U.S. Sends 1300 Troops

Invasion from the North
Part 2: Panama

After General Noriega sent in troops to the Marriott Hotel on March 28 to beat and arrest pro-U.S. opposition leaders (and a few American journalists who got in the way), outraged officials in Washington fumed, "This is the last straw!" On April 1 the imperialist bully struck back. The U.S. said it is sending 1,300 new troops to Panama and threatened to send in more. But there's one question you won't hear from U.S. officials: What the hell is the Marriott Hotel doing in Panama?!

This new military move in Central America comes just one day after the last batch of 3,500 U.S. combat troops returned from "exercises" in Honduras. This time, 1,300 Yanqui soldiers are being sent into the middle of a tense situation in Panama. Their mission: to make sure the U.S. gets its way, one way or another. It is a new and dangerous act of U.S. aggression in Central America.

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Three Main Points
by Bob Avakian
Chairman of the RCP, USA

What do we in the revolutionary Communist Party want people to learn from all that is exposed and revealed in this newspaper? Mainly, three things:

1) The whole system we now live under is based on exploitation—here and all over the world. It is completely worthless and no basic change for the better can come about until this system is overthrown.

2) Many different groups will protest and rebel against things this system does; and these protests and rebellions should be supported and strengthened. Yet it is only those with nothing to lose and their chains who can be the backbone of a struggle to actually overthrow this system and create a new system that will put an end to exploitation and help pave the way to a whole new world.

3) Such a revolutionary struggle is possible. There is a political Party that can lead such a struggle, a political Party that speaks and acts for those with nothing to lose but their chains: The Revolutionary Communist Party, USA.

This Party has the vision, the program, the leadership, and the organizational principles to unite those who must be united and enable them to do what must be done. There is a challenge for all those who would like to see such a revolution, those with a burning desire to see a drastic change for the better, all those who dare to dream and to act to bring about a completely new and better world. Support this Party, join this Party, spread its message and its organized strength, and prepare the ground for a revolutionary rising that has a solid basis and a real chance of winning.
The rulers of Israel are desperate to break the back of Palestinian resistance after four months of massive protests and uprisings. When the underground leadership of the intifada called for major actions to commemorate March 30, Land Day, the Zionists decided to make this a decisive showdown.

Israeli Defense Minister Rabin threatened, "You determined Land Day. Let's confront each other, we'll see who will be stronger." Prime Minister Shamir declared, "The means are not important; it's the ends that matter. The aim is that these days pass, as all days must, in peace and quiet."

But Israel hasn't had any "peace and quiet" since last December, and the Palestinian people gave them none during the week of Land Day.

Twelve years ago, on March 30, 1976, a general strike swept the "Israel Arab" area around Galilee in protest against the systematic theft of Arab land by Israel for expanding Jewish settlements. In the confrontations that followed Zionist troops killed six Palestinians. Since then Palestinians have commemorated that date as Land Day, or Yom al-ard in Arabic.

Palestinians living inside the "green line" (Israel's self-proclaimed borders) planned to use Land Day for a show of unity with their sisters and brothers fighting in the "occupied territories" of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. So Sharmi made a bully's threat against them: "If the Arabs of Israel won't come to their villages into exile. And that theft continues today, especially in the "occupied territories".

Arrests piled up in the days leading up to Wednesday's Land Day actions. One hundred and fifty were arrested on Monday night alone, according to the Palestine Press Service (PPS). Defense Minister Rabin announced that there were 4,000 Palestinians in custody, nearly half of them seized in the two weeks before Land Day.

The death toll mounts rapidly. Early in the morning, troops rarity killed more than one Palestinian a day. However, in the last few weeks reports of as many as four dead in a day are common. There is fear that press censorship will mean more killings may go unreported.

On Tuesday, March 29, troops forced Palestinians in many towns to clean stores so that the masses could not stock up for Wednesday's general strike. The occupation authorities sealed off whole neighborhoods to areas that have been particularly combative: the Gaza Strip and the villages of northern West Bank.

Land Day — And the Crucial Land Question

It is no accident that March 30 emerged as a key battleground. Land Day concentrates two burning political themes that target the very existence of the Israeli settler state.

On that first Land Day in 1976, Arabs in Galilee chanted, "This village belongs to Palestine, not Israel!" They were not demanding citizenship within Israel but supported the joint struggle of all Palestinians for national liberation, which can only be achieved with the overthrow of the Zionist settler state. So the first theme of Land Day is that all territory now dominated by Israel is Palestine.

The second important theme is land itself. In 1976 the immediate issue was the state-sponsored theft of 1,600 acres of Arab farmland in the Galilee area. The existence of Israel is based on systematic theft of land from its Palestinian owners. Armistice theft over many decades forced millions of Palestinians from their farms, orchards, and ancestral villages into exile. And that theft continues today, especially in the "occupied areas," where Zionist settlers brazenly grab the best land, the water resources, the roads, and the fishing rights of Palestinians.

Land Day is a declaration that land throughout all of Palestine must be returned to Palestinians.

In colonial and semicolonial countries, the overthrow of foreign imperialist domination is central to getting rid of oppression. In China Mao Tsetung charted the road to new-democratic revolution which is the only real way forward for national liberation.

Palestine is a special colonial situation. Imperialism created an expansionist settler state that drove whole people from their homes in a series of vicious wars and seizures. The return of stolen land to Palestinians is a cornerstone of the revolutionary goal of the defeat of the Zionist state and establishing a democratic, secular state of Palestine.

Israel bras that it uses armed might to "create facts on the ground." Land theft and the forced expulsion of Arabs have been central to those "facts." A key legal of the revolution, say activists, is creating new, liberating "facts on the ground," reclaiming the fields and lands from those who stole it. Without that, Palestinians cannot achieve liberation; they would remain refugees in their own country, deprived of the most valuable element of their identity: their lands and fields and factories of their oppressors.

Land Day touches on this vision; it links the return of Palestinian land with the national liberation of the Palestinian people. This is what the Israelis hoped to crush last week. They failed completely, again.

March 30 — Spring Blossomed on Land Day

Israel's West Bank Commander Mitnag had to admit, "We can't say that Land Day was quiet. It was not." Another military spokesman said, "There is no question that there were more clashes, they were more violent and more spread out."

In fact the acts were defiant, inspiring and seemingly everywhere; some said the depth of revolt was "unprecedented." It broke out every Tuesday, like the wildflowers of spring.

Eight West Bank villages were virtually total on both sides of the "green line." Schools were closed, shops were shuttered. The Israeli army did not even try to open the "green line" to Arab workers entering Israel — there was no significant scaling. It was the most successful general strike ever and continued past Land Day itself.

A report in the New York Times said "routs in the West Bank were clustered with Palestinian barricades. Many troops were on hand, with helicopters hovering above as youths gathered at crossroads and threw stones. The army said shots were fired at soldiers near Deir Abu Mashad."

House-to-house searches by Israeli troops met resistance. In one incident, a 50-year-old Palestinian woman defending her children was shot in her home and left bleeding on the floor. Another Israeli said she endangered troops with a rake. A police jeep was repeatedly ambushed by crowds of stone-throwing youth. In Ramallah, hundreds fought troops. In another incident, troops staged a massive assault on a Palestinian barricade: a jeep rammed the wall, police shot at black jeeps and a helicopter, dozens of soldiers fired into the crowds of fleeing people.

Land Day touches on this vision; it links the return of Palestinian land with the national liberation of the Palestinian people. This is what the Israelis hoped to crush last week. They failed completely, again.

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November Elections: A Week on the Razor’s Edge

Part 1

In Haiti dechouke and rache, the Creole terms for “uproot” and “tear out,” are no longer words that refer to agriculture. Today they describe a mass movement—a movement aimed at thoroughly digging up and smashing the roots of the old order. A nation founded on a powerful slave rebellion, Haiti is now, once again, the site of a people in revolt. Up against a legacy of American invasion and Duvalierist terror, the past two years have witnessed general strikes and uprisings in every major city and the beginning of peasant upheaval in the countryside. As brutal repression has continued, so too has the impatience and rage of the masses. There is a rich story behind the scanty and distorted accounts of this struggle in the mainstream U.S. media. Nadine Andre, a journalist fluent in Haitian Creole, went to Haiti during the tumultuous period of the November 1987 elections. She was able to hear the story firsthand from the Haitian people and investigate and learn more about the rapidly developing situation. RW No. 446 carried Andre’s story of the burning of the Marche Salomon in the days before the election.

A member of the “Leopards,” the special counterinsurgency force, in front of the National Palace.

The razor-sharp edge of politics in Haiti last November extended well into its air space. The plane I was on was only a third full and a restless silence had prevailed since Miami. As the island of Hispaniola came into view, someone behind me commented that a fellow passenger closely resembled one of the presidential candidates, Rockefeller Guerre. Immediately there was a flurry of nervous admonitions for him to “pran prekoup”—to be careful.

Political tension was not the only thing that loomed up and enveloped us before we touched ground. Even from the air, Haiti’s beauty has an almost alarming quality; it is something you are unprepared for. The blue of the mountains takes you by surprise and pulls you back two centuries to the “maroons”—Haiti’s first guerrillas, rebel slaves who escaped to these mountains. And an aerial view of Haiti is a view of an overwhelmingly rural country—80 percent of the Haitian people are peasants. Countless valleys and ravines unfold one after another. A Creole proverb explains, “dèy mè gen mè,” “behind the mountains are mountains.” Erosion is painfully evident. Many of the mountains rise up steep and naked, stripped of the fertile loam that the peasantry lives by. But as we descended, I could see that wherever there was a water source or the slightest bit of irrigation, vibrant green burst forth. Not a bad introduction to Haiti, I thought: life fiercely insisting, refusing to relinquish its place, determined to triumph in the end.

Like everyone else, I had many questions about what to expect during election week. But early on I realized that answers would come only by taking in the rush and swirl of rapid-fire events. It was a period of profound conflict and crisis in Haiti. And like such periods anywhere, it was a time when preconceived notions of how events would develop had to be thrown out and exchanged for a view that could encompass a dynamic mix of forces in a telescoped period of time. In this case, that period of time was to be no more than seven days.

The airport was typically eerie. No bigger than a good-sized suburban supermarket and parking lot in the U.S., it was staked out by heavily armed soldiers and police. A pathetic little band played without enthusiasm. My transit at the airport was uneventful, but two days later an acquaintance from the U.S. found herself there alone, face to face with some of the main players in the clash that was to occur that week. A regular visitor to Haiti, she had planned to rent a car after arriving at the airport. By the time she found out that there were no cars to be had, the airport had emptied of travelers and taxis. As dusk approached, the soldiers became more and more menacing. It was clear they did not appreciate her presence, but until they set up a roadblock on the only road to the airport, it wasn’t clear why. The word on the streets is that after darkness falls, the army closes off the airport road and uses the airstrip for drug running. After the woman reached a friend by phone, his car was stopped at the roadblock. Soldiers surrounded her, demanding: “Who is waiting for you?” When she told them that a number
of people were expecting her, a soldier slammed a cur-
ridge into his rifle, pointed it at her head and said,
"That's interesting." They finally let her walk down the
airport road to her car.
Out in the streets of Port-au-Prince, though, the mood
was different. I spent the first few days scoping out the
scene in the capital. My first glimpse of the people's
political exuberance was the graffiti on anything flat
enough to be written on. A prominent wall downtown
announced, "A bas 1915!, "Down with 1915!", the
date the U.S. invaded Haiti. "Aba Makout!!", "Down
with Macoutes!!" was everywhere. And amid electoral
slogans and posters of candidates: "Viv revolisyon," "Longive revolution!" A sprawling mural near the
university portrayed five people labeled "Canada," "U.S."
"France," and "Japan," and "England"
sucking straws in a glass containing a map of Haiti. All
of this was set against an American flag. Even tree trunks
had been enlisted in the effort; painted red and blue, the
color of the Haitian flag that Francois Duvalier had
changed to the despised red and black. When I once
made the mistake of wearing a red shirt and a black skirt,
I was seriously advised to never dress that way again.


Pre-election Views

What exactly were the terms of this battle for the elec-
tions, I wanted to know. Did people really think any of
the candidates could or would change things in Haiti?
How did people view the role of the U.S. in all of this?
The first thing that became apparent to me was the legacy
of the last two years of wrenching, sometimes uplifting,
struggle in Haiti. The level of political sophistication on
the street was high and political discussion and debate
permeated everything. People approached the elections
with the bold assurance of people who had themselves
forced Duvalier out and with whom any future president
would have to deal. Women selling nothing more than
cheesing gum and peanuts out of broad flat baskets
discussed the candidates with wide-open candor. They
debated and carefully examined candidates' ties to the
Duvalier regime and to the United States. Young men
without jobs spent the afternoon waiting for a flat tire to
fix, discussing the nature of foreign relations Haiti
should have. A typical exchange took place in one cab I
was in. An older civil servant spoke contemptuously of
the KNG government and the Tontons Macoute
(Duvalier's personal army of thugs, officially disbanded
but who continue to operate within the military as well as
more broadly). As soon as he got out, a younger man
protested to the rest of us that it was impossible for the
maa to have worked as a civil servant for the government
all those years and not be a Duvalierist or a Macoute
himself. The term "Macoute" was being used more
broadly to describe all those who benefited from the cor-
rupt and oppressive system.

The previous spring many people had voted for a new
constitution which was promoted by the U.S. and the
pro-U.S. Haitian "technocrats." The constitution in-
cluded guidelines for elections which put restrictions
on the old-line Duvalierists, who some refer to as
the "dinosaurs." And many people's hearts had
quickened at the prospect of at least some kind of
change, something other than warmed-over
Duvalerism. In the months leading up to the November
elections, thinking among the masses was both more
realistic as well as contradictory. Especially among the
majority of people, the bitterly poor who must struggle
to survive day-to-day, there was a feeling that the
declasse movement had to uproot society even further
and that Duvalerism could only be gotten rid of through
some kind of violent confrontation. And there was
widespread anti-U.S. sentiment and distrust of any can-
didate exposed as being in the service of U.S. im-
perialism. At the same time an overwhelming majority of
people had registered to vote, even though no single can-
didate had emerged as popular among the broad masses.
And the slogan "pouvoir popular" (people's power)
was, among some, associated with the ideal of a popular
election.

Still others had few illusions about the candidates or
the elections themselves. Wilson Alcius, a slight young
man who introduced himself to me as a "revolution-
naire," was one of those. Wilson had worked as a tourist
guide before Jean-Claude Duvalier was chased out. But
after political upheaval broke out and continued, he only
occasionally found work as a guide for foreign jour-
nalists. He spoke French and Creole, as well as a good
deal of English, Spanish, and Italian, though he read
only with great difficulty. In many ways Wilson was
typical of a younger, more angry minority with a clearer
political analysis of the elections. Sylvio Claude, a pro-

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Chicago Sanctuary Protest

"No a la Migra! Si a la Vida!"

At first glance, the barren brick building with trailer windows looks like just another industrial park factory. But then the coiled razor wire surrounding the parking lot, the chain link fence surrounding the detention center, and the sign reading "U.S. Justice Dept., Immigration and Naturalization Service," the lawn service truck that is the recently opened INS detention center located in the Chicago suburb of Broadview.

On March 27 chants of "No a la Migra, Si a la Vida!" (No to immigration, yes to life) filled the air, and the chain link fence surrounding the detention center's parking lot was protected with large banners reading "Broadview—Shut it down!" and "No a la Migra! Si a la Vida!" A crowd of seventy-five people, mainly middle-class church members, gathered in response to a call by the Chicago Metropolitan Sanctuary Alliance to "Just Say 'No' to La Migra!" The Alliance is a network of thirteen sanctuary churches which support and shelter immigrants forced to flee U.S.-backed terror and death squads in Central America. "CIA and Pentagon destroy the villages, INS hunts down the survivors!" is how one banner summed up the violence squeezing these immigrants. Many protesters penned "illegal" buttons on jackets and coats.

The approaching May 4 deadline for applications for "amnesty" under the repressive Simpson-Rodino Act gave the demonstration an added urgency. One speaker, a sanctuary church minister, exposed how Central American immigrants are systematically denied political refugee status. While 84 percent of Nicaraguans (who are anti-Sandinista) and 45 percent of all Poles receive political asylum, he reported that only 3.6 percent of Salvadorans, 3.7 percent of Guatemalans, and 4.8 percent of Hondurans are granted this status. A Guatemalan refugee living in sanctuary, his identity hidden under a hat, sunglasses, and bandana, said, "When we're deported, we're assassinated in our country."

According to a speaker from Proyecto Libertad, the Rio Grande Valley of Texas bordering Mexico has been virtually sealed off by INS checkpoints, turning the entire area into a giant detention center. Proyecto Libertad, a Texas-based legal aid organization reports that 17,000 Central Americans were arrested by the INS in 1986, a six-fold increase over 1982.

A sanctuary minister from the Wheaton United Methodist Church read a religious litany, calling the Simpson-Rodino Immigration Reform and Control Act an "immoral and racist act." He went on to target the immigration detention center as part of a "growing apparatus that will be used to deport and deport immigrants who won't qualify for legalization."

"It [Broadview] is located in a strategic spot near the Eisenhower Expressway and close to O'Hare Airport," read the leaflet handed out by the Alliance. "At last report, the only accessible phones needed credit cards. Detainees are advised of their legal rights, but legal representation is made inaccessible by the center's location outside of Chicago. Broadview was set up to expedite mass deportations. It is an efficient machine for the implementation of an immoral law."

The crowd cheered as a Catholic priest urged the people to stand against the Simpson-Rodino Immigration Reform and Control Act, and respond to "a real purpose is to control immigrant workers, not to demand amnesty."

Another section of the letter addressed and criticized their reasons for not confronting the law sooner. "We have been too distant from the oppressed people and their sufferings when we should have been standing at their side." A May 5th conference is being held by the Metropolitan Sanctuary Alliance for employers who will take a position of non-compliance with the INS rule that they demand workers' identity papers.

"When we're deported, we're assassinated in our country." Charlie, a white man who attends a Black and Latino Catholic parish and volunteers at a homeless shelter, went on, "Take Jesus! He's a Cuban guy in his 50s, he's been here a long time. But he got stabbed in a holding cell and when they opened him up at the hospital they found he had cancer. He's sick, so he won't qualify under the amnesty."

A communal house of brothers and volunteers workers has taken Jesus in to live with them since he is "illegal" and doesn't qualify for any medical aid from welfare.

Charlie described how he had seen the exploitation of illegals while working at a factory job. "The employer wasn't paying them well, they paid $2.25 for the same work." He was living in a boarding house, paying $35 a week. When two Salvadorans came looking for a room, they were charged $50 a head for sleeping in the same bed.

Explaining how he became a volunteer, Charlie said he is a Vietnam vet who became an alcoholic and wound up homeless. "I've been there myself and I work in the shelter to repay those who helped me. . . . I went to Dachau when I was stationed in Germany, you look at this," he said, pointing to the Broadview detention center, "and you wonder, when are they going to stop the fascist act?"
Hundreds Deported in Orange City

La Migra Runs Amok

Justino Llamas and three friends were on their way to work last February 27 in the city of Orange, near Los Angeles. Only blocks from his house Llamas stopped the car to get coffee and donuts. “All of a sudden,” Llamas told the Los Angeles Times. “the police pulled up behind us. I still don’t understand what went on. We didn’t do anything wrong.

Three days later, again in Orange, Jose Luis Lara was riding with a friend. They too were stopped for not wearing seat belts. Lara and one other passenger in this car also had no ID, and they too were arrested. The Orange Police Department then turned them over to the INS Border Patrol in San Clemente, more than thirty miles south of Orange. Later that day the police called Llamas at his house and told him that one of his friends “was on his way to Ti-Juanus.”

On Saturday, March 19 the Coalition for Immigrants Rights held a protest of the raids, raising demands such as “Jobs not Jail!” About twenty people with banners and signs went to the section of Chapman Avenue where the Orange police have been attacking the immigrants. There have been reports of other forms of resistance, including warning networks being formed and opposition to the anti-immigrant attacks from merchants in the area.

Outcry. The article talked of people being “locked up” in Orange. According to Robin Blackwell, on February 22 Harold Ezell, Western Region Director for the INS, told the Los Angeles Times that “Orange is typical for tens of thousands of Mexican and Central American immigrants. Many are even worse off, forced to live in squalor and without work, the INS reports record numbers of people crossing the U.S.-Mexico border in the past few months. Many of these immigrants will also end up on the streets as day laborers.

In addition to those already in the U.S., many are just stopped and then deported without an explanation. They didn’t say anything about my ID or my papers. They just told me to get into the car and drive to a point in the desert.” The article said they liked the Orange policy.

After the March 16 raid an INS spokesman told the Los Angeles Times that “This is not an act against a certain group. If these people are in this country illegally, they have to be deported.” Earlier, after the March 10 raid, an INS spokesman told the L.A. Times that they can’t “ignore” the Chapman Avenue area “if these people are in this country illegally, they have to be deported.” The article said they liked the Orange policy.

Opposition to the Attacks

The police/INS sweeps in Orange have been met with outrage and opposition. The ACLU and the Orange County Coalition for Immigrants Rights began handout information packets to the day laborers along Chapman, advising them of their rights, and they also called a press conference on March 3 to expose what was going on.

At the press conference about 100 people stood on Chapman Avenue, many of them day laborers, came in defiance of La Migra and the Orange police, who had an observer there. One immigrant who spoke up was 19-year-old Manuel Cardenas, who talked through an interpreter and was quoted in the L.A. Times. Cardenas had been deported only five days earlier. He said that he and a friend were walking along Chapman Avenue at about 11 a.m. on February 26 when cops in unmarked car handcuffed them and took them to the police station. “We were walking on the sidewalk. They did not tell us what we had done wrong. They said I should not be here in this county of Orange any more and don’t come back. They didn’t say anything about my rights.” Cardenas said he had to pay a coyote $300 to bring him back across the border.

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Meanwhile the INS expanded its assault on immigrants in Orange. According to an account in La Opinion, another Spanish-language newspaper in L.A., the INS pulled off raids on March 16 which went beyond the Chapman Avenue area. The INS said they arrested and deported 124 immigrants from various locations in Orange in a three and one-half hour operation. This brought the total number of immigrants deported from Orange to about 430 in just over three weeks.

After the March 16 raid an INS spokesman told La Opinion that “This is not an act against a certain group. If these people are in this country illegally, they have to be deported.” Earlier, after the March 10 raid, an INS spokesman told the L.A. Times that they can’t “ignore” the Chapman Avenue area “if these people are in this country illegally, they have to be deported.” The real criminals in these attacks on immigrants are those holding state power. It is clear from the threats they make that in La Migra is taking aim at all immigrants. Can anyone who hates this shit sit back and allow it to continue?
November Elections:
A Week on the Razor's Edge

Continued from page 5

U.S. candidate who has been jailed a number of times, is considered an incompetent politician by many but also praised for his courage and upholding of anti-Duvalier martyr. But Wilson told me Sylvio Clauze was just as entrenched in the corrupt system as the Macoutes. He also explained to me that Marc Bazin, the ex-World Bank official, was in the service of the U.S., one of the most damning criticisms. Wilson deliberately called Bazin "Mr. Clean" for his false image of being above Duvalierist graft and talked of how Bazin paid poor people to travel around the country to campaign for him. Wilson also told me the U.S. had urged Gerard Gourgue, a pro-U.S. candidate and member of the original post-Duvalier junta, to quit the KNG in order to remain an untainted candidate for the presidency.

Rejecting seductive illusions about change through elections, the bottom line for people like Wilson was the understanding that the old system could never be uprooted without some kind of mass violent upheaval.

People were, Turenne explained, "fache encha tal." That is to say, they were extremely pissed but carefully containing their rage. The brutal violence of the government and the Macoutes was intended to stop the elections as well as any mass upheaval that might erupt. And there was the feeling among some that even the slightest outbreak would be used as a pretext to unleash further attacks on the people and cancel the elections with cries of "chaos" and "anarchy." Even those who understood the elections to be a sham with no promise of change were determined that neither the army, the Macoutes, nor the KNG gain ground in this showdown. There was talk, in hushed voices, of a "dezya a mounmoua" - a second uprising - if the elections didn't come off. And in all of this there was an understanding that more was at stake than whether or not elections were held. Many felt that, more fundamentally, there was the question of whether or not the people would be able to hold onto the political ground they had gained since Duvalier's flight and what kind of a position they would be in to move to a higher level.

The air was heavy and the sun unforgiving as Wilson and I walked through the broad, empty streets near the National Palace. Off to one side was the office of the Provisional Electoral Council, or the CEP, which was responsible for carrying out the elections. We had rejected twelve presidential candidates who were former associates of the Duvaliers. The ruling structure, particularly those forces tied to the old feudal oligarchy, the Macoutes and the military elite, feared that any semblance of a popular election would threaten their hold on power. And so they set out to sabotage the elections. The military and the Macoutes launched a campaign of terror which targeted the CEP, some candidates (two of whom were assassinated in pre-election campaigning), and the people.

Many people told me that repression under the KNG was worse than it had been under the Duvalier regime. And as the elections approached, repression intensified. Nighttime death-squad attacks left bodies to be found the next morning. Usually gunfire came from speeding unmarked cars and men in civilian clothes. And by the time I arrived, this kind of terror had totally altered the daily tempo of Port-au-Prince. By 4:30 in the afternoon, vendors in open-air markets were hurriedly packing up their things. And in a country where people used to gather in groups on the roadsides and talk late into the warm evenings, where students had stood until midnight under lampposts reciting their lessons aloud, the streets were deserted by seven o'clock. This unofficial curfew was trespassed at the risk of death. Turenne Charles, a man who traveled through much of the city every day on his way to a job as a dishwahser, leaned forward as he worked and told me, "You go to Delmas or Carrefour, and in every corner you find the Macoutes." Then, simply out of habit and not because anyone else was nearby, he told me under his breath: "It's quiet now, but it is very dangerous. It was dangerous when there were demonstrations, but this is more dangerous. Things are very, very hot."

Waking on Monday, November 23, the feeling of suspended time snapped like the machine-gun fire during the night. The entire city awoke to find that one of the most important open-air markets in the country, the Marché Salomon, had been burned down that night. With one stroke the KNG and its supporters had directly targeted the poor people of Port-au-Prince and declared just how high the stakes were for them in this battle. As I set out to visit the site of the market, bloody tracks were everywhere. In the darkness, scarlet messages had been painted up on scores of walls throughout the city. Around every corner was the same announcement: "Vive l'armée," "Long live the army." Some were accompanied by "Abas CEP," "Down with the CEP." That same night the CEP headquarters and the offices of two presidential candidates were shot up, and the election office for the capital district was broken into and arson was attempted. Before I got there, the Marché Salomon, Jean-Luc, a French friend, returned from a news clip out of a smaller open-air market where he had been buying vegetables. "They are targeting the people in the center of Port-au-Prince," he said. "The phrase people in Port-au-Prince had used up until then to describe the death-squad terror of the military and the Macoutes. But that Monday the Macoutes broke their own rules and carried out their attacks in broad daylight. Jean-Luc had seen a group of forty men in civilian clothes carrying machine guns marching through the city, busting up cars in the middle of the morning. Schools closed and by early afternoon most stores and shops had been shuttered and locked. Standing amid the smoldering rubble at the site of the market, I reflected that in Port-au-Prince, people still feeling from the assault. Their very next sentiment was, "Kouye a se la ga a" - "This is war." It was a sentiment shared by people all over the city. On the way to the hospital where victims of the night's terror were taken, I saw that people had set up barricades with burning tires and car parts. "You can kill me...the elections will take place," a woman told me, and I heard this many times later that day. With the press of events, the sentiments of people in their tens and hundreds of thousands changed quickly and dramatically. My own notebook reflects the accelerated pace of events and political debate as careful notes gave way to a hastily scribbled record of developments rebuffing off each other.

I remember that in anticipation of election day there was a feeling of time almost being suspended. Political tension focused on the coming election, and the rapid development of events made each day seem like a week. Throughout there was the feeling of a dangerous calm before the storm. As Wilson and I walked along an unusually well-paved promenade across from the National Palace, my friend jeered, "They've been in power for two years and all they did was build this fucking park!" Then, simply out of habit and not because anyone else was nearby, he told me under his breath: "It's quiet now, but it is very dangerous. It was dangerous when there were demonstrations, but this is more dangerous. Things are very, very hot."

Poster seen on the streets of Port-au-Prince reads: "Populare of Port-au-Prince, it is the future, in the paideko, in the state, in the army, in the Macoutes."
Brigades de Vigilance

The next morning, Tuesday, November 24, a new phase, "brigades de vigilance," jumped out from radio broadcasts and echoed through the alleyways of the slums of Port-au-Prince. Overnight these vigilance brigades of ordinary people had become a visible force in almost every poor neighborhood. Rather than paralyzing people, Monday's onslaught of terror had called forth defiance. Tuning my radio to the non-government stations, I heard scintillating reports of actions by the vigilance brigades, including the disarming of Macoutes. And in a brave move, some antigovernment radio stations read formal statements from these brigades over the air.

I set out for Carrefour Feuilles, the poor neighborhood near the center of the city which was instantly renowned as the birthplace of the vigilance brigades. As I walked through the streets of Carrefour Feuilles in the late afternoon, I talked to people already gathering on the "galerias," or stoops, for the nighttime vigil. At first glance the scene appeared ordinary enough, men and women with no jobs, children and old people sitting on dusty cement stairs, out as dusk approached and the day's heat lifted a little. But something more subtle and far more significant was taking shape.

As the scene came into sharper focus, I could see people with a calm but deliberate air carrying pipes, lengths of lumber, rocks, or sitting with clubs, machetes, or knives within reach. A piece of lead lying next to the dusty cement stairs and a gearshift caught my eye in the taxi I took to another neighborhood. People there told me, "Even if some of us are shot, we can stop them." Many confessed that they had made a serious mistake in 1986 after Duvalier was forced to flee the country — after disarming some of the Macoutes, the people had given many of the arms away, it was impossible to imagine the CEP dealing with the logistical problems, let alone the Macoutes and the army. The CEP press conference I went to that afternoon was equally grim. In sharp contrast to the people's daring, the candidates and CEP members looked beleaguered, huddled in, and terrified.

By Tuesday I felt as if night and day had been reversed. The day was lived in anticipation of dramas which would unfold only in the darkness. That night the vigilance brigades erected barricades all over Port-au-Prince to stop death-squad cars and commandos. People's patrols were also on the streets. Four men were apprehended and killed Tuesday night by the brigades. Two of them were policemen — one a member of a political investigation unit. Two others were stopped in a car in the slum of Cité Soleil and after they were killed their bodies were set afire. Revolvers and ammunition were found in their car.

The next morning I read that one of them had, in the horrific words of a pro-government daily, been "emasculé par la population" (castrated by the people). The bodies had also stormed the house of a Tontons Macoute in the well-to-do neighborhood of Fontamarra. The Macoute's house was burned down and two of his speedboats were demolished.

That same night people all over the city heard grenades exploding in Carrefour Feuilles, the place the "brigades de vigilance" had first appeared less than forty-eight hours before. These blasts announced the next episode in this explosive week.

To be continued
Land Day

Continued from page 3

Reports are that four Palestinians were killed and seventy injured in the West Bank on Land Day. The “official death toll” now stands at 200, with more deaths reported daily.

The Israeli army tried to claim that there were only “small disturbances with no casualties” in the Gaza Strip. However, the army was completely cut off from the outside, so it should be assumed the Israelis are lying. The heavy-handed wall of silence that Israel is putting up around Gaza makes it hard to find out what is going on there.

Inside the “Green Line”

For years Arabs within the “green line” have been told by Israel to cut their ties with the rest of the Palestinian nation and to forget dreams of a liberated Palestine. Their struggle (or lack thereof) was at most against their “second-class citizen” status within Israel.

But after this Land Day, the Chicago Tribune’s headline read: “Arabs in Israel Leave No Doubt about Loyalty.” Hundreds of thousands of “Israel Arabs” observed the general strike. Thousands of them marched to beating drums and loudly shouted, “It’s better to die than to lose your land!”

Shamir’s New Threats

On Thursday, only one day after this heavy defeat, Prime Minister Shamir traveled to the West Bank and surrounded himself with an audience of racist settler thugs for a bloodthirsty stump speech. Standing in the ruins of an ancient West Bank castle, he declared: “They say…this land belongs to the soldiers, the killers, the terrorists. But anyone who wants to damage this fortress and other fortresses we are establishing will have their skulls smashed against the boulders and walls.” Shamir raged that Palestinians were “grandshopers” who would be crushed.

Baron hidden behind such talk is a threat that Zionist troops and settlers may be unleashed to commit new levels of horrible pogrom-like massacres. As the same time Israel is taking further steps to prevent the outside world from hearing and seeing the details of Israeli crimes. The day after Land Day, the Palestinian News Service was closed down, second of being linked to the Palestine Liberation Organization. Using the language of Nazism and apartheid, Israel said the closing was “necessary for maintaining public safety and public order.”

U.S. Endorsement

As Israel was increasing the repression, U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz announced that he will make his second “peace mission” to the region in early April.

Nothing the United States does opposes the brutal violence of the Israelis. In fact, on the eve of Land Day State Department spokesman Charles Redman explained that the U.S. believed that Israel “not only has the right but the obligation to restore order in the occupied territories.” A second Reagan administration spokesman said that Israel was obliged “to use appropriate levels of force to accomplish that end.”

There are dual tactics at work here: on one hand, the Israelis seek to “soften up” the Palestinians with murder, torture, and growing economic warfare. On the other hand, the United States sends in its envoy, who pretend to have deep, neutral hands, in order to reap the diplomatic benefits from Israeli atrocities.

There are reports that Jordan’s King Hussein has agreed to go along with Shamir’s “peace plan” and that Yasser Arafat and the PLO “external” leadership have been told by Israel to cut their ties with the Palestine Libera

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TO WIN

THE GULF FULCRUM

THE GULF FULCRUM

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“Imperialism Entangled In Gulf’s Rising Waters” looks at the Iran-Iraq war; “Ragged Hole In ‘Resurgent America’” analyzes America’s Iran-Guatemala affair; “Israel’s Door Burns Its Clove in the Gulf” reveals Soviet moves in the Persian Gulf.

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NEW ISSUE! REVOLUTIONARY INTERNATIONALIST QUARTERLY

TO WIN

THE GULF FULCRUM
The instability of the current situation is essential at this time to insure the continued safety of U.S. personnel and facilities.

The Reagan administration has been trying various ways to pressure Noriega out. They squeezed Panama's dependent economy by creating a shortage of U.S. dollars (which is the currency in Panama), they blocked a general strike by opposition forces who are very much at the U.S.'s beck and call, and they called on the military to stage a coup against Noriega. But so far all this hasn't worked. In fact, Noriega has been stabilizing things his way to some extent by forcing the general strike to crumble, figuring out ways to keep some dollars coming in, and tightening control over his military.

**Coups and Other Plans**

By sending in its rapid deployment troops and threatening a full-scale military assault, the U.S. hopes to stabilize things in its way. The first choice for the U.S. probably is to encourage a coup in the Panamanian military, with the U.S. troops standing by as an encouragement — and a threat. In the past few weeks U.S. officials have been openly courting officers in the Panamanian Defense Forces who are afraid that if Noriega goes, his position and lives will also be in danger. The U.S. is promising that all they want is to get rid of Noriega and that the military as a whole will not be touched. The other side of the promise is that if the Panamanian officers don't go against Noriega, some of them will be swept away along with him.

This is more exposure that the U.S. doesn't want to see any fundamental changes in Panamanian society. The U.S. imperialists want to keep and strengthen its position in Panama, and they are willing to use military force to keep it.

But Noriega has crushed one coup attempt already, and the U.S. is making it clear that it is considering other options. There are reports in the press that State Department officials were pushing for taking direct military action, for example by having the CIA organize a coup or using a paramilitary force to kidnap Noriega and bring him to the U.S. to trial on drug-trafficking and money-laundering charges. The Pentagon, it is reported, is reluctant to do anything because officials fear that such blatant actions could lead to anti-American protests among the masses in Panama and beyond. The press has also played up calls by U.S.-backed anti-Noriega figures for U.S. military action against the general.

It is unclear whether these reports have been "leaked" in order to put more pressure on Noriega or if there are real arguments within the administration over concrete plans. But the U.S. ruling class as a whole is eager to win the battle for what it sees as "peace makers" in Central America, and the press is playing up any reports of growing food shortages and hardships among the poorest sections of the people, and a move by the U.S. military could have unpredictable consequences in this situation.

The stand of proletarians is clear: The U.S. has no right to decide and determine what will happen in Panama. Noriega is an enemy of the Panamanian people — but behind Noriega and others in the Panamanian ruling class stand the U.S. godfathers and their system which keeps Panama under foreign domination. U.S. OUT OF ALL OF CENTRAL AMERICA! NO U.S. INTERVENTION IN PANAMA!
Commemorating a Major Struggle in the RCP, USA

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This past winter marks ten years since the Revolutionary Communist Party’s victorious struggle to uphold Mao’s line and repudiate the 1976 revisionist reversal of socialism in China. This article commemorates and analyzes what has been the most important inner-party struggle in the RCP, USA.

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