

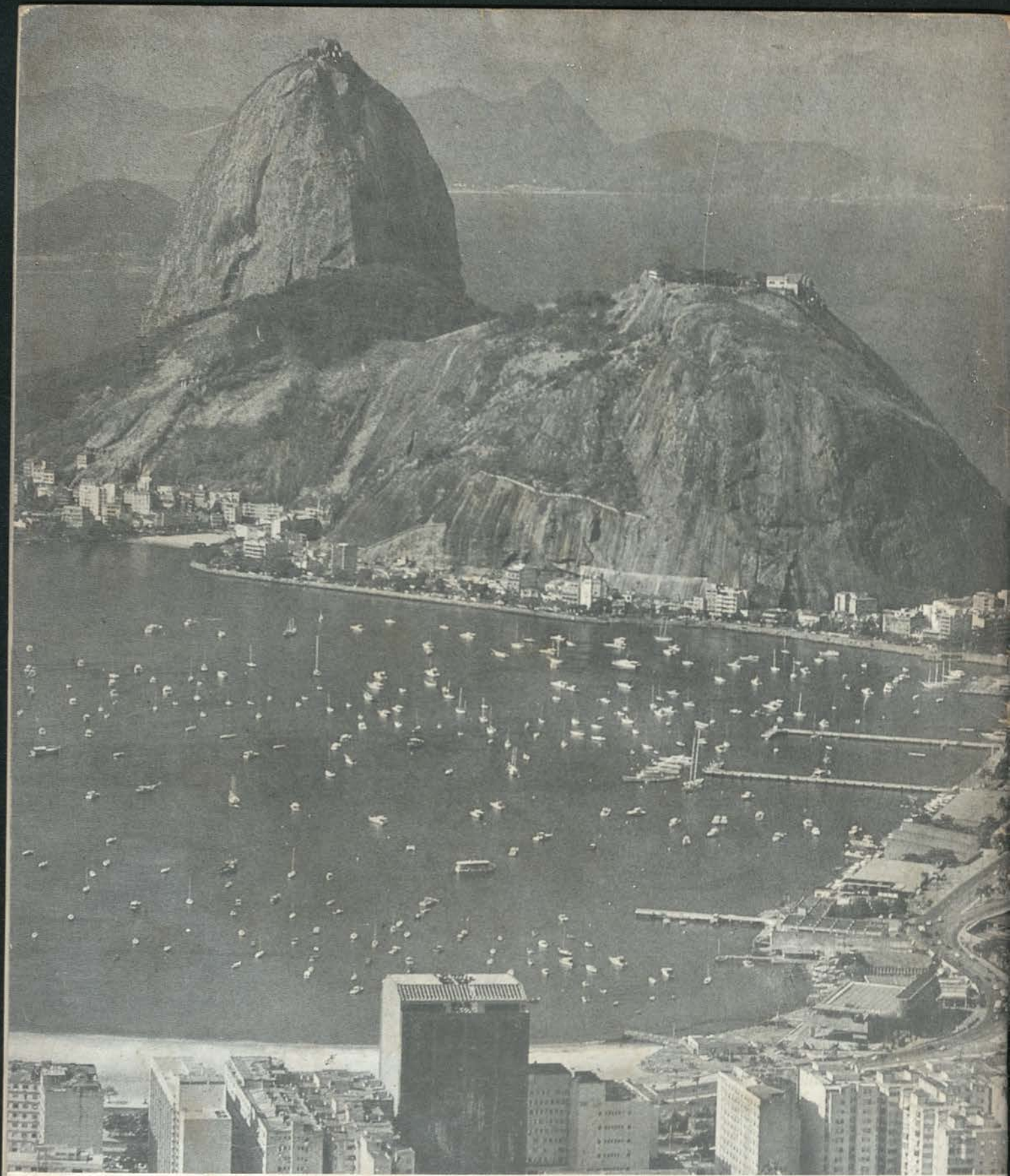
• **Tunisia**
Commission nationale tunisienne pour l'éducation, la science et la culture
Ministère de l'éducation, de l'enseignement et de la recherche scientifique
22, rue d'Angleterre
B.P. 1280 R.P. – 1000 R.P. Tunis

• **Uganda**
Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development,
P.O. Box 7086, Kampala

• **Uruguay**
C.O.N.I.C.Y.T., Sarandy 444, p.4,
Casilla de correo 1869, Montevideo

• **Zaire**
Commission nationale pour l'Unesco
Commissariat d'État chargé de l'enseignement primaire et secondaire
Boîte postale 3163
Kinshasa - Gombe

• **Zambia**
Zambia National Commission for Unesco
Ministry of Higher Education
P.O. Box 50619
Lusaka



We're opening space for the debate of Third World problems

CITY OF
RIO DE JANEIRO