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ELECTRICITY COMMISSION IMPORT SUBSTITUTION PROGRAM

Mexico City UNOMASUNO in Spanish 3 Feb 84 p 22

/Article by Jeanette Acosta/

/Text/ The Federal Electricity Commission /CFE/ announced yesterday that Mexico will save the foreign currency equivalent of 857 billion pesos during the next 7 years with the starting up of an import substitution program. Fourteen national firms have already begun manufacturing equipment and priority capital assets for the sector.

According to the commission's statement, the program consists basically of standardizing the specifications of priority capital goods items to facilitate their manufacture in this country, while at the same time an effort is to be made to encourage the setting up of joint investment projects bringing in foreign technology suitable to the needs of our country, subject to prior approval of the CFE. In its first stage, the program has commenced operations with 14 firms manufacturing turbogenerators, steam generators, hydraulic turbines, power transformers, circuit breakers, water pumps, insulated phase busses and high tension disconnect switches.

"These items of capital equipment, the manufacture of which has already begun or is about to begin, actually represent import substitution amounting to 857 billion pesos of the 993 billion peso cost of the 17 principal categories of imported heavy equipment," the CFE noted. The commission also announced that, with the cooperation of the National Chamber of Electrical Manufactures /CANAMEL/, the manufacture of such products as isolating switches, current recuperators, water treatment units and insulators will be started soon, apart from which the local manufacture of powerhouse automating equipment and supervisory control systems will be promoted. Later, the manufacture in Mexico of voltage regulators, lightning arresters, communication units, wave traps and power reactors will also be encouraged.

The CFE noted that the decision to push domestic manufacture of the equipment which it requires was reinforced following a review of top management expenditures in recent years, which amounted to an outlay of 15.6 billion pesos for this purpose, for the years 1971 through

1976 alone. "This led to the setting up of a Domestic Manufacture Promotion unit within the Committee on Import Substitution, which reached the conclusion that unless the trend was checked, the CFE would spend 650 billion pesos on foreign imports in the current 6-year period."

It is important to point out that in the past 12 months, the technical working groups on import substitution have achieved some successes, among them the installation of two standardized units of 350,000 kilowatts each in the thermoelectric power station which is being constructed in San Luis Potosi, on whose total cost of 200 million pesos it was possible to achieve a foreign exchange saving of 265,000 dollars.

It should also be pointed out that at the thermoelectric power station at Tuxpan, where two 350,000-kilowatt units are being installed, the cost of the complete heat-exchange unit is on the order of 278 million pesos with expected saving on imports of tubing of about 4.8 million pesos and total savings from import substitution of about 125 million pesos. The Manzanillo power station should also be mentioned, the equipment costs of which will be about 495 million pesos.

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CSO: 3248/459

BRIGIDO NATERA VIEWS PDVSA'S FINANCIAL SITUATION

Caracas EL UNIVERSAL in Spanish 11 Feb 84 p 1-12

[Text] In his first confrontation with reporters, as president of Venezuelan Petroleum Inc [PDVSA], Dr Brigido Natera displayed a successful handling of the press scene and firing of questions, underscoring the points that he considered fitting and of interest, 24 hours after having assumed the position that he holds.

Accompanied by nearly all the members of the board of directors, and Dr Jose A. Giacopini Zarraga, executive assistant to the president of PDVSA, Dr Natera opened the press conference by giving public recognition to each of the board members accompanying them, both those who have joined as new members and those who were confirmed. And during the course of the conference, in answering a question about the board members who were removed from their posts, he said: "We are analyzing their situation promptly and we shall soon report on the position to which they will be assigned."

Natera did not cite any preliminary issue in his press conference. He made a general reference to the board of directors which he chairs, and then offered to answer questions. The first one related to his predecessor, Humberto Calderon Berti, of whom Natera said: "I think that he expressed opinions favorable to me personally, perhaps because we are friends and because we have esteem for each other as such."

And then, replying to a question on what Calderon said about the illegality of his dismissal, Natera remarked: "I would not want to say anything more than what has already been said by Minister Hernandez Grisanti on that topic. I believe that he said it all."

Natera next discussed the topic of the PDVSA budget, noting that, when Minister Hernandez Grisanti spoke on that subject he did not want to comment directly on deficit situations, but rather on the levels of return that the financial spending in the oil industry should have. But Natera took the opportunity to declare later, in response to another question: "I don't have the slightest doubt that, this year, we shall have no financial problems in the industry, and we shall do everything necessary to prevent problems from occurring next year."

Then he remarked: "We have received PDVSA in a state of good health in every respect, and we think that we shall be able to keep it that way, or even improve it insofar as possible."

As for what must be done to ease PDVSA's fiscal burden represented by having to pay a tax based on an artificial price level, because what is involved is the export value, which is at least 30 percent higher than the sales price for the oil, the PDVSA president said that this is a situation that will have to be corrected, because it is not fair for a company (the only one in the country) which produces foreign exchange for the state and which represents the main backer of public revenue to be paying taxes on unreal bases. This should be cleared up as promptly as possible, because the system on which that export value figure is based was warranted only during the time of the concessionary company model, but is not now, when there is a completely Venezuelan industry such as oil is.

The question of the Orinoco Belt and the continuity of it and other petroleum programs was brought up, and Natera noted: "The campaign for exploring the belt is considered finished. Now the evaluation will be made of both the Guanipa 100 area and those of Cerro Negro and Zuata, so as to specify the production volumes that will have to be attained in each of those areas. We believe that a accumulation of in situ reserves has been located in the belt which are sufficient to ensure the continuity of heavy and extra-heavy crude production for many years; and, for the present, we shall not invest more resources, because that program, insofar as exploration is concerned, has been considered to be ended."

After stating that the authority to appoint the board members of PDVSA's seven branch companies [words missing from text], Dr Natera mentioned this board's firm intention of stressing the policy of internationalizing the Venezuelan oil industry, so as to reduce the intrinsic vulnerability of this activity when it is only of a national type, and lending it greater operational and financial flexibility. In this connection, he said that the results accrued from the investment made by PDVSA in Germany (the Veba-Oel project) are quite satisfactory, and that there is an intention of continuing to analyze new proposals, for the purpose of engaging in other negotiations that would reaffirm Venezuela's presence abroad, by way of industrial associations or direct investments in the purchase and operation of oil plants located in European territory or in other parts of the industrialized world.

Natera responded to a question as to whether the new management of the oil industry would be willing to accept any kind of private participation in the oil business by saying that this would have to be examined very carefully; in other words, it must be made clear what type of participation is involved, since we already know that a stockholding participation, for example, in the oil companies currently in operation, is very difficult, because they are basic companies that are the exclusive, indivisible property of the state. Nevertheless, there are other types of state participation in the oil business, and that kind of participation is already in operation. And it is possible that, in the future, progress may be made along the line of participation by private capital in areas that are not limited to the state, as holds true in the vast area of petrochemicals.

Natera confirmed the fact that MENEVEN [subsidiary of PETROVEN] would become consolidated in Oriente, because that is an institutional decision which will not be changed. As for the rest of the oil companies, no decision has been made concerning them with regard to a move to the interior section of the country. He said that no structural or functional changes are planned in the industry's operational administration and management. There is an intention to maintain the operational continuity, because that is an unchanging principle of this industry. And the shift in individuals in the industry's top management does not mean that changes will have to be made.

He remarked: "The main situation that the oil industry will have to confront is a market problem, because we must realize that we are no longer experiencing those times of easy marketing of oil, and even unilateral price setting, such as occurred during the 1970's, when we had a time of a seller's market. Now we are in a situation of a buyer's market, wherein they are the ones who decide on how much oil they can buy, and they are even attempting to impose terms. So, we think that this market problem is the most significant one that the Venezuelan oil industry is facing at present. Nevertheless, we shall continue to carry out a market policy based on diversification and, in particular, direct marketing, without the intervention of the traditional commercial mechanisms involving intermediaries."

Upon being asked whether there will be any change in the industry's plans and programs, Natera noted that oil is an industry that is not governed by improvised ideas stemming from certain individuals, but is rather an industry which operates in accordance with a medium and long-term planning system. He said: "We have 5, 10 and 15-year programs, in addition to the annual plan, which is the industry's budget and, as I said before, it will not face any problems with its financing."

"In other words, we do not anticipate any changes in the programing, because the plans that are under way have been based on that planning which we have done and which, in turn, relates to a philosophy of institutionality, and not the managerial style of an individual or a team that arrives at the top management, as we have arrived, at a particular time."

In the last part of his first press conference, the PDVSA president, speaking with great poise and with unprecedented ease in the language used, declared: "We propose to develop a growing motivation and a greater discipline and devotion to work in the tasks that we have ahead of us. We realize that difficult times are coming, owing mainly to factors of an external nature and origin, and we must prepare mentally for coping with them."

"We trust in the integrity and ability of the board members who are accompanying me in this endeavor, and we believe that we can guarantee the development of a policy of honest, efficient industrial accomplishment, with an effort aimed at reducing the operating costs and maximizing the profits of the company."

He was asked: "Will PDVSA be in debt?"

"That possibility has not cropped up, at least over the short term. However, I would like to say something about it. Here in Venezuela it would seem like a sin to talk about being in debt when, technically, we know that credit when properly used is one of the most formidable tools of business and administrative management, but on the condition that there is good handling of the funds that are borrowed.

"The industry does not plan to take funds on credit over the short term, but if it should have to do so some day, I am sure that there would be many banks that would be willing to give us money; because this has been an industry that is very well equipped to pay what it owes, and that is all that is needed to make one deserving of credit."

2909

CSO: 3348/321

ACTING ENERGY MINISTER DISCUSSES PDVSA DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Caracas EL UNIVERSAL in Spanish 8 Mar 84 p 1-16

[Text] The original plans for the development of the Orinoco oil belt as a whole were of very large financial dimensions; hence, they have had to be revised and resized based on the new national financial and petroleum situation.

This statement was made by the acting minister of energy and mines (MEM), Hernan Anzola, in declaring the official position of the national oil sector in response to the document submitted by the oil expert, Eduardo Acosta Hermoso, to the Office of the Controller of the Republic, questioning the policy of the hydrocarbons industry in recent years.

He stressed: "The resizing of the plans for the belt does not mean that it has been abandoned because the oil industry's projects are continuing in it (but not with the dimensions originally called for), consisting of programs for evaluation and even production of crude."

The official noted: "It would be senseless, in view of the state of the market, with a closed down oil production and the financial weakness of the country and the industry, for us to continue with projects as if nothing had happened."

He emphasized: "It is a fundamental rule of good management to analyze situations, to become updated and to gear oneself to the new conditions, which led to the resizing of the plans for the belt, something that has been accomplished."

In commenting on the area of the contracts for technology with foreign oil companies, the minister stated that the first agreements of this type were studied and devised in 1975, based on the inventory of technology in the area of hydrocarbons that the country had at that important time of the oil nationalization.

Moreover, he expressed certainty that, "The oil industry recognizes that it is subject to the analysis of the Venezuelan state, as a source generating revenue for the country."

He claimed: "There are no concealed figures in PDVSA [Venezuelan Petroleum, Inc], because everything is known to the Controller's Office and the competent organs of the Venezuelan state, including the Ministry of Energy and Mines."

Anzola reported: "It was not at the behest of the multinationals that the contracts were devised in this way, but rather at our request, as part of the overall negotiations to ensure that the individuals responsible for running the oil industry would have technical backup before the nationalization."

He gave a reminder that, "These agreements were not signed with the idea that they would last forever, because from the very time that their negotiation began, mention was made of the need and the feasibility of our gradually becoming independent of those sources of technology, and having our own technological infrastructure."

The official pointed out: "In short, this idea is what gave INTEVEP [Institute of Venezuelan Petroleum Technology] its origin and raison d'etre."

He remarked: "The technology contracts have been phasing out; some have been signed again, but in far more reduced terms than the previous ones, and with a series of clauses and provisions that are more advantageous for Venezuela, in addition to the fact that the system for payment has been changed."

He added that other agreements, such as the one with Mobil, have ended, and have not been renewed.

He commented: "In the contracts, there has been a positive change, as planned by the oil industry, which has afforded the consolidation of a technological base of its own (INTEVEP and the industry's personnel per se); and the agreements which are still in existence are far more specific and quite reduced in comparison with the first ones."

With regard to the agreements on changes in the refining standard, he explained: "The only refinery that has actually undergone a change of standard in the strict sense of the word is the one in Amuay."

2909

CSO: 3348/321

SOVIET DELEGATION ARRIVES TO DISCUSS GRAIN SHIPPING DELAYS

Bahia Blanca LA NUEVA PROVINCIA in Spanish 29 Feb 84 p 3

[Text] An official delegation from the Soviet Union headed by Minister of Maritime Fleet Yevgeniy Shcherbakov undertook an analysis at Ingeniero White yesterday of the causes for the delays which occurred last year in the loading of Argentine grains to be shipped to that country.

The visitors talked with all of the authorities in the port sector, who gave assurance that this year "will not be worse than the last" in this connection.

If indeed they showed concern about these delays, they admitted that "any change in the situation will take some time, given the existing problems and the recent changeover in Argentine government authorities."

In a statement to LA NUEVA PROVINCIA, the visitors declined to express any opinion of the quality of the grain imported from our country, stressing that "if the Soviet proposal for remodeling and expanding the port of Bahia Blanca is accepted, there will in 2 years be shipping operations involving about 100,000 tons."

In addition to Shcherbakov, the delegation included the representative of that ministry in Argentina, Yevgeniy Sergeyev; the director of Sovfrakht Argentina, Pablo Jablonsky; the representative of the Russian Ministry of Maritime Fleet in the South Atlantic, Nikolay Ponomarev; and the representative in the United States, Captain Valentin Kurov.

This visit came about thanks to an invitation from the Nidera Argentina enterprise, whose local manager, Carlos Podesta, coordinated the tour. Nidera is the largest private exporter of Argentine grains to the Soviet Union at the present time.

During the morning, the members of the delegation talked with the captain of the local port, Pedro Taramasco; with the representative of the National Grain Board, engineer Rafael Corral; and with the port administrator, Jose Egidio Conte. They also participated in a tour of the maritime station, and at noon they were guests at a luncheon in their honor. In the afternoon, they returned to Buenos Aires.

In talking with an editor of this newspaper, the representatives of the USSR voiced their concern about the delays which have occurred in the shipping of grains from the local port, "running in some cases up to 60 days."

"This is the main grain port in Argentina, and for this reason we have the greatest interest in understanding it and talking with its authorities," they said.

They stressed that "we would like to have personal knowledge of the causes of the great delays in 1983, and the possibilities of avoiding them in the future. In this connection we are somewhat reassured, because the authorities have told us that this year will not be worse than the last."

When asked about Russian views concerning the quality of the grain shipped by Argentina recently, Sergeyev said that "this delegation is only considering the transportation problem, and is not authorized to voice any opinion on the quality of the product."

With regard to the Soviet proposal for expanding the local port, they said that "we favor our proposal because it would allow the buyers of Argentine grains to use 100,000-ton ships, that is to say double the size of those now in use."

After declining to make a comparison with the World Bank proposal, they said that "our plan would be carried out in a much shorter time. It would be usable in 2 years."

In the days to come, they will tour other port installations, mainly those in Rosario, from which the rest of the Argentine ships bound for the USSR sail. In this connection, they said they are familiar with the problems originating with the Mitre Canal.

Other News

It has been confirmed that the Argentine Shipping Lines (ELMA) vessel Corrientes II will arrive in Puerto Galvan this coming Friday. It will carry polyethylene produced by POLISUR to Europe, in the first operation of this type at that maritime facility.

In another connection, businessman Sergio Del Bene visited the city yesterday. He confirmed that the work of expanding Galvan's site 5 will begin in March. The work will take about 6 months and will provide a fourth docking facility for grain vessels.

Finally, it was announced that beginning yesterday, the berthing of steamships of a length of up to 206 meters was authorized at White site 7-8. This represents a 6-meter increase in the maximum allowed earlier.

5157

CSO: 3348/314

CLARIN EXAMINES POSSIBLE EFFECTS OF LABOR REFORMS

Buenos Aires CLARIN in Spanish 9 Feb 84 p 20

[Editorial: "Trade Union Reforms"]

[Excerpts] The executive proposal for trade union reorganization which is currently being considered in the Congress has provoked an active polemic. The purpose of the undertaking, as has been repeatedly explained, is to organize the holding of elections in the trade unions, so as to confirm or replace the current leadership in democratic fashion, thus making it completely representative.

The measures proposed to achieve this end have given rise, however, to a perceptible volume of resistance. The trade unionists believe that the government wants to establish a kind of beachhead in the trade unions. Something like repeating, in trade union territory, the general advance already achieved in the political realm. Thus they view the administrative delegate for which the new plan provides with suspicion, since thanks to the authority he would enjoy, he could become a de facto interventor. If this were the case, they claim, it would be difficult to expect real impartiality in the approaching election. The interventions ordered in recent days provided fuel for this concern.

Another point of conflict is the official desire to establish the presence of minorities in the leadership (executive board) of the trade unions by law. The argument opposed to this idea is trade union freedom, based on international agreements and the tradition of the trade unions themselves. Only they, it is said, are the suitable agencies for dictating their own internal norms.

This is the point of formal debate. However, the main question in the view of objective observers is whether the reform being promoted will inevitably result in the division, and even splintering, of the trade union sector. Thus even accepting the need to hold trade union elections making it possible to establish the actual feelings of the base levels and to have them reflected in a consistent workers policy, the fear nonetheless arises that the procedures undertaken will in the final analysis weaken the sector, through the schisms to which they may lead, and thus harming one of the pillars on which it will be necessary and possible to rebuild the social structure in Argentina.

Trade union reform is not being attempted, of course, in an abstract country. In order to understand its consequences, one must take as a basis the social situation as it is now. In other words, calculating the losses of jobs, the decline in wages, the reduction in social benefits, the lag and shortages suffered by workers, and in brief, all of the workers who have ceased to be that, sometimes affecting the very survival of the members of the worker's family and always destroying the social fabric.

If this is the case--and it suffices to leave the federal capital to observe this decline--the only reasonable thing is to focus all efforts on Argentine reconstruction, such as to reestablish sources of jobs and put recovery of standards of living into motion. This will without any doubt be a difficult task because of the situation inherited, but for that same reason it cannot be postponed. And this task must begin with the destruction of the financial mechanism which is still hindering a return to the production system.

In connection with these factors of judgment, one can assess the gap which would be created between the democracy which is allegedly sought for the trade unions and the division which seems to threaten them anew. The latter would have to be viewed in terms of those who in the past opposed the single trade union by production branch or the unified confederation.

Anything which divides the common front or one of its components will aggravate the common poverty instead of working toward overcoming it. It will lengthen the time needed for recovery instead of shortening it. Therefore it is useful to analyze the subject of trade union reform in the light of the higher interests of the country.

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CSO: 3348/314

CHURCH VOICES DISCONTENT WITH GOVERNMENT ACTIONS

Buenos Aires CLARIN in Spanish 21 Feb 84 p 17

[Article by Washington Uranga: "The Complaints of the Church"]

[Text] The first 2 months of the democratic government have elapsed, and the church has maintained silence, as was expected. Suddenly last week, a series of church criticisms which caused concern on the highest government level emerged.

On Monday of last week, the Argentine Catholic Information Agency (AICA) published a report setting forth the discontent of some sectors of the church with the elimination of certain Catholic programs carried by two government radio stations. On Tuesday, also through the AICA, the harsh criticisms voiced by Msgr Italo de Stefano, archbishop of San Juan, against the national secretary of culture, Carlos Gorostiza, were made known. On Wednesday, this same agency responded in harsh terms to the explanation set forth by the director of Radio Municipal. On Thursday, the bishop of Avellaneda, Antonio Quarracino, speaking in Santiago, Chile, criticized the economic policy and the court proceedings undertaken with regard to military officers who violated human rights.

An observer unaffiliated with the church might be led to think by these statements that the bishops have launched a campaign against the government through a coordinated plan of statements in the mass media.

Churchmen, but perhaps few other individuals, know that this series of ecclesiastical complaints was not dictated by any prior strategy or coordination.

Nonetheless, there was official concern. President Alfonsin himself took a hand in the proceedings to clarify misunderstandings, and if necessary to correct the errors which might have been committed.

The rapid reaction on the part of government officials to which we have referred was described by the AICA as "hypersensitivity." The agency explained that the series of statements criticizing the government should not be interpreted as "animosity toward the civilian authorities," but as "an understandable reaction on the part of the members of the Catholic hierarchy and leaders to the succession of events and attitudes which can be interpreted as irritants to the feelings of the Catholic population of the country

and a cause of division rather than unity and reconciliation." This was in reality a clarification which lapsed into criticism.

New Style

On Thursday, the president of the episcopate, Cardinal Juan Carlos Aramburu, met with Minister of Interior Antonio Troccoli. The subjects of their talk were not revealed, but it is obvious that the church criticisms of the government must have been one of the items on the agenda for the meeting. Following this interview, Cardinal Aramburu spoke to the press and refuted the criticisms Ernesto Sabato made of the church in connection with the subject of human rights. The cardinal of Buenos Aires justified the attitude of the church in this regard and recalled the pronouncements made by the hierarchy. However, no mention was made of a very specific charge by the writer, who had said that torture "was accepted and even justified by the chaplains in the armed forces." This last point certainly would merit specific clarification by the church.

The prudent silence maintained by the church hierarchy for almost 60 days, the first period of the Alfonsin government, concerning national events was interpreted as a "letter of credit" offered by the church, as well as the majority of the country, to the constitutional authorities.

The new situation also forced the church hierarchy to review the style typical of relations with the government and with civilian society in general.

This fact had already been noted last September by the Catholic periodical CRITERIO, which stated in its editorial in Issue 1019 that "when an authoritarian order denies the citizens participation and concentrates power in the hands of a few, the social sectors defend their interests by having recourse to the professional bodies. The church wrongly appears as another sector in this 'corporative order,' represented by its hierarchy," the editorial writer went on to say.

When power is returned to its legitimate heirs and is based on institutional procedures, the church can more easily define its specific role from the point of view of service to the individual man, as a function of "enlightening civilian society, with respect for its autonomy, through the evangelical truth about man, society and the universe," as the Argentine bishops put it in "The Church and the National Community," No 161. It will fall to the Catholic layman, in turn, as that same document also noted, to serve as the evangelizing catalyst in society, through a creative contribution expressed in a teaching and a language adapted to the political and cultural reality.

The president and his closest advisers have taken special care to avoid deeds or gestures which would harm the good relations between the state and the Catholic church. On the one hand, there is recognition of the service rendered by the church in the return to democracy, while on the other, note is taken of the political power which, based on its moral authority, the Catholic hierarchy continues to have.

For this reason President Alfonsin has instructed his colleagues to continue to maintain open channels of communication with the church.

In earlier estimates, divorce and education were the potential points of conflict. To date, the government has dealt cautiously with the subject of divorce, avoiding pronouncements on the highest level, and with regard to education, it has provided the explanations sought. So that what are for the moment mere indications of disagreement will not develop into more serious problems, the government will have to reorganize its relations with the church, giving them just measure within the overall problems of the country, while at the same time strengthening its links with all the church sectors.

5157

CSO: 3348/314

COMPLEXITIES OF ARMED FORCES REORGANIZATION PROJECT VIEWED

Buenos Aires CLARIN in Spanish 11 Mar 84 p 6

[Article by Luis Garasino: "Military Reform"; passages enclosed in slantlines printed in boldface]

[Text] The retirement of Brig /Alberto Simari/ and his subsequent sanction due to a controversial report abruptly brought the topic of the reorganization of the FFAA [Armed Forces], one of the constitutional government's priorities, to the forefront.

Of course, the events last week that created a political-military "minicrisis" generated different versions. However, there is still no clear or complete idea of the idea-force behind that vast and indispensable military reform.

In the first place, an idea deeply implanted in governmental political leadership and also in vast sectors of the public must be repeated: the need to unite the FFAA, both in planning and in operations, under a single command exercised constitutionally by the president of the country.

Interservice rivalries and doctrinal differences about their use and leadership and about their budgetary allocations are recorded in practically all the countries of the world.

However, it is also true that in Argentina from 1976 to 1983 the military /"feudalization"/ acquired characteristics that could /be called pathological, especially in light of the experience of the Falkland Islands War/.

All the analyses of this South Atlantic conflict agree that the lack of joint leadership of national military power was an essential factor in the ultimate failure.

The concept that predominates in the EMC [Joint General Staff], according to these analyses, is classical: military action is a /means/, not an end in itself. The objective of defeating the enemy is to achieve a /political/ result, not determine the supremacy of one army over another.

Basic Concept

Within this line of thought, the EMC becomes the /work organ of the Ministry of Defense/. That is where all the planning on the /strategic military/ level should be done.

At the same time, the /strategic operational/ planning--that is, the concrete action of available forces in different areas--would still be done at the level of /specific and joint commands/. These are being studied.

The first would include, for example, a strategic naval command, a strategic air command and an air defense command.

The /joint commands/ will be created based on conflict hypotheses and will be under a commander of the theater of operations. He would work with the respective heads of the land, naval and air components.

In a /war situation, all these commands would be directly under the president of the country/ in his position as commander in chief of the FFAA. In normal times, they will be directly under the EMC chief, /but only administratively and for planning objectives/.

Based on these features, the president of the country would have two advisory levels in crisis situations:

- 1) /The war cabinet/ made up of all the members of the national cabinet, ministers and secretaries of state, and the EMC chief who will advise the chief executive in /overall direction/ of the conflict; and
- 2) /The military cabinet/ that will advise the president in the /direction of operations/ and will be made up by the minister of defense, the secretary for state intelligence, the EMC chief /and the chiefs of general staffs of the three branches/.

Legal Framework

A reform of this size makes passage of a new national defense law necessary, as Minister Raul Borrás has explained repeatedly. That law--which optimists believe could be sent to congress during the next regular session--will entail the need to amend several legal instruments: the National Planning System Law, the Civil Defense Service Law, the Mobilization Law, the Obligatory Military Service Law and the Military Personnel Law, among others.

The experts who work in this field also indicate that, in spite of the vastness and importance of these changes, they only constitute /one part/ of the entire National Defense System that they are trying to reevaluate.

/Also they are aware of the resistance that these changes arouse within some branches or the objections that can be presented in the future./

It is recognized that the FFAA are unquestionably affected by a reduction /in their prerogatives which is normal under a constitutional government/. For

example, their budget is determined by the minister of defense. The loss of political-institutional power under the institutional structure to which the country has returned is also normal.

As to the fact that the respective general staffs lose command of their forces, this happened also /theoretically/ under the system applied from 1976 to 1983 although it was /noted less/ because the respective commanders in chief formed the Military Junta which /also theoretically/ was the depository of political power.

Another change considered inevitable is that since the appointment of the EMC chief is a decision of the president of the country, the rigid system of rotation in that position among the leaders of the three branches almost automatically ends.

One of the most controversial questions that also became public in recent days is the hierarchy of command.

Those who object to the system they are trying to implement indicate that the EMC chief sets himself up as director of military power immediately under the president of the country and the minister of defense. The chiefs of general staffs of the branches remain in a relationship of functional dependency.

The advocates of the new organizational chart rebut that actually the hierarchy would be as follows: president of the country-minister of defense and, /on the same functional level/, the EMC chief and the chiefs of the respective branches.

It is even indicated that this is a more moderate system of subordination than the one established in many Western countries where the position of the EMC chief is defined as one of /functional and hierarchical/ superiority over the branch commands under him.

At the same time it is noted that, given the military principle of rigid hierarchy, it is necessary for the EMC chief to have greater seniority in rank than the chiefs of the three branches whose planning he must coordinate.

First Trial

The plans being studied in the EMC include the creation of a theater of operations with a joint command formed by the EMC chief and those responsible for the direction of the /three/ branches.

This would be new since the doctrine upheld by the army now is that the theater commander is, at the same time, commander of his respective branch.

This would be done as a trial. It implies that the commands will be located in the same place geographically and there will be a joint plan that corresponds to a strategic operational level.

In short, there is a long road to travel. The concrete modifications in direction and planning must be accompanied by a gradual change in the mentality deeply rooted in certain military sectors as well as by the necessary resignations.

Another important element is that if the branches should overcome rivalries and antagonisms for a higher goal--the defense of the nation--the political branch must set an example of subordination to that objective, over and above partisan slogans and factions.

7717

CSO: 3348/319

LABOR SEEKS TO RECONCILE DIFFERENCES WITH GOVERNMENT

Buenos Aires LA NACION in Spanish 19 Mar 84 p 8

[Article: "In Search of Alternatives"]

[Text] Now everyone is waiting to see what steps the government will take to normalize union life after the parliamentary setback caused by senate rejection of the union reorganization law. What alternative roads will the government seek?

That question asked from the moment Justicialism, with the support of the Neuquino Popular Movement and the Integration and Development Movement, defeated the government bill must be quickly answered.

The UCR [Radical Civic Union] has suffered a bad setback and is forced to take the initiative again to carry out union democratization. Defeat of this bill has prolonged the life of the current union leadership, attacked from every side by President Raul Alfonsin during his electoral campaign.

To achieve that objective, the government must use every constitutional and legal mechanism in the current situation. Minister of Interior Antonio Troccoli and German Lopez, secretary general of the presidency--considered the ideologist of the labor policy--felt that the parliamentary setback forces national authorities to work with the Law on Union Associations of Workers (22.105) dictated by the military junta. It empowers the Ministry of Labor to intervene in union organizations.

This prospect was discarded by the president of the country. He pointed out that the government "will find other ways."

Application of the law passed during Videla's administration would have a high political price which the government party wants to avoid. It would also be a contradictory position since repeal of Law 22.105 was a commitment signed by the Multipartisan political groups including the UCR.

The predictable reaction of international labor organizations--the ILO and the ICFTUE--to using that disputed law must also be considered.

Consequently, the government must take other, less bumpy roads. One might be to regulate Law 14.932 which confirms ILO Convention 87 on union freedom. That could be the vehicle to achieve the government's objective.

CGT Initiative

Meanwhile, the CGT [General Confederation of Labor] leaders, encouraged by the parliamentary defeat of the union reorganization law, feel that this can lead to a stage of negotiations with the government about the controversial matter.

The CGT waited for the outcome of the bill in the senate before responding to President Alfonsin and developing its strategy.

In its answer to the government, the CGT convoked the political parties, management and youth sectors and religious organizations to form a broad national front to "serve as a support to the state and protect the democracy."

In this way, the CGT seeks to transform itself into the axis of a multisectorial front to organize popular participation for possible cooperation with the government based on programmatic agreements.

Although the response to Alfonsin includes harsh criticism, one of the four CGT leaders, Saul Ubaldini, recognized that the CGT shares, in general, the ideas of the president for overcoming the socioeconomic crisis that envelops the country.

In its reply to the chief of state, the CGT stated: "It is not impossible to satisfy the socioeconomic aspirations of the workers while inflation persists. In the past, there has been prosperity even with inflation."

The response repeats the known CGT demands on wages, cost of living, arbitration, revitalization, health and pensions and again insists on the institutionalization of dialogue.

Agreement

There were also questions from the Committee of 20 from the former CGT-Azopardo. In a sternly worded document, it agreed with the CGT about a broad national agreement, proposing that the government take the initiative without delay. According to the sector headed by Jorge Lujan and Luis Etchezar--the former Peronist and the latter UCR--"without agreement, there is no commitment; without agreement, there is no participation."

The union sectors agree on the need to encourage agreement with the government and institutionalization of dialogue. This is within the framework of strengthening the democracy through direct participation via known channels. This prevents overflows that can be uncontrollable for both sides.

Conflicts

Union agitation for wage demands has not diminished. This is a worrisome situation which is being followed very closely by the Ministry of Labor.

Sectorial or factory conflicts have been increasing but what most concerned the government was the railroad workers. They threatened to resort to violent measures on some lines and this would certainly spread.

The opening of negotiations between Ferrocarriles Argentinos and the union sector meant a break, at least for now, in direct protest actions.

There is disagreement among the leaders of the mechanics union, one of the most powerful unions, with respect to the strategy for wage demands. The sector headed by national Justicialist deputy Ruben Cardozo--loyal to Kloosterman--opposes stands of strength until the negotiations with management are exhausted. The group that answers to the last leader of the union, Jose Rodriguez, advocates immediately leading the workers out on strike.

This disagreement about the wage question marks the internal dispute between the sectors trying to control the mechanics union. It also reveals the fight that will break out when the time comes to normalize that union.

7717

CSO: 3348/319

BRIEFS

SORGHUM SOWN ACREAGE--The area under cultivation with grain sorghum may amount to 2,750,000 hectares, a figure which would represent a growth rate of 3.5 percent with respect to the acreage sown in the previous cycle, in accordance with the second estimate made by the Secretariat of Agriculture and Livestock. That expansion would also show an increase when compared to the averages for the last five-year period and the last decade (12.9 percent and 7.1 percent, respectively). Cordoba, which would represent 28.4 percent of the total acreage, as well as Santa Fe, which will constitute 16 percent, would be looking at a slight decrease in the area under cultivation by 1.4 percent and 0.5 percent respectively. In Cordoba's case, severe attacks by diatraea moths (larvae) are said to have forced many producers to replant, and they have turned to corn and soy beans. Santa Fe, meanwhile, reportedly has not had good climatic conditions for planting, with the lack of moisture in the soil bringing planting activity to a halt. The lack of sufficient rainfall has had negative effects on Buenos Aires. This province, which would contribute 14 percent of the nation's acreage, may be looking at a reduction in sorghum acreage of 8.1 percent. These decreases would be offset by the increase which would be registered in Chaco and Entre Rios. The planted acreage would be more than 53.4 percent and 14.5 percent, respectively, in relation to the agricultural area for 1982/83. [Text] [Buenos Aires LA PRENSA in Spanish 2 Mar 84 p 8]

INCREASE OF FERTILIZERS--The nation's Executive Branch has decreed a reduction from 18 percent to 5 percent of the VAT [Value Added Tax] quota on imports of certain fertilizers. This measure includes the following products: ammonia, liquified or in solution; guano and other natural fertilizers of animal or vegetable origin including mixtures of these, but not chemically manufactured; mineral or chemical fertilizers which are nitrogenous, phosphatized and potassic; and other fertilizers or products of this nature which are available in tablet form, as a cake or in other similar forms, or in containers with a maximum gross weight of 10 kg. Fundamentally, this decree (681) explains that "the seriousness of the crisis confronting the nation, which is without precedent in this century, demands the full use of the country's resources. Therefore it is necessary to immediately take advantage of the potential for increasing agricultural and livestock production, particularly in the case of exportable products. The wide distribution of fertilizers and other agricultural chemicals has a very limited impact on production and on the export balance, since their effect is produced in the same

agricultural year in which they are used." [Text] [Buenos Aires LA PRENSA in Spanish 1 Mar 84 p 10]

COTTON YIELD--The production of raw cotton for the current agricultural year which is estimated at 660,000 tons, would result in an increase of 76.8 percent over the production figure obtained for the previous cycle, in accordance with the first estimate made by the Secretariat of Agriculture and Livestock. Compared to the average values for the last five-year period and the last decade, the tonnage would be greater by 49.7 percent and 36.2 percent respectively. This production would be the second most significant in the last decade, following the 714,000 tons produced in the 1977/78 cycle. The favorable prospects which are being noticed would be the result of the strong recovery in the area of planting and a significant increase in the yield per hectare which would be estimated at 1,338 kg. [Text] [Buenos Aires LA PRENSA in Spanish 2 Mar 84 p 8]

CSO: 3348/318

POLITICAL CONFLICT SEEN AT CENTER OF CHAOTIC SITUATION

La Paz HOY in Spanish 20 Feb 84 p 2

/Commentary by Carlos Serrate Rich/

/Text/ Revolutionary nationalism has been the dominant doctrine in Bolivia since 1952, that is, since the April revolution. This change in the old feudal structures shook the foundation of national society, which had been a nation-state since the 15-Years'-War. Starting with the founding of the republic, we began to be a new Bolivian national community made up of the nationalities interwoven in our historical development: Aymaras, Quechuans, Guaranis, among the principal large, indigenous communities, and the slow but growing crossbreeding of Spanish creoles that is typical of South America. There is also a large number of Europeans, mainly from the Iberian peninsula, who have remained a distinct group. Most of them have settled in the eastern part of the country, where small, though numerous and diverse, tribes are either becoming extinct or are assimilating through a process of domestication (Chams, Sirionos, Movimas, etc., etc.).

When there had been a change in the relations of production and the ownership of the means and instruments for generating wealth, when it was possible to speak of a new society that belonged to the modern age--a society that was attempting to define its territory and, within a clear concept of a national state, to lay the foundations of its political and social structure--a society with clear ideas of economic development and strategic defense of its intrinsic interests, with leaders whose mentality was clear and united, the treacherous upheaval of restoration of November 1964 took place.

The changes of guard over the next 18 years were nothing more than attempts to maintain the control of the state through dictatorships, as a function of the oligarchic offshoots of the feudal and monopolistic past of the mining barony. The dialectic of history could no longer be left behind. Owing to the corruption at the international level of the last military officials who gained power through coups, there was a forced return to the so-called "Congress 80" in October 1982, in which all the elements of the national community participated in the face of the economic and financial collapse and the external blockade, which was attributable more to cocaine than to the defense of the democratic system.

A transaction had occurred, but a solution had not been found, as we are seeing today. The truth is that the national revolutionary process has been diverted from its path. We are living more in a period of social anarchy than of democratic institutions, since the latter must agree to enforce the law. In reality we are living in a democratic carnival and not under a democratic system.

It has been called a dialogue, but it is really a confrontation of doctrines (liberalism vs socialism and perhaps Marxist socialism), between private enterprise and the workers' federation. On the one hand, prices are frozen on basic goods (state planning) and on the other, the minister of industry and trade talks about eliminating subsidies (market economy). The government is shared by the Communist Party, which is controlled by the Soviet Union, and the Christian Democrats, who are controlled by the Vatican through the German International with a branch in Venezuela. The MNR /Nationalist Revolutionary Movement/ of the Left, the president's party, has three variants: the promilitary branch, with terrorist habits, the orthodox Marxist left and finally, the pro-IMF branch. The PCB /Bolivian Communist Party/ itself, in the government, signs decrees with its right hand and with its left, tries, tries to amend them in the parliament and the COB /Bolivian Labor Federation/.

No one is surprised, consequently, that the country and especially the government have been faced with multiple obstacles this week: peasants, mining cooperatives, neighborhood councils. Nor is it worthy of note that teachers do not want to begin classes, that the Central Bank closes its doors to stop the drain of dollars, that the State Bank has stopped operations because of wage problems or that civil servants have paralyzed the administration by demanding social benefits. They have dragged along with them the employees of the judicial branch, which is not independent in this case. Finally, it is no surprise that physicians have decided to let things go, to let people die, in the best democratic liberal style.

Clearly, the contradictions in Bolivian society are getting worse and it is time to make some decisions.

12351

CSO: 3348/296

GOVERNMENT ACQUIESCES TO LABOR DEMANDS, AVERTS STRIKE

La Paz PRESENCIA in Spanish 22 Feb 84 p 1

/Text/ Yesterday the government delivered to the Bolivian Labor Federation 16 decrees approved to meet the demands of various union factions. A messenger delivered the package of decrees to the COB /Bolivian Labor Federation/ at 11:55 am, 5 minutes before the deadline set by the labor organization.

Immediately afterward, the executive committee met and decided to suspend the national 48-hour strike called at noon yesterday.

The provisions of the governmental decrees are as follows:

- New regulations for the payment of the 57 percent wage increase to public employees.
- The state will promote the renegotiation of the private sector's foreign debt with a view to not "absorbing" the financial costs.
- ENTA will purchase 60 cargo trucks for the rural area.
- New scale for payment of the seniority bonus in public administration.
- A professional bonus has been set at 5,000 pesos monthly for civil servants.
- Fringe benefit for civil servants set at the equivalent of 50 percent of wages.
- Transfer bonus to state workers in La Paz, Oruro, Potosi, Cochabamba, Santa Cruz and Chuquisaca.
- New distribution of the 12.5 percent tax on domestic gasoline sales.
- COMIBOL /Mining Corporation of Bolivia/ will market metals processed by ENAF /National Smelting Enterprise/.

--Some 48 percent interest for delayed payment is set for businesses that owe contributions to social security.

--Widows are granted the right to social security income.

--Labor will have majority representation in social security funds.

--Social security is established for the university of Santa Cruz.

--A death benefit is set: 100,000 pesos plus 2 salaries equivalent to the amount earned on the date of death of the person insured.

--Municipalities will cede land for peasant markets.

--INER and ENDE will prepare documents for bidding on the third phase of the rural electricity supply.

12351

CSO: 3348/296

PCB LEADER KOLLE CUETO SEEKS TO STRENGTHEN RADICAL LEFT

La Paz HOY in Spanish 23 Feb 84 p 16

/Text/ "As of yesterday, the government has begun to strengthen itself by updating the program of the Popular Democratic Unity under its original terms and by broadening its social and political base among the leftist sectors, which are represented in the Bolivian Labor Federation," communist leader Jorge Kille Cueto stated yesterday.

The National Executive Committee of the UDP /Popular Democratic Unity/ began its deliberations yesterday in Government Palace with the purpose of outlining a "new plan of government." Its plans include a call to join the governmental coalition which was directed to the Movement of the Revolutionary Left, the Revolutionary Party of the Nationalist Left of Lechin, the Socialist Party 1 and other sectors of the left represented in the COB /Bolivian Labor Federation/.

The Communist Party, in its stand, together with the other parties of the governmental coalition, intend for this political evaluation to try to establish a "coherent" executive branch that can carry out the program to overcome the economic and social difficulties of the nation, said Christian Democratic leader Luis Ossio Sanjines.

The CEN /National Executive Committee/ of the Popular Democratic Unity resolved to update its program in order to respond to the current situation and agreed to work on a permanent basis with a view to overcoming the crisis that has occurred in various sectors of the nation, he added.

Hernan Siles Zuazo, president of the republic, personally provided the guidelines for this procedure and explained how this process is going to be undertaken in the immediate future, he stated.

Communist leader Jorge Kille Cueto said that the CEN meeting, which began yesterday and will continue today, has as its objective a review of the UDP program. This program will be updated in order to adopt measures that will make it possible to strengthen the political capability of the government and to face the problems caused by the crisis.

He said that the goal of the governmental coalition is to restore the UDP under its original terms and under terms that will make it possible to broaden the social and political base of the government, maintaining the program content that originally led to its establishment.

The communists "have posed the need for a UDP government," he added.

After the analysis of the UDP government program, consideration will be given to the reformulation of the new ministerial cabinet, since basic steps determine secondary steps, said Kolle Cueto.

The expansion of the political base of the government coalition would mean the return of the MIR /Movement of the Revolutionary Left/ to the government and the entry of the PRIN /Revolutionary Party of the Nationalist Left/ of Lechin, PS-1 /Socialist Party 1/ and other political parties.

The Central Committee of the Bolivian Communist Party recently decided to propose to the CEN of the Popular Democratic Unity the expansion of the social and political base of the coalition as a means for overcoming the economic crisis in which the country is embroiled.

Marcos Domic, also a party leader of the PCB /Bolivian Communist Party/, said at the end of the first UDP session that his party had evaluate the political situation and basically ratified the goal of making a success of the political coalition, which gave rise to the program. He said he is not only a member but also its founder.

12351

CSO: 3348/296

DOLLAR SALES LIMITED TO CONTROL SPECULATION

Santo Domingo LISTIN DIARIO in Spanish 4 Mar 84 pp 1, 12

[Article by Jose Romero: "Banks Will Limit Sale of Dollars"]

[Text] In order to establish a strategy against the excessive escalation of the dollar, directors of the Association of Exchange Banks have decided to limit sales as of tomorrow to traditional clients only.

"We will sell only to clients we have known for 10 or 12 years," said a source from the association. He indicated that they will do the same thing they do in times of rapid escalation.

Several association directors consulted said that its members cannot be blamed for the current speculative rise in foreign currency which occurred when it was learned that the government had not finalized negotiations with the IMF. They indicated that independent persons--not money brokers or bankers--are participating in the market. They create the pressure on demand since they want to buy millions, not the small quantities that the people buy retail which do not influence the market at all.

These large purchases change the market and do it abruptly, according to what was stated.

According to the excuse given by the directors who insist they are not the cause of the speculative rise, independent persons bought many dollars before the negotiations with the IMF began. They hoarded them until they could sell them at large profits.

During the 15 days of negotiations with the IMF, those invisible buyers--according to these directors--left the market which meant a drop in demand and, consequently, in the price which went down some 50 points.

Once the negotiations ended without results, these persons returned to reactivate demand for a new interval.

According to the directors, it is not appropriate for the directors to speculate for several reasons. First, they do not have enough working capital to hold onto expensive dollars since their business is in and out. Second, the people would accuse them and discredit them. Third, they would go out of business.

Directors of the association said they were aware that the action of these invisible buyers is hurting them considerably. For that reason, they have decided that, as of next week, they will only sell to people known to them. The invisible buyers will have to find the dollars they need from other sources.

Yesterday the exchange banks were buying small quantities from the public at 2.70 pesos per dollar but the price for large quantities was higher--from 2.73 to 2.75 pesos. They were selling at 2.78 to 2.80.

However, there were few sales since some exchange houses alleged they did not have dollars.

7717

CSO: 3248/476

GOVERNMENT POLICY SEEN HARMING PRIVATE AGRICULTURE

Santo Domingo LISTIN DIARIO in Spanish 7 Mar 84 p 7

[Article by Dr Jose B. Gautier: "Exasperating Agrarian Policy"]

[Text] The agrarian policy carried out by three different governments in the last 12 years has not changed significantly from the original model with its famous agrarian laws imposed demagogically by Dr Joaquin Balaguer's government in 1972. It aspires, first of all, to completely eliminate private rural ownership. The means used to achieve that tragic objective include interesting multiple actions.

One simple strategy is aimed at the economic asphyxiation of private agricultural-livestock producers through unfair competition by the government in the labor market. **The attempt is almost ingenuous.**

For example, production costs in the agricultural process have increased only for private enterprises. In fact, in one way or another, obligations are liberalized so that they do not apply to state agricultural enterprises. With a handicap here, another handicap there, the last three governments have zealously sought the economic failure of private agricultural enterprises in general and the survival of state agricultural enterprises, even using the foulest means.

Since the last three governments have done this maneuver well, without arousing suspicions, many Dominicans do not understand it and feel we exaggerate in our evaluations. We are going to reveal the following scene to end the doubt of some friends.

Everyone knows that there are laws in the country that benefit the workers like the Social Security Law and Workmen's Compensation Insurance.

The Dominican state is a big agricultural business. It owns immense areas of agricultural lands and employs hundreds of thousands of laborers and farmers to work on its lands.

In the concrete case of the IAD [Dominican Agrarian Institute], the state is absolute owner of more than 9.5 million plots where, according to the state, hundreds of thousands of laborers work. They receive monthly pay for their

work from government payrolls. However, even though the IAD is the largest agrarian boss in the Dominican Republic, it does not pay Social Security for its agricultural employees--call them tenant farmers, laborers, migrant workers or whatever--nor provides them with Workmen's Compensation.

The Dominican state, as a big agricultural business, also owns the largest agroindustry in the country, the CEA [State Sugar Council]. The CEA has another 4.5 million plots and employs more than 50,000 agricultural workers just to cut cane for its 12 sugar mills.

These 50,000 state agricultural workers, all illegal Haitian aliens hired by the state enterprise in violation of the migration, labor and health laws, do not have Social Security nor are covered by Workmen's Compensation.

Another 50,000 Haitian and Dominican agricultural workers who work on other CEA agricultural activities do not receive Social Security or Workmen's Compensation.

Don't be surprised, friends. This is the exasperating government agrarian policy that we have been fighting for the last 12 years.

There are other state agricultural enterprises like the Cotton Institute, owner of more than 500,000 cultivated plots with thousands of agricultural workers--mostly illegal Haitian aliens--who do not receive Social Security or Workmen's Compensation.

We could cite many other state agricultural enterprises--dozens of them, large and small, like the banana project in La Cruz de Manzanillo--that employ Haitian and Dominican agricultural workers under the same conditions.

The Secretariat of Agriculture itself employs thousands of migrant workers throughout the country on hundreds of agricultural projects and does not give them social benefits.

This is not the entire ghastly Dominican agricultural history, friends. Today we will not talk about state agricultural enterprises subsidized by the national budget. We do want to point out, however, that when a state agricultural enterprise cannot pay its debts owed to state institutions like the Central Bank or the Reserve Bank, the government issues bonds to settle those accounts (case, 80 million pesos, CEA, 1983).

Another specific case is when the state agricultural enterprises want to improve part of their assets on which they owe money to state institutions. The government simply forgives the debts of that state agricultural enterprise (case, 37 million pesos, CEA, 1983).

Should private agricultural enterprise be subjected to this cruel discrimination?

It is time we all play with the same deck.

We want in-depth changes in government agrarian policy in order to take the country out of the economic hole it fell into in 1972. We want concrete deeds, not just words.

Redefine the right of ownership of productive lands. Respect foreign laborers. Everyone must equally comply with the law. Give equal treatment in rights and obligations to private agricultural enterprises and state agricultural enterprises. Establish the same rules of the game in agricultural-livestock production. Eliminate the irritating privileges of state agricultural enterprises like exemptions for agricultural equipment and supplies, tax exemptions, abuse of power, etc. Stop playing politics with the food of the Dominican people. Eliminate price controls on agricultural-livestock products so that the prices are governed by the economic law of supply and demand in an open market where costs and prices are lowered by the efficiency of the producers.

We think that only in this way will the agrarian demagoguery reigning over the last 12 years be erased. It has cost the Dominican people, today on the verge of ruin, dearly. Only in this way can the country freely develop a flourishing agricultural economy where there is a lot to divide among all.

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CSO: 3248/476

BRIEFS

NEW UNIONS--The Secretariat of Labor reported yesterday that it had registered 17 new unions in February, a higher number than recorded in January of this year. Mr Julio Telemin Bell, official for union registration and accounting, explained that 10 of the unions registered are in the south. The official said that 6 unions were registered by the Secretariat of Labor in January. He indicated that the unions that registered included: the National Fishermen's Union; the Tellers Union of San Cristobal; the Bakers and Pastry Cooks Union of that same province; the Catarey Sugar Mill Employees Union; the Needleworkers Union of the municipality of Haina; the Needleworkers Union of San Juan de la Maguana; the Port Services Unions of Azua and Pedernales; and the Independent Drivers Union of the border zone. Telemin Bell said that, in the northern region of the country, the Construction Union of Maria Trinidad Sanchez Province and the Tellers Union of the municipality of Nagua registered. This official reported that 22 new unions have registered at the Secretariat of Labor so far this year. Telemin Bell said that the labor leaders' interest in registering the unions is due to the facilities that the secretary of labor, Dr Pedro Franco Badia, is offering. [By Tulio Navarrete] [Text] [Santo Domingo LISTIN DIARIO in Spanish 1 Mar 84 p 11] 7717

CSO: 3248/476

MONETARY GOVERNING BOARD LOWERS INTEREST RATES

San Salvador EL DIARIO DE HOY in Spanish 1 Mar 84 pp 1,53

/Text/ With the goal of making a new contribution to the economic recovery of the country, the monetary governing board has agreed to lower interest rates for loans and savings deposits in the national banking system, Alberto Benitez Bonilla, president of the Central Reserve Bank and secretary of the monetary governing board, stated last night.

The board, he said, deemed it necessary to review and reduce interest rates to streamline the profit on savings, giving preference to liquidity and return to investments according to their maturity dates.

The new active and passive interest rates of the financing system, approved by the board to become effective 1 March 1984, except those for savings and loan associations which will become effective in 60 days, are:

Loans

For Class A loans to be paid in less than 3 years, 14 percent. Those loans to be paid in more than 3 years, 15 percent. Class B loans to be paid in less than 3 years, 16.5 percent; those to paid in more than 3 years 17 percent.

For the purchase of houses and other buildings with a value of up to 40,000 colones, 16 percent; for those which cost more than 40,000 colones, 17 percent.

Interest rates for construction enterprises will be reduced to 15 percent plus a 2.5 percent commission.

Deposits

The new interest rates for deposits without notice is 7 percent in banks and 8 percent in savings and loan associations. Savings deposits with previous notice is 7.5 percent in banks and 8.5 percent in savings and loan associations.

Interest rates for fixed term deposits in banks and fixed deposit certificates in savings and loan associations are: 60-day maturity date, 9.5 percent; 120-day maturity date, 11 percent; 180-day maturity date, 12.5 percent; and 360-day maturity date, 13 percent.

Comments

Comments accompanying the chart are as follows:

--Rates on active or passive transactions, which do not appear in this chart, remain at the levels approved as of 1 February 1982. For example, the preferential interest rate of 13 percent on credit to coffee producers of up to 50,000 lbs/gold, as well as for producers of cotton, basic grains, and vegetables, will remain in effect.

--Active and passive interest rates for savings and loan associations will become effective in 60 days, according to Article 76, subparagraph 4, of the law of national housing financing and savings and loan associations.

Measures Regarding Cotton

The board has also adopted exchange measures which will guarantee the cotton producers a more profitable price for their product, revitalizing at the same time the production levels for the 1984-85 crop which is about to begin.

The measures consist of allowing the cotton cooperative to sell those dollars received for the exportation of their product in the parallel exchange market, at a level slightly higher than that allowed in previous years.

The board also agreed to let the cooperative sell in the exchange market dollars received as income for their cotton exports, up to 50 percent of the increase of the 1984-85 exportation harvest over that of the previous year.

Increases to Bank Employees

In regard to the negotiations to increase the salaries of bank employees, Benitez Bonilla stated that the Salvadoran banking system has agreed to a 10 percent fixed increase to employees on the payroll, while the Central Reserve Bank, the Popular Credit Bank, and the General Insurance Company have agreed to a 10 percent increase with a percentage distribution to employees on the payroll, effective 1 March.

Concerning the Capitalizing Bank, negotiations are underway and the bank, which went on partial strike on Tuesday, is already serving clients as usual.

As for other banks and financing entities, he added, those in which there are no labor pressures and which have the capital to do it have already increased salaries 10 percent. However, some savings and loan associations which recorded losses in their fiscal year have not been able to grant such increases.

15201

CSO: 3248/471

BRIEFS

REFUGEES RETURN--The Ministry of Foreign Affairs reported that 173 Salvadorans refugees who had lived in Honduran camps for a long time will arrive at the frontier checkpoint of El Amatillo on 3 February. It is the first time that a group of refugees have found it easy to return to their country, said a spokesman for the ministry. According to the report, the arrangements for the return of the Salvadorans to their country were made by the U N High Commissioner for Refugees. Information on the 173 refugees revealed that they had fled El Salvador several years ago and that the majority of them lived in the departments bordering with Honduras such as San Miguel, La Union, Morazan, and Chalatenango. When they sought refuge in Honduras, they abandoned their possessions. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of El Salvador will send several of its officers to welcome the fellow countrymen who are trying to live in El Salvador again, even though they may not be able to return to their native towns or homes. It was reported off the record that it is possible that another group of Salvadorans will return soon from Honduras. /Text/ /San Salvador EL DIARIO DE HOY in Spanish 1 Mar 84 pp 2,11/ 12501

PRICE FREEZE APPROVED--As an emergency measure, the law of price stabilization was approved yesterday. It freezes prices and establishes mechanisms to effectively implement the law, which aims at preventing businessmen from altering the prices of the products set by Decree No 544 regarding housing, medicines, basic goods, school tuition, hospitalization services, etc. This was reported by the representatives from the committee on finance and special budget, after having expressed their approval of the salary increase for public employees. Such an increase, they said, must be accompanied by a compensatory measure. Therefore, from today on, the Ministry of Economy, with the support of watchdog entities, will implement a coordinated effort throughout the country to prevent an increase in the prices of the goods and services mentioned above. The fines for violating this temporary freeze will range from 1,000 colones to 25,000 colones. The law of price stabilization gives the Ministry of Economy far reaching powers to effectively implement such legislation. Otherwise, the increase in salaries would be worthless if what is sought is to alleviate the economic situation of the Salvadoran family. The increase in salaries would directly benefit businessmen, while more than 100,000 families would remain in the same economic conditions. /Text/ /San Salvador LA PRENSA GRAFICA in Spanish 1 Mar 84 pp 2,40/ 12501

PRI LEADER: NATIONAL ASSEMBLY PROPOSAL, MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE REFORMS

Mexico City EXCELSIOR in Spanish 5 Mar 84 pp 1-A, 10-A, 11-A, 33-A, 34-A

[Excerpts] The Mexican revolution has not become petrified nor is it exhausted; rather, it is a living movement with a vast moral reserve. Furthermore, "we shall not allow a few corrupt, irresponsible persons to bring into question the deepseated endeavor to transform the social process which began in 1910," declared PRI's [Institutional Revolutionary Party] national leader, Adolfo Lugo Verduzco, on the occasion of the marking of this party's 55th anniversary.

In the presence of President De la Madrid and slightly over 1,000 leaders (the top-ranking PRI national leadership), Lugo Verduzco also claimed that the separation of church and state, as well as democratic, secular education, are irreversible political gains, despite the counterrevolution, which is absurdly attempting setbacks in those areas.

He announced that, for the purpose of renewing PRI, as the chief executive has requested, he would propose today the calling of a National Assembly, because there are already suggestions "as to what the party should preserve, what it should strengthen and what it should renew." He said that the proposal would be made to the national council.

In his address, he remarked that there are minority political movements in the country seeking to win power, but "they have not achieved this, nor will they achieve it," because their "outlines for an ideological platform" have no historical viability, nor do they address the people's aspirations.

He criticized those who "theorize naively about the program of masses," and the reactionaries who "imagine that this is the time to add political power to economic power, so as to cause retrogression in the people's conquests." And he declared: "We repudiate any plan that seeks to divide the people."

On the grounds of the Monument to the Revolution, the chief executive was accompanied by governors, senators, deputies, former PRI national leaders, most of the members of the cabinet and leaders of the state committees of the party itself.

Lugo Verduzco claimed that the gathering of PRI members was intended "to affirm our commitment to the principles originating in the historic struggles of the

Mexican people, contained in the Constitution." He stressed the fact that, in 55 years, PRI has achieved the institutionalization of political power and has created the conditions of stability required to carry out the national plan; adding: "The nation's original ownership of the resources in the soil and subsoil, the workers' rights, complete agrarian reform, the state's leadership, the mixed economy system, democratic planning, free, compulsory public education, the right to health, housing, work and information, and unlimited respect for individual rights are unquestionable, irreversible conquests made by the people of Mexico."

He noted that, "faced with a severe international crisis," Mexico is now confronted with difficult times, but, he said: "The internal crisis is a challenge to those of us who are committed to the Mexican revolution." Then he remarked that the program for economic reorganization, the recent constitutional reforms and the National Development Plan "attest to the nationalist, popular, democratic and revolutionary nature of the current regime."

'Strong Support' to the Government

The government party's national leader expressed this entity's "strong support" for the acts of the present government, and observed that historical processes are not linear, but rather, peoples progress amid obstacles and contradictions. He added: "Our revolution has not become petrified nor is it exhausted. On the contrary, it is a living movement that has a vast moral reserve and the experience of a lengthy, persistent historical struggle."

He said that there have been successes and mistakes in the life of PRI, commenting: "We do not hide the mistakes and deviations that have been incurred at times, which we are determined to correct"; noting: "The faults are not attributable to the revolution or to its party. They are the faults of those who have erred or those who have betrayed our principles."

"We shall block those who have failed us on all fronts. We shall not allow a few corrupt, irresponsible persons to bring into question the deepseated endeavor for transformation of the Mexican revolution."

And in commenting on the minorities that "have not succeeded, nor will they succeed in winning power," he cited those who naively theorize about the program of masses, not counting on the masses but rather on a dogmatic position. They "make analyses that are not based on the country's reality and, incapable of understanding it, they are consumed with adventurism. Their chronic division prevents them from acting as they preach," he claimed.

The reactionaries, for their part, aim their attacks against the revolution's steady, intensive progress. "They take advantage of our problems or our mistakes, but they lack the capacity to make constructive proposals." He added that this movement seeks to confuse and, for this purpose, revives the debate on old issues on which the people have already made a statement a long time ago.

In the presence of nearly 100,000 PRI members (according to the estimate made by the Institutional Revolutionary Party itself), Lugo Verdugo stated that the fundamental political decisions contained in our Constitution are still in force and are unchangeable, but that the conservatives ("advocates of immobility and retrogression") oppose the progress of the constitutional reforms, assuming that they will be able to achieve setbacks in church-state relations and, in their absurdity, are also attempting to change the meaning of the education stipulated in the Third Article.

The revolution will not take one step back in the defense of the constitutional mandate. He said that these controversies have already been surmounted by history, and constitute a closed chapter at the people's desire.

He remarked that the celebration of PRI's 55th anniversary marks the same number of years for a process, not a finished phase; and, in this connection, he noted that the renewal of PRI "is not a dissociation from its origin, but rather a reaffirmation of its founders' spirit and of the best of its record."

Consultation of the Popular Rank and File

To renew the government party, "we shall hold a great mobilization" to consult the popular rank and file and this very day (as he announced) the proposal will be submitted to the national council to call a national assembly, which is PRI's supreme organ. He added: "The party's renovation is a task for all PRI members."

He admitted that "there are inadequacies in the ideological training of our members," and predicted that, "We shall counter the monolithic dogmas and schemes and the ritual language on the basis of our ideological commitment, with a live debate on the national problems."

He claimed: "We shall intensify the party's ideological presence before the public, speaking out strongly and acting consistently with regard to the issues of national concern." To achieve this, however, there will be an improvement in the sectorial and regional organization; the ties with the peasant, working and low-income classes will be intensified; and, in general, a more vigorous, real presence will be intensified in the rank and file organizations.

The PRI leader also remarked that it will be a priority to restructure the municipal committees and, on that basis, to strengthen the sectional committees; and he announced: "We shall stake out the PRI organization in the Federal District, bolstering our district committees." A more intense effort will also be made to attract members from among women and the youth.

He said: "For party activity, there are no men's problems and women's problems. To transform the Mexican society in a revolutionary manner is a task for all party members. We are a party of men and women committed to the ideals of the revolution and to the people's interests."

He offered to "the genuine militant" the position that he deserves, but explained that someone who apathetically occupies a space awaiting promotion is not a

militant. "Let us make a career in the party's ranks; let us scrupulously fulfill the statutory obligations; let us give evidence of our participation in the party's life; let us exercise the right to vote; and let us uphold discipline, so as to achieve unity in action."

Assuming Responsibility

Lugo Verduzco called upon the PRI members to "assume the responsibility for excluding from party activity those who do not meet the requirements for revolutionary morality," because moral renewal is a profound revolutionary act.

He stressed: "It is incumbent on us PRI members to dignify Mexico's political activity. We must promote our most outstanding militants." PRI's opponents, he added, win positions, not because their political platform is better, but because we PRI members are disunited or are mistaken, or when we are actually inconsistent with the revolutionary principles that we profess.

He reiterated the fact that, in the future, better selections will be made of candidates for popularly elected posts, and therefore, "we PRI members must assume our commitment to the nation."

He backed the regime's international policy, and expressed PRI's gratification at the forthcoming trip by President De la Madrid to four South American countries.

Lugo Verduzco was the only speaker at the ceremony, which lasted an hour, and from which the secretaries of government, national defense and navy, Manuel Bartlett Diaz, Juan Arevalo Gardoqui and Miguel Angel Gomez Ortega, respectively, were absent.

2909

CSO: 3248/482

PRI WINS IN TRANQUIL QUINTANA ROO ELECTIONS

Mexico City EXCELSIOR in Spanish 5 Mar 84 p 4-A

[Text] Chetumal, Q.R., 4 March--Unopposed, PRI [Institutional Revolutionary Party] claimed a complete victory in the seven town halls and 11 local electoral districts during today's elections, which were typified by absolute calmness.

Governor Pedro Joaquin Coldwell said that the opposition is virtually non-existent in this state, and that if his party has lost in other states ("our tribute to PRI is having won all the offices, all of them") it is due to an ineffective selection of candidates and a lack of penetration, and is a result of the social dissatisfaction caused by the crisis, which virtually does not exist here.

The state's chief executive went to vote at polling place 5 in the Fifth Electoral Zone, accompanied by the heads of the opposition parties, for whom he held a breakfast this morning, at which there was complete harmony and cordiality, without the ideological and political differences noted in other parts of the country.

Julio Matos Mayora, leader of the Unified Socialist Party of Mexico [PSUM], remarked that this state's electoral law "is exemplary," because it considers the possibility that the minority parties may have access to positions of popular representation with council members or local deputies based on proportionate representation.

The PSUM leader claimed that, in this way, the political parties are more concerned over fighting for these positions than for the majority mayors' and deputies' offices.

The chairman of the State Electoral Commission, Esteban Maqueo Coral, announced that today's activity was without incident and that if any complaints were received, they were only in the Cozumel electoral district, where PST [Socialist Workers Party] was opposed to the presence of outsiders on the site, who were rejected by the voters themselves.

The state PRI leaders remarked that this is a result of "the scrupulous selection of candidates and the penetration of their campaigns."

In an unusual act, not observed in other states of the country, the opposition, represented, for example, by Miguel Martinez Martinez, of National Action; Tomas Cruz, of PST; and Jaime Jimenez Govea, David Espino Solis and Julio Matos Mayora, of PSUM, gathered together in the gardens of the official government residence for the breakfast tendered them by Joaquin Coldwell.

While lining up with his sister to cast his vote, the state governor said: "Our parties need to mature, we need to become more able, particularly we young politicians who will have to face the future."

In Quintana Roo, only PPS [Popular Socialist Party] ran candidates for mayor in the seven town halls and the 11 local deputyships; PAN [National Action Party] backed Fernando Lizama Arpona as a candidate for the mayor of this town; and the rest of the parties scarcely provided all candidates for the popularly elected posts.

2909

CSO: 3248/482

EPISCOPATE OFFICIAL DENIES 'DIRECT' CHURCH POLITICAL ACTIONS

Mexico City UNOMASUNO in Spanish 2 Feb 84 pp 1,6

[Article by Teresa Gil]

[Text] The executive secretary of the Social Communication Department of the Episcopate, Francisco Ramirez Meza said that, despite criticism of its meddling in politics, the Catholic Church will continue to act in the same manner since -- he went on -- it does not engage in direct political activities, but it does act in cases in which indirect political action is involved, in denouncing corruption, for example, he said. As for the director of the Center for the Coordination of Ecumenical Studies, Raul Macin, he emphasized that the problem of those parties that criticize church intervention in politics is -- he asserted -- that they do not distinguish which kind of politics.

Interviewed concerning the statements made by the PPS [Popular Socialist Party] and PST [Workers Socialist Party] that the law should apply to the church without indulgence, Ramirez Meza commented that it is very natural for them to be concerned over the great influence the church has on the national scene, among other reasons he said, because of its ability to denounce [inequities, etc.] and its earnestness.

He noted that the church is not violating the law because it does not engage in direct political action.

He went on to say that it does so in cases like elections where it is appropriate for it to intervene because one must know whom one is electing or in cases of corruption, viewed as sins by the church since they violate the seventh and eighth commandments.

He said that those who speak of violation of the Constitution ought to take a look at Article 130 of the Constitution, which says that political actions will not be engaged in during worship or when priests are assembled, which the church does not do. "What we do is speak out personally in cases in which anyone may express an opinion, of course, with due prudence."

Also director of the church publication CLAVES LATINOAMERICANAS, he said that he has always declared himself in favor of fighting for the civil rights of all Mexicans, including priests and soldiers, but also so that the effort

foreign organizations or individuals are realizing in the interior may be imprinted on people's minds, an effort that is a manifestation of the obvious influencing of and interference in our political life.

He referred to the apostolic delegate, Geronimo Prigione, who "very diplomatically and suavely" expresses his opinion on our internal affairs and meddles in Mexican politics without anybody's saying a word against it.

Referring to the parties of the Left, which criticize clergymen's way of politicking, he pointed out that a true party of the Left should oppose everything that threatens its principles and recognize that there are two classes of priests, those who are openly allied with capital and the outside world, like those of Hermosillo. [as published]

Therefore, he added, we cannot in general talk of church politics without observing that within the church the same thing happens as in society, the class struggle goes on. He said that, no matter what their sign, churches are divided within themselves because in them there are at the same time the rich and the poor, the exploited and the exploiters.

He also said that what those parties that criticize religion in this way without giving details on behavior do not want is to personally identify those who break the laws and threaten the Constitution.

11,466

CSO: 3248/461

SONORA CLERGY ACCUSED OF INTERVENTION IN POLITICS

Mexico City EXCELSIOR in Spanish 3 Feb 84 pp 4-A,27-A

[Article by Armando Sepulveda Ibarra]

[Text] Hermosillo, Sonora, 2 February—The secretary general of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) of Sonora, Benjamin Salazar Acedo, who informed us that there are 20 PRI candidates up for nomination for the governorship, today asserted that the clergy of the organization have with their frequent political interventions "already exceeded the limits of the Constitution" and, as he made clear, they take advantage of the fact that most PRI supporters are Catholics to lead them to the polls with their sermons so that they will vote for the PAN [National Action Party].

He said that the election of the PRI candidate to the Sonoran government must be conducted in a democratic manner to avoid violence during the 1986 elections when the public will vote for the man who will replace Samuel Ocana Garcia in the governor's office.

Before, the PRI said: "This is the way it's going to be, and that's the way it was," Salazar Acedo reported. But now "fingering candidates has to stop being the way we elect people. A Sonoran from here who has always lived in Sonora has to be the candidate. If someone from Mexico City is sent, the people will feel that they have gone over their heads...."

When he was asked whether the PAN would have a chance of winning the elections if it nominated a Sonoran residing in the national capital as standard-bearer of the PRI for the governorship, Salazar Acedo deferred his reply saying only: "I can't say whether the elections would be lost then. It would be better if we got on with this."

(Although the party official refused to let us know who the 20 names of candidates for the governorship are, in PRI districts the names of PRI state leader Daniel Acosta Cazares and state treasurer Oviedo Pereyra as well as those of Senators Alejandro Sobarzo Loaiza and Fernando Mendoza Contreras are now being mentioned, a few months before the candidate's name is revealed.)

The secretary general of the official party said: "I don't believe the people will accept someone from Mexico City. A vice governor could be from there. People who have not lived here cannot come here to govern."

He admitted that during past elections there had been errors within the PRI in the selection of candidates for mayor and deputy posts, most visibly so two 3-year terms ago when the PAN won six municipal presidencies.

But the effort achieved during the following 3 years made it possible to recover three mayoralties and increasingly reduce the Right's penetration into the organization, he explained. The organization, the program and the steps that have to be taken to obtain the positions the PAN now proudly holds already exist.

Salazar Acedo assured us that candidates can no longer reach voters "with false promises or demagoguery"; they will have to win votes with genuine development programs. "People are now rejecting demagogues," he said.

The PRI leader denied that they are in any hurry to disclose the name of the candidate for the governorship of Sonora. (As precedents, the nominations of Carlos Armando Biebrich and Samuel Ocana were revealed on 22 December 1972 and 16 January 1979 respectively.) He added that it was important "to avoid unrest among the population."

He stated that up to now "there has been no cause for concern in either my party, the PAN or the clergy. There have been no open confrontations with their representatives."

"The damage the church hierarchy causes by intervening in politics is relative, but the clergy has always intervened in those matters," he said, "which the Constitution prohibits them from engaging in."

We asked Salazar Acedo, the ex-mayor of Caborca and former local deputy in the last legislature: "what objectives will the clergy — bishops and parish priests — pursue if they exploit Catholic PRI supporters to induce them to vote for the opposition?" And he replied: "We are not informed as to what interests they are seeking. The PRI is respectable but it asks that others respect it."

He demanded that members of the church hierarchy express their opinions within the limits prescribed in the Constitution, "which they have already in many respects exceeded in their statements to the press."

However, he made it clear that in his eyes "it's a mistake to proceed against the clergy; that would raise a hue and cry. It's not that important."

Then he explained that Catholic PAN supporters affiliated with groups like employers' associations and other associations exert influence on the church hierarchy "and operate within it to get them to intervene" in favor of their party.

11,466
CSO: 3248/461

ACCOUNT OF BISHOP'S ROUNDS IN CHIAPAS DIOCESE PROVIDED

Mexico City UNOMASUNO in Spanish 24 Feb 84 p 5

[Article by Victor Aviles]

[Text] Cristo Rey, Chiapas, 23 February--Two big skyrockets launched from the highest point on the hill announced the arrival of the tatik, the bishop, Samuel Ruiz, who was already advancing along the trails shaded by the flowering coffeee plantations.

Seeing him mounted on a mule, it is hard to believe that he has been bishop for nearly 25 years. A tireless traveler, not many years ago he flew 30 meters in his jeep when it went over a cliff and, when he got up, he had two broken ribs. A month later the little plane in which he was traveling crashed on the runway at La Aurora in Pantelho and his thick lenses buried themselves in his temple. In the forest on the Lacantum hardly had he crossed the river when a mule threw him and he dislocated an arm, which he practically dragged along hanging at his side until the following day when he got hold of a bonesetter in Palenque.

He speaks fluent English, Italian, French, Latin, Tzeltal, Tzotzil, some German, Tojolabal and Chol, and naturally Spanish; and he writes Greek and Hebrew. Because he walks alongside the Indians, because of his long rounds, sometimes on foot, through the mountains and above all because he promotes change, the bishop of San Cristobal de las Casas is one of the chief institutions of Chiapas, a state which during the past few years has been marked by its political instability.

He is one of the 3,000 bishops who in the early 1960's participated in the Second Vatican Council in Rome, in addition to being one of the chief artificers of the "great leap" the Catholic Church made in establishing the preferential option for the poor, especially as concerns Indian clergymen, at the Second Latin American Bishops' Conference in Medellin, Colombia.

Thoroughly familiar with Indian mythology and the religiousness of the people, Samuel Ruiz works in one of the country's most conflict-ridden areas: the Chiapas Highlands, an area characterized by a population with a high density of Indians, with a high demographic growth rate, with explosive agrarian problems

motivated by the deprivation of their lands from the Indians by means of blood and fire or through fraudulent contracts and the displacement of large population centers to other areas because of the construction of dams by the Federal Electricity Commission.

High federal government authorities consult him to set policies in the area included in his diocese, as is the case with the Guatemalan refugee camps on this side of the Usumacinta, and curiously enough he works in the face of the total indifference of the state government. His pastoral mission and above all bringing the word of the gospel to people in an area of deep-seated inequalities create constant problems for him that range from disappointments to not just a few death threats.

On arriving in Cristo Rey, a parish of 60 families, the tatik greeted the Indians in Tzeltal from an altar formed by four banana plants and adorned with flowers, located right in front of the Augusto Cesar Sandino Bilingual School. He had come to preside over the confirmation of dozens of Indians and to invest a predeacon, elected by the community itself, in office. After a mass lasting about 3 hours, during which the peasants explained their problems, the Indians went off with the nuns, who help them to manage the people's funds. Two jkaxlanes, mestizos, from Santa Lucia in the municipality of Pentelho had arrived along with the Indians "to see whether you have come to organize us," they informed the bishop, who commented: "I've certainly not come to dis-organize...."

One thing that draws attention in an institution with a strong hierarchic tradition such as the Catholic Church is the democratic system Monsignor Ruiz has introduced into his diocese, the fourth oldest in the country. He divided the diocese into six teams: Tzeltal, Tzotzil, Chol, the center (San Cristobal de las Casas), south southeast and Tojolabal. Each group, each of which has different pastoral agents and Indian catechists, holds a monthly meeting at which it evaluates its work and all together hold an annual meeting at which the trail to be followed in the diocese is blazed. In this way, for example, it is not the bishop who unilaterally decides on changes in the parishes, except in special cases such as those due to illness, but the team in question itself, within which the bishop, of course, expresses his point of view.

11,466

CSO: 3248/461

BRIEFS

STATE OF MEXICO POLICE DIRECTOR--Toluca, Mexico, 3 February. The director general of public safety and traffic of the Mexico State Government, Col Juan German Anaya Velazquez, resigned this afternoon for "health reasons." For the past year and a half, during which he headed the Public Safety and Traffic Administration, Anaya Velazquez had serious problems with the operators of the so-called "tolerados" /unlicensed or substandard passenger vehicles/, becoming the subject of serious accusations. Two hours after Anaya's resignation, Capt Jesus Antonio Buentello Medina was named the new director. The Mexico State Government secretary, Leopoldo Velasco Mercado, swore in the new appointee at a ceremony at which "A" undersecretary, German Ruiz Esparza, was also present. Capt Jesus Antonio Buentello Medina completed his studies at the Anton Lizardi Naval School in Vera Cruz, and has served as chief counsel of the Mexico State governor, Alfredo del Mazo Gonzalez, since 1984. During recent weeks, the now ex-director of traffic and public safety of the Mexico State Government, Col Juan German Anaya Velazquez, was severely criticized on account of his close friendship with Arturo Durazo Moreno. Anaya Velazquez was director of the police academy of traffic headquarters of the federal district, when Durazo Moreno was in charge of that headquarters. /Text/ /Mexico City EXCELSIOR in Spanish 4 Feb 84 p 27-A/ 12383

POLICE MODERNIZATION INCLUDES COMPUTERIZED ASPECTS--The secretary of safety and highways, Ramon Mota Sanchez, announced yesterday the starting up this year of a computerized supervision and control system for police mobile units, permitting optimization of human and material resources; also an equipment modernization program involving the purchase of 500 patrol cars and 500 motorcycles, with radiotelecommunication equipment. In a speech delivered at a dinner given in his honor by the Lions Club of Mexico City, Mota Sanchez also announced that the five programs begun last year, intended mainly to modernize the police system and transform it into a decent and honorable security corps answering the needs of the citizenry, will be continued and expanded. He also said that the small bus transport service of Mexico City would be brought up to standard and integrated into the highway service programs, and that the computerized signal system would be further expanded with a view to improving traffic flow. /Excerpt/ /Mexico City UNOMASUNO in Spanish 24 Feb 84 p 22/ 12383

ARMS, EXPLOSIVES UNCOVERED IN CHIAPAS--Soldiers of reserve units stationed at key points in the state have uncovered movements of arms and explosives, according to the commandant of the 31st military zone, Gen Enrique Cervantes Aguirre, who added that the discovery was made in the course of the vehicle checks which the soldiers carry out. Acknowledging that these checks are an annoyance to the civil population, he noted, however, that they are a guarantee of the tranquility of the citizenry. Cervantes Aguirre pointed out that the reserve units discharge an important function, which is that of reducing crime by their presence. /Excerpt/ /Tuxtla Gutierrez LA VOZ DEL SURESTE 2 Feb 84 p 8/ 12383

CSO: 3248/459

ELECTION POSSIBILITY, VOTER REGISTRATION PROCESS ASSESSED

Indications of Election

Basseterre THE LABOUR SPOKESMAN in English 25 Jan 84 p 2

[Editorial: "The Issue--The Survival of Democracy"]

[Text] General Elections are constitutionally due in St. Kitts and Nevis in the very early months of 1985. The last elections in St. Kitts and Nevis were held on 18th February 1980.

Although we have so far in this article referred to general elections in St. Kitts and Nevis, we know that it is no more than an academic exercise in Nevis. General elections were already held in Nevis in August last year prior to independence. But elections were not held in St. Kitts prior to independence. So the elections to come will not be all that important for Nevis but they will be of crucial significance for St. Kitts.

The government persist in saying that they intend to exhaust their full 5 year term and that the elections will not be held before 1985. [as published] But all the signs suggest that the elections are imminent. Indeed, it cannot suit even the government to put them off much longer.

What are the signs which indicate imminent General Elections? They are as follows:-

(1) Members of the government are engaged in serious election canvassing. On Tuesday 17th January, at the end of the working day, the Prime Minister, other Ministers and senior officials of PAM invaded Old Road. They were like a circus come to town. They went from street to street and from house to house. Their explanation was that they were meeting the people.

After 4 years they were inquiring from the people what they the people wanted the government to do. They were inviting the people to request personal favours from them. And they were purporting to find instant jobs for people whose applications had been consistently turned down over the last 2 years.

It is reported that they did the same thing in Tabernacle on Wednesday 18th January and even as this editorial is being written Ministers and PAM officials are engaged in the same exercise in Sandy Point.

If elections are not coming soon it is difficult to understand the intensity of that kind of activity.

Labour has, of course, been continuing their regular campaign of public meetings all over the island of St. Kitts.

It is possible that PAM has chosen the strategy of the "meet-the-people circus" rather than the public meetings for two reasons. In the first place they have no proper answers to give to the public in relation to the issues raised by Labour. And in the second place their private rounds will certainly be more conducive to the kinds of smear campaigns at which they are adept. Some of the lies they have to tell they prefer to tell in secret. We therefore call upon the citizens of this country to be on their guard. These elections should be about serious issues touching on the development of the country. They should not be about vile rumours.

(2) The second sign that elections are close at hand is the way the government is playing generous with money. In 1983 the government said they had no money to pay the sugar workers goat water. Now the Prime Minister says government still has no money but they have borrowed some to pay goat water. And it is widely circulated that they intend to pay the goat water to waterfront workers in St. Kitts and Nevis as well as the severance pay to those who have been displaced in St Kitts.

In 1983 it took a lot of agony to offer sugar workers an increase of 1 1/2 percent. In 1985 government is said to be contemplating a substantial increase. And it is said that Civil Servants and nonestablishment workers will also be given increases this year.

Then the government claim that they are making \$400,000 available to Bank of Commerce to be paid out to depositors other than the Comrade Leader and Marcella Liburd.

Yes! a desperate attempt is being made to buy the voters. It is evident that PAM believes that the elections will be determined by money and that they are gearing to spend big. The voters should refuse to be bought. They should learn from their experience of the last 4 years. The franchise, the right to vote is much too valuable to be traded for a little filthy lucre.

(3) There is a great show of feverish activity in relation to the economy. There was the announcement of the substantial reduction in the price of milk without any hint as to when will these things be or as to the level of the reduction.

There was the sale of Friars Bay as part of the development thrust. There was the arrival of the Middle Eastern "investors" in the dead of night. And there is the preparation going on at the Hole for the making of a movie. These, however, are all show and nothing more. And in so far as the movie is concerned however nice it may be, it will be purely shortterm in its impact on the economy.

It is not likely to make any meaningful or lasting contribution on our development.

As we approach the run-up to the elections there are several disturbing features.

(1) The electoral lists as revised in 1983 have not been made available for public scrutiny. This is vitally important particularly since the electoral boundaries have now been redrawn.

(2) Legislation has been enacted to provide for a new system of voter registration. Regulations were required to be made and government gave an undertaking to discuss these with the Opposition before they were finalised. To date no such regulations have been discussed with the Opposition. There is no indication as to when the new procedures will go into effect or even as to whether they are already being used for some people.

(3) The Independence Constitution provides for citizens to be able to vote at 18. It is not clear what steps are being taken by government to give practical effect to this provision. We do not know whether the government intends to call the elections without registering 18 year olds.

(4) The Independence Constitution provides for the establishment of an Electoral Commission to supervise the Supervisor of Elections. Despite numerous proddings from the Opposition the Commission has not yet been appointed.

(5) The Special Branch of the Police Force has been mandated to "tail" Opposition politicians during canvassing with the aim of intimidating would-be-voters.

All the above matters are profoundly serious. All of the concerns speak to the very serious issue of the very survival of democracy in our country.

To this issue no citizen can afford to be indifferent.

General Elections, now or later, will be completely meaningless unless they are genuinely free genuinely fair and genuinely free from fear.

If they are otherwise, whoever wins, the whole country will lose.

Attack on Opposition

Basseterre THE DEMOCRAT in English 11 Feb 84 p 2

[Editorial: "The Advantages of Continuous Voter Registration"]

[Text] THE DEMOCRAT continues its exposure of the pettiness and unreliability of the Opposition Labour Party by commenting this week on the Wednesday Editorial of THE LABOUR SPOKESMAN "A Backdoor Approach". In it they spend a great deal of time and space discussing their attitude to the proposed new Election Registration Regulations.

They recapitulate their original "fears" about the modernizing rules, referring to "the diabolical plan of the Government" which contained much "potential for electoral fraud". They condemn "the Government with their wicked plan" because Government "had hoped to succeed under the cloak of secrecy". They even have the heart to refer to the "special issue" of THE LABOUR SPOKESMAN which they brought out to air their "fears". Up to now, they have not even realised that they can be taken to Court for that publication as it clearly violated the statutory requirement in the Newspaper Act that calls for disclosure of details of the publishing of any such supplement. Nowhere in that "special issue" is there even a hint of the legally required information about who is publishing it and where it is published. Yet, in the issue, all they are talking about concerns their apprehensions of wrongdoing. This is typical of the confusion of the defeated Labour Party.

What are they talking about, when they rant and rave about the "wicked plan" of the Government? The same LABOUR SPOKESMAN came out and praised the Government in their issue following the National Assembly Meeting which passed the amendments to the Electoral Law. They said "Comrade Moore the Leader of the Opposition commended the Government on their maturity." The SPOKESMAN said the Government displayed good sense in the manner in which they accommodated the Opposition's suggestions.

What do they mean, when they say the Government "hoped to succeed under the cloak of secrecy?" The Manifesto of the People's Action Movement openly stated that continuous registration was a priority. The platform of PAM has been campaigning publicly since 1971 for a reform in the system of voter registration. It is under this Administration that the Electoral Commission designed to supervise the Supervisor of Elections has been created and constitutionally entrenched.

It is the Labour Party that introduced in 1971 the system of excluding qualified voters if they were unable to be present on the one day that registration of voters took place. Up to now, with all their bluff, Labour has not been able to say why they never came up with continuous voter registration, although they now support it. The truth is, they very well know that there was something sinister and terrible about the system which they maintained for facilitating the exclusion of qualified voters.

What "secrecy" can there be in a Government which is inviting the constructive comments of its Opposition? By their own admission, Labour finally understands and appreciates the advantages of continuous registration. Therefore, their griping about the proposed regulations is petty and irresponsible!

Overseas Vote-Getting

Basseterre THE LABOUR SPOKESMAN in English 11 Feb 84 p 1

[Text] The Labour Party has received firm information in letters from Kittitians resident in England and the United States of America that Agents of the Peoples Action Movement (PAM) are busily campaigning and soliciting votes in those two countries for PAM candidates in the forthcoming general elections in St. Kitts.

The short extract reproduced below our banner headline was written at the top of one of the letters sent from New York.

One of the reports from England states that a female PAM agent in Leicester, has been working around the clock soliciting votes for PAM.

Kittitians in England and America describe the activities of the PAM agents in those countries as clandestine, feverish and fraudulent, and have called upon other fellow Kittitians to bring the scandal out into the open.

In November 1983 the NRP/PAM coalition government introduced a Bill in the National Assembly called the House of Assembly Elections Ordinance (Amendment) Act, 1983, which among other evil provisions sought to create an unlimited number of citizens of St. Kitts and to give them the rights to register and vote in their absence.

During the debate on the Bill the Opposition succeeded in getting the more glaringly undemocratic provisions deleted or amended.

The Simmonds government has recently disclosed Draft Regulations which seek to re-introduce some of the very undemocratic provisions expunged from the Bill in the National Assembly.

The information given above provides strong evidence that PAM is still pursuing its aim to undermine the electoral process and subvert democracy in St. Kitts.

At a public meeting of PAM held at George Street, Newtown, on Thursday 2nd February, 1984 the Prime Minister is reported to have made several glaring statements in relation to the proposed electoral changes here in St. Kitts. One such statement was that once someone was a citizen of St. Kitts-Nevis, that person could live in the U.S. Virgin Islands, St. Maarten, the U.S.A., England or wherever, he couldn't care less, his government's intention is to get his or her name down on the voters' list and get such persons to vote in the upcoming elections. And he, Simmonds, had no apologies to make to anyone.

The disclosure of fraudulent PAM activities overseas in its attempt to defraud the people of St. Kitts of their right to elect a government of their choice gives additional reasons why all of the people of St. Kitts must become and remain vigilant to protect their rights.

Opposition Voting Proposal

Basseterre the LABOUR SPOKESMAN in English 15 Feb 84 p 1

[Text] Yesterday, Tuesday, Hon. Lee L. Moore, J.P., Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly, despatched a twelve-page Memorandum to the Hon. Attorney-General comprised of comments and recommendations on the Draft Election Registration Regulations sent to the Opposition on Monday 30 January 1984.

The Election Regulations are meant to provide the rules and regulations for the working of the system of continuous voter registration agreed in the National Assembly last November.

On Tuesday 1 November 1983 a Bill entitled "The House of Assembly Elections Ordinance (Amendment) Act of 1983" was presented to a meeting of the National Assembly for the purpose of making changes in the electoral laws of St. Kitts-Nevis.

It contained certain alarming proposals, including the proposal that persons living in North America, Europe and other distant places should be able to vote in elections in St. Kitts-Nevis, and without even having to come to St. Kitts-Nevis to do so.

As a result of great public outcry and the well-reasoned arguments of the Labour Members of the Assembly, the Bill was substantially amended and finally passed.

The Simmonds government gave an undertaking that, before the Regulations were made to bring the new system into effect, the Draft Regulations would be sent to the Opposition for study and comment.

Three months later, on Friday 27 January 1984, there was an announcement on ZIZ that the Draft Election Regulations had been sent to the Leader of the Opposition. In fact, Comrade Moore received them on Monday 30 January.

Then it took a few days before copies of the principal law could be obtained from the government.

In the end, the Opposition submitted a full and detailed Memorandum with comments and recommendations on the Draft Election Regulations. We understand that some of the matters raised in the Memorandum are of extreme importance for the maintenance of free and fair elections in our country.

The Leader of the Opposition has requested a meeting with the government to discuss the problem areas identified in the Regulations.

'Fairness' Issue

Basseterre THE LABOUR SPOKESMAN in English 15 Feb 84 p 2

[Editorial: "The Appearance of Evil"]

[Text] In our lead story on Saturday last, we cited reports that PAM agents in England and America were collecting votes for PAM for the next General Elections to be held in this country.

No doubt, there are those who will treat the story with scepticism. Some will dismiss it with the thought that that is the kind of thing you get from politicians. Some will find it hard to believe.

There are others who will protest most vigorously that it is completely untrue, that it is just another SPOKESMAN lie and that the report was but one more attempt to discredit their honest decent government.

We hope and we trust that there are others in this country who will treat the report seriously. And we hope that those who do so will be the vast majority of the people of this country.

We have warned about many things in the past which some people have chosen to disregard. Some of them found out too late and to their cost that our warning had merit. Some have exclaimed "if I had known", but alas those chastening words always come too late. Some have been too ashamed to confess that they suffered because they had made light of our warning.

If the report is true, it is a profoundly serious matter. Because that will affect the quality of elections we will have here and that in turn will determine whether our country will face the future with stability and confidence or whether we will face it with turmoil.

For unless the next elections are free and fair and seen to be free and fair there will be no guarantee of peace and harmony in the country. Instability, and disharmony, strife and confusion will further inhibit progress and prosperity.

It will not be enough to assert that elections were held and that one group won. If the citizens feel that there was not fairness, if they feel cheated in so far as the exercise of their franchise is concerned that will put in question the true meaning of democracy.

Now we know that the story we printed represents a very serious imputation against the government's integrity in relation to the conduct of elections. And we would agree that such allegations, being so serious, ought Not to be lightly made.

That is why last Saturday we published the handwritten extract out of a genuine letter from America. Granted that someone can stay in America and falsely write home such an allegation, the question would be why. What would the writer of the letter have to gain by reporting it to be so, if, indeed, it were not so?

The letter from which we took that extract was not written to the SPOKESMAN. It was not written to any person in the leadership of Labour. It is not part of a political tract.

It was incorporated in, or, perhaps better, added to a letter from one friend to another, the recipient being a very humble ordinary woman from the Basseterre area.

We, for our part, have given credence to the allegation for the following reasons.

(1) In the first place to the best of our knowledge it is a spontaneous report. It was unsolicited. No question was asked which called forth that answer.

(2) Secondly, we are impressed by the context in which the allegation is made. If the writing were avowedly political there might be more basis for suggesting that the report was biased. But as far as we know, it is the only political comment in an otherwise personal letter.

(3) The person to whom the letter is addressed is also an important indicator. The letter is not addressed to any person with a direct personal interest in the outcome of voting except as an ordinary citizen. It is not addressed to an electoral candidate or even to anyone in the leadership of a political party. The person to whom the letter is addressed has no special standing to be able to do anything about the information. And there was no suggestion in the letter that she should show it to anyone.

The fact that she made it known to us was motivated purely by her civic duty. When it appeared in writing, it confirmed what we had heard with disturbing frequency.

Nor is that the only disturbing report we have heard. We have heard that very many persons who were here for the celebrations in September had their names "registered". And that the Bill that was taken to the National Assembly to amend the Elections Law was an ex post facto attempt to provide legitimacy for such registration. When the government in the National Assembly made concessions and accepted amendments to their Bill, we were prepared to discard this report.

But when the Prime Minister said in George Street that his government could not care less and it was his intention to provide for every citizen to be registered and when the draft Registration Regulations seem to adopt that same posture and to recant from the position agreed in the National Assembly, then our concerns are revived.

There is also a very disturbing report that the government has put the system of continuous registration into effect on a partisan basis. So, as far as the country knows no registration is taking place now. Persons are not able just to walk in off the streets and have their names registered. But it is said that those who go as having been sent by certain favoured PAM activists will have their names put on the lists.

Now perhaps all these are only wild rumours and there is no truth in them. But if they are only wild rumours, how are they fed?

--They are fed by the fact that the government actually brought that Bill to the National Assembly on November 1, 1983.

--They are fed by the irresponsible statements such as the ones at George Street made by the Prime Minister and others.

--They are fed by the government's continued treatment of the electoral lists as top security and their refusal to publish them abroad for all the world to see.

If people are not to lose faith in the electoral process then in its entirety it must be conducted in the open and must be seen to be above board. [as published]

Here is a situation where we need to shun not just evil but the very appearance of evil.

Simmonds-Moore Meeting

Basseterre THE DEMOCRAT in English 25 Feb 84 p 2

[Editorial: "Casting Pearls Before Swine"]

[Text] THE DEMOCRAT welcomes the news, released yesterday evening on ZIZ's 7 o'clock round-up that the Prime Minister the Honourable Dr. Kennedy Simmonds sat down with the Leader of the Opposition the Honourable Lee L. Moore to discuss the draft Election Registration Regulations. We understand that the meeting resolved and clarified certain concerns raised by the Opposition Labour Party, and agreed to reserve certain other matters for further reflection. It is reported that the meeting, which was chaired by Prime Minister Simmonds in the Cabinet room, was cordial and marked by an atmosphere of dignity and respect.

We say that we are heartened by such a revelation, because here in St. Kitts and Nevis, most people had come to the conclusion that such an exchange between the Leaders of the two St. Kitts-based political parties was just not on. The meeting followed a request by Mr. Moore, who was prompted into seeking an audience with the Prime Minister as a result of Government's invitation to the Opposition to discuss constructively the proposed election regulations. In requesting the meeting, Mr. Moore gave evidence of good faith by enclosing twelve (12) pages of comment and recommendation for the Government's consideration.

It is a pity that such a rapport between the Leader of the Government and the Leader of the Opposition could not have been cultivated since the earlier days of this new Administration. Alas! this was not to be. Incident after incident of disorderliness has taken place out of the bitterness of the Labour Party. It would take several paragraphs to list a complete account of actions carried out by Labour which almost amount to subversive activity. Certain actions, indeed, cannot be described as anything but subversive activity.

We recall with horror a call issued publicly by the Leader of the Opposition Mr. Moore in August 1982 for the removal of the Government without elections. We remember the statement made by Mr. Moore that "Simmonds and his gang can have Independence in 1983 without elections, but only if I and the majority of Kittitians are lying dead in the street". Mr. Moore, to his eternal

shame and disgrace, called upon his supporters to carry out a boycott of the momentous Independence Celebrations. This was at a time, as Mr. Moore discovered, when there was universal and mass support for Independence among Kittitians and Nevisians here as well as in London, New York, Barbados, and other places which simulated the massive celebrations taking place here. We recollect the unbelievable lie fabricated by Labour about a "Peeping Tom" in Warner Park.

This Government, now embarked upon its Fifth (5th) year in office, has set a high standard of performance at home and abroad, carrying Democracy, Development and Decency to unprecedented heights in this country. Let us fervently wish for more co-operation, for more compromise, and more cordiality, so that no one would have to think that they were only casting pearls before swine!!!

CSO: 3298/594

OPPOSITION EXHORTS YOUNG PEOPLE TO ORGANIZE FOR ACTION

Basseterre THE LABOUR SPOKESMAN in English 25 Jan 84 p 4

[Article by Brian A. Farrell]

[Text] My people where is your Roots? [as published] Where is your Identity? Where is our once proud and strong race?

As our great forefather Marcus Garvey once said "a race without authority and power is a race without respect."

Have we not endured enough shame injustice, and oppression?

Is it not now time enough for us to become fully aware of who we are and what we are, my brothers?

We were people once proud and free until our white counter-parts shattered our image with their ideals of Western civilization.

We must make our stand once again, we must awake the slumbering giant of Africa that will never sleep again. Up ye mighty Race and let us be free again.

Men and women of the black race, rise in the name of your posterity, summon your every sense, collect your every faculty, thrust the scales from your eyes and be converted to the cause of black advancement and dignity, black power and sovereignty, freedom and integrity, thereby becoming the giants of your own destiny.

Black brothers and sisters, it is time to gather our sources and pool our resources.... It is time to become conscious of our surroundings and realize that we have been placed once more into virtual slavery as we were in the 17th Century.

I am appealing specially to people in the newly-independent nation of St. Kitts and Nevis. We have approached nationhood but do we know where we are heading and what inspiration we have to carry on?

We depend on the so-called politicians to lead us but all we get is fool-promises and lies.

It is time for us to act as an independent people and remove the monster of economic stagnation and deprivation. We can only do so through the system of organization and collective corporation. Let us not waste time in breathless appeals to the strong (politicians) while we are weak, but lend our time, energy and effort to the accumulation of strengths among ourselves by which we will voluntarily attract the attention of others thus ensuring a vibrant and productive black nation--never more to fear oppression, victimization, discrimination at the hands of a chosen few.

I wish to appeal specifically to the young of this country. It's now time for us to get organized if we are to prove a valuable asset to the country. And those in authority I say if this nation is to survive, far more attention has to be given to the young and their aspirations.

CSO: 3298/595

SIMMONDS REPORTS DETAILS OF CGCED \$30 MILLION AID PACKAGE

Basseterre THE DEMOCRAT in English 25 Feb 84 p 2

[Text] In a Television and Radio interview broadcast on ZIZ on Tuesday night of this week, the Prime Minister the Honourable Dr. Kennedy Simmonds reported to the Nation on his recently concluded mission to the Conference held in Washington by the Caribbean Group for Corporation in Economic Development (CGCED). Dr. Simmonds was accompanied on this mission by Ambassador Dr. William Herbert and Director of Planning Mr. Hugh Heyliger.

A total of EC \$30 Million in project funds was pledged for the development of the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis at the CGCED Meeting, a massive amount of aid and assistance for our fledgling nation.

Assistance was agreed at the regional level as well. This included a commitment by Canada for the upgrading of airports throughout the region with special emphasis on safety, so as to improve landings and take-offs, and to provide an extension of the runway in Nevis, and navigation and fire-fighting facilities in St. Kitts.

A plan was discussed to form a private sector Bank to stimulate the flow of capital in the region. Three (3) local businesses were specifically mentioned as having applied for this regional assistance to the private sector. They are the Shrimp Farm at Conaree, the Broiler Operation of Mr. Warrington Grant and Vegetable Production of Mr. Austin Da Silva. In addition, assistance will be forthcoming in export promotion for the marketing of produce such as vegetables and fisheries, especially in light of opening up of the American market through the CBI. Priority was also given to the development of energy resources and petrochemical exploration, and the setting up of a Regional Intra-Stabilisation Fund.

On the National level, Prime Minister Simmonds reported that an economic memorandum prepared by World Bank experts has praised the policies and projects of his Government as being in keeping with the overall strategy of diversifying the economy. The economists also declared that a good investment climate has been created in St. Kitts and Nevis over the past four years. Also, they found that a great deal of emphasis has been laid by this Government on the development of infrastructure as the basis for a take-off into a new spate of developmental activity.

Specific projects approved for St. Kitts and Nevis include electricity development, telephone development, tourism development, irrigation, agricultural and livestock development, Basic Human Needs, and health care. A sewage system for Frigate Bay, a Mini-Hospital for Molineux, new primary schools in Nevis, Basseterre and Estridge, improvements for the Alexandra Hospital in Nevis and Pogson Hospital in Sandy Point, water projects in Nevis, the re-construction of the Supreme Court building destroyed by fire on 1st September, 1982, a new Administration Building for Nevis, these are some of the projects outlined by Prime Minister Simmonds in his informative and encouraging report to the Nation. The first project, the Mini-Hospital for Molineux, is likely, said the Prime Minister, to be started within one month from today.

CSO: 3298/595

GOVERNMENT LAUNCHES 10-YEAR PLAN FOR SUGAR INDUSTRY

Basseterre THE DEMOCRAT in English 11 Feb 84 p 1

[Text] The Government of St. Kitts and Nevis has commissioned a comprehensive 10-year development plan which is aimed at addressing all relevant problems in the Sugar Industry and coming up with proposals for re-instating the ailing Industry to a position of financial soundness.

Government has been instrumental in getting together a Steering Committee which will consult on the measures which can be taken to nurse the virtually bankrupt Industry back to health. The Committee, chaired by Agriculture Minister the Hon. Michael O. Powell is broad-based and includes representatives from the Government's two sugar corporations (N.A.C.O. and S.S.M.C.), the British Development Division (B.D.D.), the Ministry of Agriculture, and the St. Kitts-Nevis Trades & Labour Union. This Steering Committee will co-operate with Booker Agriculture International (Booker's) in establishing the 10-year plan over the next six (6) months.

This act of commitment by Government to the future of the Sugar Industry and the livelihood of the 5,000 workers employed in it will pay particular attention to land utilisation, field practices improvements to the transportation system possibilities for the mechanisation of harvesting, soil erosion, ways of increasing coordination between the two corporations, the social implications of proposed changes, the scope for the expanded use of the by-product of the Industry, and the long-term marketing prospects of the Sugar Industry.

After a brief upswing in the late 1970's, the worldwide Sugar Industry has been on a plummeting downturn in the 1980's, with the cost of production far exceeding the price of sugar. Nevertheless, the Government has succeeded in preserving the jobs of 5,000 sugar workers and in providing the money to keep the Industry going.

CSO: 3298/595

PLP LEADER ODLUM SCORES 'MILITARIZATION' OF CARIBBEAN

Castries CRUSADER in English 25 Feb 84 p 1

[Text] Speaking at a ceremony in Marie Galante, Guadeloupe earlier this month the Leader of St. Lucia's Progressive Labour Party George Odlum had a strong message for the Progressives of the Caribbean who had gathered together to dedicate a building to the memory of Grenada's slain Prime Minister Maurice Bishop.

The Ceremony was organised by Mayor Jean Girard of Marie Galante and resulted in an impressive meeting of representatives of the Progressive Movements of the Caribbean cutting right across the barriers of language. On the day preceding the commemoration of the Bishop Centre, the Caribbean groups met to review the tragic events in Grenada and ex-Minister of Grenada George Louison gave the gathering an expose of the disastrous happenings in Grenada.

Addressing the Assembly and the media on the subject of The Invasion of Grenada by the United States, St. Lucia's ex-Foreign Minister George Odlum dealt with some of the international implications of the invasion of Grenada and also drew attention to the frightening militarisation of the Caribbean in the wake of the Grenada Invasion. He traced the history of the development of a Para-Military Force for the Eastern Caribbean and outlined the current situation regarding the militarisation of the individual Eastern Caribbean States by U.S. forces.

Mr. Odlum said that it was one of the most disgraceful chapters of Caribbean history when the leaders of the Eastern Caribbean sold out the sovereignty of the Caribbean Peoples in exchange for this squalid militarisation and a farcical Caribbean Basin Initiative which is designed to intensify the exploitation of the Caribbean People.

Mr. Odlum called on the Progressive Movements of the English, French and Dutch speaking Caribbean countries to fight to keep the spirit of Maurice Bishop alive. He said: The Caribbean must unite against all forms of imperialism and the power and wealth of the Caribbean must be put in the hands of the people of the Caribbean.

The St. Lucian Leader ended by saying that President De Gaulle of France once described these Caribbean islands as mere specks of dust and more

recently President Reagan of America illustrated his arrogance and contempt by saying that the United Nations vote of 108 to 9 against the Invasion of Grenada would not even disturb his breakfast that morning!

"The struggles of that gallant and courageous Leader Jean Girard might have appeared inconsequential and Marie Galante itself might have been regarded as a speck of dust" Mr. Odium said.

"But today, this tiny island of Marie Galante this "Speck of dust" has become a focus of solidarity and commitment for the Progressive Forces of the English and French Caribbean through the instrumentality and vision of Mayor Jean Girard." [as published]

CSO: 3298/596

OPPOSITION PLP MAINTAINS FOCUS ON ISSUE OF U.S. TROOPS

CRUSADER Comment

Castries CRUSADER in English 25 Feb 84 p 2

[Editorial: "No Foreign Troops on St. Lucian Soil"]

[Text] The Prime Minister has done many very serious things in the name of St. Lucia and St. Lucians. The undemocratic nature of our Parliamentary Democracy allows him the latitude to do so. The fictitious nature of our Party System allows him to take fundamental decisions without a "by-your-leave" from his Party colleagues far less from the people of St. Lucia.

He has changed the laws of the state to afford him the "legitimacy" to victimise the England Family without one shred of evidence or without any qualms of conscience. He is by nature both reckless and bull-headed and not given to cool reasoning and analysis. He is desperately myopic in matters relating to international relations and has committed our state to positions which history will record as crass ignorance and buffoonery. The decision to invite the United States to invade Grenada and the surrender of the sovereignty of these Eastern Caribbean islands is the absolute bottom-line of his recklessness and insensitivity.

OECS Credibility

St. Lucia and the other OECS States have been made the laughing stock of the International World. The President of Tanzania told his Parliament in most unequivocal terms that the Prime Minister of the OECS States had lied to the world. The whole affair involving the trumped-up letter involving Governor General Scoon was a disgraceful affair which left the credibility and honesty of OECS Leaders in grave and irreparable doubt.

St. Lucians must now find a way back to rescue our country from the fiasco of a US-Invasion of Grenada and the resulting militarisation and occupation of our country. We must recall clearly the deception and hypocrisy of the Prime Minister's Statements which were echoed in the Governor General's Throne Speech when he said that the problems of St. Lucia do not lend themselves to military solutions but to economic solutions. What has happened so suddenly which has altered the policy-line of the Government?

Reagan's Policy-Line

It has always been the contention of the Prime Minister that St. Lucia has no need for an Army and a heavy build-up of weapons. He was adamant that the Police Force was competent enough to handle the problems of law and order. He took hefty wads of the public purse and allocated it to salary increases and better conditions for St. Lucian Policemen after the Unions had driven him to considering their needs and when he felt that his political protection from discontented St. Lucians necessitated it.

The scenario has now changed dramatically. The mouthings of Prime Minister Compton now relate more directly to the foreign policy projections of President Reagan's United States, than to any ethos or policy perspective which would redound to the benefit of the people of St. Lucia.

The warmed-up concept of a Regional Defence Force for the Eastern Caribbean is one such idea which originated in the United States and its implementation was hotly canvassed by the United States through the puppetry of Compton, Adams and Eugenia Charles.

Para-military Force

It is true that the germ of the idea came in the late Sixties when Antigua's Bird became concerned about the rise of Peoples Power in Antigua and sought the help of the British to buttress his shaky political perch. The British took the fairly principled position that they would assist the Eastern Caribbean Governments if they were threatened with external aggressions but not in containing the political wishes of the people of their respective states. The panic and nervousness of the Caribbean leaders in the Black Power era led to the germination of the idea of a Para-Military Force moving foot-loose through all the Eastern Caribbean Countries. The formulation was fraught with difficulties. The first difficulty was the paranoia of these nervous office-holders that a standing Army based in any one territory would be a perpetual threat to the incumbent regime. The Military take-overs in Africa and Latin America had etched a lesson on the minds of these jumpy leaders.

Whose Finger on the Button?

The second difficulty arose over the control of such a Paramilitary Force. The whose-finger-on-the button syndrome reared its head. Would the Leader of the base-country control the Force? Should the control be rotated annually? Would the decision to use the Force be a unanimous decision? Automatic on request? Or a simple majority decision? Would the effectiveness of such a Strike Force be impaired if the decision to strike was a plural decision?

Saving the Necks of Leaders

All these fears and the growing feeling of the impracticality of the idea delayed its implementation. But most of all it became clear to all the OECS

leaders that there was no enthusiasm for the concept among the people of the individual states. It was crystal-clear to the ordinary citizen that there were no serious threat of external invasion and the only rationale for such a Defence Force was to save the necks of leaders who had grown hopelessly out-of-touch with the people they claimed to represent and were holding on to the trappings of office by a combination of electoral trickery and traditional pork-barrel politics. [as published]

The concept of a Regional Defence Force remained still-born from 1967 to 1979. The overthrow of the Gairy Regime in Grenada on 13th March 1979 triggered off a new paranoia among the dated OECS leaders. St. Lucia's Prime Minister behaved much like a school-boy who had an urgent call-of-nature and couldn't find the toilets. He beeseched the British to invade Grenada to re-instate the calamitous Gairy Regime. When the British rejected this unprincipled madness he convened the grouping of Eastern Caribbean Leaders to revive the idea of a Defence Force for the Region. There was open opposition in many islands especially in St. Lucia where the man-on-the-street was hell-bent on rejecting the Compton Regime. When Compton's Government fell by ordinary democratic ballot three months later, it was clear to all that the Defence Force was simply a ruse to buttress unpopularity and to offset public discontent.

Compton - U.S. Deal

By 1982 the split in the ruling Labour Party in St. Lucia opened the way for the Americans to treat with Opposition Leader Compton on the question of an American-organised return to power in exchange for the destruction of the Bishop Regime in power in Grenada. The package included the promotion of the idea of a Regional Defence Agreement and a Regional Defence Force. These were the open-sesame for the US militarisation of the Caribbean and the maintenance of corrupt, reactionary puppet-governments which would underpin hegemony in the Caribbean Basin.

No Appetite for Defence Force

The people of St. Lucia still have no appetite for the idea of a Regional Defence Force. Many eyebrows were raised in St. Lucia when Barbados Prime Minister Tom Adams sent his policemen into the St. Vincent Grenadines to interfere in a purely local unrest. Mr. Adams also sneaked some of his Barbados Defence Force men into St. Lucia during the General Election in 1982. In the hubbub of the Elections it went un-noticed but was roundly attached in the aftermath of the Election.

The strange and peculiar circumstances of the Grenada Crisis and the consequent (but pre-arranged) Invasion by the U.S. has created a somewhat different climate to militarism. The horror of Grenada has numbed many citizens who now observe events in a spirit of suspended judgement. But as the dust starts to settle the Yankee Boots imprinted on the beaches of these near-virginal islands have started to irritate the people. The impact and consequences of the Invasion has just started to register on the bemused minds of our people. The illogic of condemning the Afghanistan Invasion and

welcoming the Grenada Invasion is slowly dawning on our people. The crude vulgar pragmatism of calling in Barbadian, Vincentian, Dominican and Antiguan soldiers to shoot down St. Lucians at home simply because St. Lucian policemen might be reluctant to shoot their friends and relatives for the greater glory of John Compton, is now becoming apparent to the St. Lucian people.

Destroying Our Manhood

If Prime Minister Compton succeeded in compromising the Independence and Sovereignty of St. Lucia, he will not succeed in destroying the manhood, the dignity and the latent national pride of St. Lucians. We embrace Regionalism and we will love our Caribbean brothers and sisters provided they are not soldiers and hired killers. The people of St. Lucia will stand up and resist not only Russian Boots (as Compton hinted some years ago). We must resist American boots on our St. Lucian soil! We must resist Barbadian boots on our St. Lucian soil! We must resist Vincentian boots on our St. Lucian soil! We must resist Dominican boots on our St. Lucian soil! We must resist Kittitian boots on our St. Lucian soil. We must resist Antiguan boots on our St. Lucian soil! We must resist Grenadian boots on our St. Lucian soil! No foreign troops must be made welcome on St. Lucian soil.

Super-Power Trap

The pathetic OECS Leaders are taking Caribbean people into the same pathetic Super Power trap that Independence and Non-Alignment is calculated to avoid if used judiciously and sensitively.

The corrolary to having American troops in St. Lucia is that any Opposition Party which gains power in one way or another might feel constrained to eject the Americans and call in other Super-Powers. Our people are being led into an unnecessary cul-de-sac of futility. There is a wide open road to meaningful independence, national dignity, self-sufficiency and human development open to our people even while they use the trinkets and handouts of Super-powers to develop their sinews.

Attack on Compton Policy

Castries CRUSADER in English 18 Feb 84 p 3

[Text] Is it necessary to have so many soldiers in this small country?? No, No. Is it necessary to shine soldiers boots with tax payers money?? No, No, No. Well don't tell me, tell Comptie, he brought them to protect him, guns in their hands, driving around, and causing a fright to this peaceful land.

In the aftermath of the Grenada invasion St. Lucia is today in a state of economic, social, and political tension, with the take over of the Americans and St. Lucia's puppet on the string singing and dancing to the tune of his imperialist masters. The radio, the churches, the voice and the private sector all in one big conspiracy keep on bombarding us with the flattering sweet talk that this is a peaceful country and that our people are

God-fearing, therefore it is no big thing that not one of these organisations have questioned the presence of U.S. troops on this peaceful country. It was not ironical therefore that the VOICE newspaper in last weekend issue made it appear that the reports appearing in a Trinidad newspaper the CHALLENGE was wrong and that it was all lies. [as published]

However the truth is that St. Lucia is under a state of seige by U.S. troops combined with section of hand picked policemen from the S.S.U. who are being trained in the act of dealing with demonstration, strikes and political progressive organisations. Amidst this dangerous and destructive situation our people are subjected to constant insults and abuse from a shameless and discredited Prime Minister.

The cost of living continues to rise its ugly head, with the increase in electricity rates, cooking gas, and postage stamps. The job situation is crucial and frustrating, with more and more workers being laid off and the unions are unable to deal with the situation because they have prostituted their bargaining rights for that which profits not, and have become victims to bribery, corruption and double standards. It is against this background that the military training, the military parades, and the pomperous display of the machines of war can be allowed here without any one seriously challenging the government.

Compton more than any one else knows this. He also realizes that at this point in time our people are not properly organised and mobilised to deal with the present situation. It is precisely why Compton has transformed St. Lucia into a despotic state and has openly declared war on the people of this country.

The situation is therefore crucial and rough, and the way out look difficult, mountainous, and painful. [as published] It is my view that as a people we can do it, but we can no longer do it in peace as we are accustomed to. War has been declared and we must arm ourselves with the tools and machines of war to accept the challenge. Indeed those who want a free country must be prepared to fight, and if possible die for it.

Derision of U.S. Troops

Castries CRUSADER in English 25 Feb 84 p 3

[Editorial Report] The Castries CRUSADER, English-language organ of the opposition Progressive Labour Party, in its regular page 3 column "Queek Quak," on 25 February 1984 carries, among other of its customary gossip-type paragraphs generally critical in some respect of the government, its officials and its policies, the following separate entries:

"What a cock-eyed topsy-turvy place St. Lucia has become! St. Lucians are prohibited by law from wearing Greens in their own country, but Americans are allowed to strut around in greens. Has there been a special amendment to the laws which discriminate in favour of American soldiers?"

"The Physical Training sessions of the 'Dogs of War' Police Brigades on mornings are somewhat comical and ridiculous on the surface concealing the horror below. The American masters lead our local foot-soldiers into some hoofing jog-sessions shouting in a hoarse chorus: We want to get back to Grenada. Funny. The Policemen who went to Grenada ran away from the corpses and hid from the snipers in the bush. Maybe it's the American Trainers who want to get back to the cheap sex-and-drugs scene!"

"Psssst! Ever stop to think that Gairy's Mongoose Gang at least belonged to Gairy but the Papa Jab's Dogs of War belong to Reagan, so anytime the Yanks are ready to change horses in mid-stream then, the devil takes the hindmost!"

"Tut! Tut! Tut! Our foolish OECS Leaders were conned into straining at Grenada's gnat and they all ended up swallowing the whale of US occupation. St. Lucia's Prime Minister is quoted saying of the American presence in St. Lucia 'I will not allow them to militarise my country'. And the Dominica Prime Minister quite categorically said: 'We will not allow people like Gairy back in Grenada.' Seems as if Reagan is having a whale of a time while the OECS traitors are swallowing their pride and eating their vomit."

CSO: 3298/596

REPORTS INDICATE U.S. SEEKS MILITARY BASE IN GRENADA

Castries CRUSADER in English 25 Feb 84 p 8

[Text] Concern is growing in Grenada over reports that Washington is seeking a long-term lease on Grenada's unfinished international airport, in order to transform it into an American military base in the Eastern Caribbean.

Such reports surfaced on the occupied tiny Caribbean island this week, as keen followers of events here since last October's US-led invasion dug deeper into the unofficial accounts of discussions held between the ruling "Interim Advisory Council" and US Secretary of State George Shulz during the latter's recent visit to the island.

According to the reports from the island, Washington is said to be interested in a long-term lease of the Point Salines airport, somewhat similar to those enjoyed at the Guantanamo Base in Cuba, to allow for establishment of a sub-regional military base and permanent military presence on the 133 square-mile island. There has been no response from the Interim Council to this claim in some Grenadian quarters, but according to Grenadians visiting St. Lucia this week, the claim sprung from critics within the interim administration who disagree with the continued military use of the airport by Washington while the Reagan administration drags its feet on repairing the damaged tarmac and allowing it to be opened for civilian use.

A source on the island confirmed by telephone that several persons in official and commercial circles are concerned about the continuing delay in securing financial support for the completion of the airport, and link this with the recent indication by the NATO Commander for the South Atlantic that Grenada was strategically located to facilitate NATO control of the sea-lanes in the Caribbean.

One report says that the Americans are interested in a ninety-nine year lease on the airport, but officials remain tight-lipped on such details. The Interim Council appointed by Washington-backed Governor General of Grenada, Paul Scoon, is in favour of a continued US and Caribbean presence on the island, with Council Chairman, Nicholas Brathwaite, already having requested that the 700 American and Caribbean soldiers on the island should remain until a general election is called in November. But Brathwaite also

told several Caribbean leaders at a meeting in Grenada on January 30, that a foreign military presence on the island would be necessary, in his view, for another three years, at least.

Diplomatic and political observers here feel that Washington would welcome the possibility of establishing a permanent military base on Grenada for the future, but say that the Council would have to wait until an elected government emerges to take responsibility for giving Washington the nod.

"But in the meantime, it would certainly be to Washington's longterm advantage if it could delay the opening of the airport for commercial use, while seeking the support of friendly neighbouring governments for a case for establishing a permanent US base in Grenada in the name of assuring permanent regional security against a repetition of the recent events in Grenada", said a high-placed diplomatic official here.

CSO: 3298/596

PLP REITERATES QUERY ON TORTURE OF GRENADA PRISONERS

Castries CRUSADER in English 18 Feb 84 p 8

[Text] A report on the state of Grenadian revolutionaries being held in detention at the maximum security Richmond Hill Prisons is forcing the CRUSADER to ask Commissioner of Police, Cuthbert Phillips, and Minister of National Security, John Compton, to investigate allegations against St. Lucian policemen, accused by the detainees of assisting in violation of their human rights while in detention.

The report compiled by the "Committee for Defense of Human Rights in Grenada" (a major section of which is reproduced in this issue) implicates St. Lucian policemen currently serving with the military occupation forces in Grenada, of administering "mental torment" to former New Jewel Movement (NJM) and military leaders being held by US and Caribbean forces on the island, without charges, since the October invasion last year. The report states: "During detention, detainees have been mentally tormented day and night by St. Lucian and Dominican policemen wearing PRA uniforms".

It further alleges that "American and Barbadian soldiers" have been administering physical and psychological torture, "including electric shocks", in an effort to extract false statements implicating them in the death of former Grenadian Prime Minister, Maurice Bishop, who was killed on October 19.

In fact, the report alleges that several detainees have already been forced to sign false statements implicating the Central Committee of the NJM with having planned Bishop's assassination long in advance of October 19. The information compiled in the Jamaica-based committee's report is based on on-the-spot witness reports, information sent out of Richmond Hill by the detainees themselves, and from several persons who have seen or spoken to them since their capture by the invading US forces.

A look at that section of the report reproduced in this issue, and a consideration of the right of each and every individual to full respect for human rights and liberties guaranteed in all civilised societies, forces even those who blame the Coard faction of the NJM for Bishop's death to call for a full investigation into the treatment of the detainees, and the conditions under which they are being held. It is significant that more

than one hundred days after the US invasion, the ruling military council in Grenada has still been unable to lay any charges against the 47 NJM leaders being held in prison despite support from a group of Caribbean lawyers, and a top official of Britain's Scotland Yard in their efforts to formulate such charges.

Independent reports from Grenada have also indicated that some of the St. Lucian policemen have been engaging in other actions which the Grenadian people do not condone, and which many are seeing as an infringement on their country's sovereignty, and the rights of Grenadian citizens. Even some of the policemen who have so far returned from Grenada have been reported as condemning certain aspects of the behaviour of some of their colleagues in Grenada. A certain St. Lucian officer was even said to have been sent back home, on account of his irresponsible behaviour.

These are matters which beg for quick action from Commissioner Phillips and the Prime Minister who should leave no stones unturned to clarify. Honestly, we do not expect the Commissioner or the Prime Minister to disclose their findings if they find that any of these allegations are true. But still, we insist on some form of investigation, and if any of our local policemen are found to be guilty of such behaviour, we beg that strong action be taken to ensure that such behaviour is not continued in the future. Our policemen must not be made to become political mercenaries for the sake of Reagan's regional military and political designs.

CSO: 3298/597

LABOUR PARTY OFFICIAL OFFERS PLAN FOR PARTY REVITALIZATION

Castries THE VOICE in English 29 Feb 84 p 2

[Text] The St. Lucia Labour Party is continuing its plans for reorganisation.

A special conference of delegates last Sunday endorsed a report by Vice Chairman Mr. Julian Hunte, who headed a Special Standing Committee to formulate plans for the reorganisation and modernisation of the party.

But Mr. Hunte conceded that the SLP was still a divided party with many wounds to heal. And he exhorted the delegates to sink their differences and unite "behind a leader who will give the party and the country its best chance of success."

The following is an edited version of Mr. Hunte's address to the conference:

"The St. Lucia Labour Party now finds itself in a most precarious position--it is walking a political tightrope, and at this stage, we must do all in our power, with the help of Almighty God, to avoid repeating past mistakes, if we are to put the Party in a position, to form the next Government.

"In our view, the people of this country now fully understand, and appreciate, the real causes of the problems of the Party that led to the premature fall from office, of the Labour Government in 1982. For this reason, many St. Lucians are again looking to the St. Lucia Labour Party, as the only alternative to the ruling party.

"But before the Party can entirely regain the confidence of the electorate as a whole, it is my view, that it has to fulfill the following conditions.

Condition:

1. The Party must have the right image--that of trustworthiness, honesty, integrity and prepared to work selflessly in the interest of all.
2. The leadership of the Party must be established beyond doubt.
3. The Party must prepare and present to the people, a programme, designed to bring about a fairer and more equitable society. This social and economic

programme /must/ [in boldface] be realistically framed, with the main objective being the creation of new jobs, increased food production, and a social infrastructure programme, to complement its economic development thrust.

"This Party, has for too long existed as a mass hysteria organisation. In the Party's thirty odd years of existence very little has been done, to organise a proper party machinery. There are many who still think, that a group of speakers, armed with loudspeakers and microphones, shouting platitudes and time-worn slogans from a platform, constitute the main work of a party.

"I respectfully submit, that if it were once possible to impress the people in that way, it is no longer applicable today. The lessons learned by St. Lucians, in the past four years have made them very suspicious of those who seem only to want to talk. Surely the time has come for action!!

"It is clear, that the people are tired of the unfulfilled promises by politicians and political parties. They /reject/ [in boldface], the colourful but empty rhetoric, and want instead, positive action, that would make life more enjoyable, more meaningful, with faith in the future, rather than perpetual despair.

"The people of this country, are looking forward to a new type of politics, and the Party that can offer itself in this new mould, will gain the acceptance of the electorate. The St. Lucia Labour Party must therefore present itself in this new light, as a "born again" party, if you like, if it expects to become the Government of the future.

"Mr. Chairman, the St. Lucia Labour Party, like any other organisation in the society, must attract new members into its ranks, so that the Party could have the energy /necessary/ [in boldface] for further development. In fact, the continued injection of new blood in the Party, is the only way to ensure its future, long after all of us will have left the scene. However, whenever the Party finds itself with new blood, a conflict emerges between the old and the new. Why is this situation so evident in the history of the Party? The St. Lucia Labour Party has fallen out of office on two occasions, because of conflict with new members, and although the Party always recognised the need to attract new members, the Party structure appears to have proven too inflexible, to handle new ideas, and that inevitably comes, from the intake of the new membership. If this Party is to move out of that historical position, then it must develop the ability, to incorporate new ideas.

However, having said that, it is in the interest of the Party, to protect itself, from those whose political views are not consistent with the basic principles, for which the St. Lucia Labour Party stands.

"The party, must guard itself against hardline extremists, whose modus operandi is usually to infiltrate the Party, in order to use its base to gain political office. This always causes serious problems within a party, because the views of extremists have always proven inflexible, and cannot

be absorbed into general party policy. The result is, for the extreme groups, to attempt to take over the leadership of the Party, in order to be in a position to change its ideological base.

"We are at the point where the St. Lucia Labour Party must restate categorically, its firm and unequivocal commitment to democracy, at all levels, and that it has no room for extremism or any individual, or group within its ranks, that will support any means other than the ballot box to change Governments.

"In the past, there have been those, who have deliberately set about to prevent any proper structuring of the Party. Because any proper organisation, will result in the lessening of the power of those individuals. Moreover, a well-organised party, requires from its members, a high level of discipline, which in the past, some members in the Party have resisted.

"The recommendations are as follows:

1. Constituency Groups

The Special Standing Committee, identified the immediate reorganisation of the constituency groups as a top priority. Up to now, now whatever exists or existed in many areas as a constituency group, is not necessarily organised, to reflect the various sectors within the particular constituency.

2. Party Office

The Committee is of the view that, we can no longer operate the St. Lucia Labour Party at the kind of amateurish level that has been the order of things, and that the time has come to bring a level of professionalism, in the way the Party is run.

"In this regard, a Central Party Office has been established, on the ground floor of the St. Lucia Workers Union Building. These premises were made available to the Party since November 1983, and thanks to a donation from a staunch party supporter, rent has been paid to the end of January 1984. In order to finance the rental of the office, as well as its operational costs, i.e. water, electricity, telephones, the constituencies are requested to assist with the payment of monthly rental, by organising various fund-raising activities in their respective areas.

3. Secretariat

In the past, it was relatively easy for an individual to perform the duties of Party Secretary, along with whatever he or she may be engaged in as a livelihood. In this day and age, this is no longer possible.

Recognising this fact, and in an effort to establish better communications, between the Central Executive and the constituency groups throughout the island, the Central Executive appointed Mr. Hilary Modest as Executive

Secretary, responsible for the coordination of work of the Central Executive with the Constituency Groups. The post is separate and distinct from that of Party Secretary.

4. Youth Arm

If the Party is to prepare itself for the future, then it must attract, a greater number of young people. As a result, the Central Executive must organise a Youth Arm, that will operate as a parallel, to the Constituency Groups.

5. Women's Role

The Party cannot ignore the significant role which the women of this Country are playing, in every field of endeavour. Women should provide the Party with the added thrust needed, in its expressed desire to involve all sectors of the community, in Nation Building. In this regard, women must be encouraged to play an equal part with men at every level of the Party's organisation from the Youth Arm upwards.

6. Disciplinary Committee

The St. Lucia Labour Party's main problem has been the lack of discipline displayed by even some of its key members. The whole power struggle that finally destroyed the Labour Government was caused by the indiscipline that ran deep within the officers, and the rank and file of the Party.

In order that the Party can regain its self-respect, it is necessary that members operate under a Code of Discipline, and it is for this reason that the Committee recommends the setting up of a Special Standing Disciplinary Committee to comprise longstanding and respected members of the Party.

7. Rules Committee

The present Constitution of the Party needs revision. As part of the reorganisation of the Party, it is necessary, that it is not held back by a Constitution, that does not reflect the needs of a modern political climate. In other words, the present Constitution is inadequate to present day needs of the Party and it must set about revising it, if it is to function effectively.

The Special Standing Committee is therefore recommending the formation of a "Rules Committee," to revise the constitution of the Party, and that these new rules should be presented to the Central Executive Committee, in time for presentation to the Party Convention, in August this year.

8. Social and Economic Policy

As we enter the second half of the 1980's, it is also necessary that the Party prepare a social and economic policy statement, to present to the St. Lucia public. The members of the Party must now prepare themselves for

new sophistication in St. Lucia politics. Slogans and vague notions, are no longer a sufficient platform, for a political party. It is of paramount importance for the Party to devise its own policy paper, which it can promulgate and discuss with its supporters, as the Party's policy when it gets into office. The Special Standing Committee feels, that the Policy Document, is a necessary precondition to public meetings by the Party.

The Committee is recommending therefore, the setting up of "sub committees" to handle the various areas of policy formulation, and will present its report to a Special Conference of Delegates, on or about June 17th 1984.

10. International Relations Sub-committee

The Central Executive approved the appointment of an International Relations Sub-Committee, under the Chairmanship of the Political Leader, Bro Neville Cenac.

The Sub-Committee to be responsible for--

1. Maintaining links with fraternal organisations in the Caribbean, as well as extra-regional.
2. Co-ordinating all external assistance to the Party.
3. Formulating a foreign policy/strategy for consideration by the Central Executive and annual convention of the Party.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, it would be almost an act of deception, not to admit to the Conference, that in many ways, the St. Lucia Labour Party is still a divided party, with many wounds to heal.

"There still exists an unnecessary preoccupation (at the expense of all else) by supporters and the supported as to the leadership of the Party.

The way forward, Mr. Chairman, is for the Party to sink its differences and unite behind a leader who will give the Party and the Country its best chance of success.

The immediate task ahead:

1. Organising and strengthening each Constituency Group.
2. Early endorsement of Candidates, whose views are consistent, with the principles of the Party.
3. Prepare, debate, and agree a Socio-Economic programme, that will provide the leadership which this Country so desperately needs.
4. Take this programme to the people--to every part of St. Lucia--discuss it with them."

CSO: 3298/597

GOVERNMENT CRITICIZED ON ISSUE OF NATIONAL HOLIDAY

Castries THE WEEKEND VOICE in English 25 Feb 84 p 2

[Editorial]

[Text] We sense a growing disenchantment, in fact, resentment, among St. Lucians over the manner in which the anniversary of the independence is being observed. And on close examination, it is clear that this displeasure is not without good reason.

This newspaper has always campaigned against certain holidays on our calendar, some of which bear no relevance to anything St. Lucian and in fact can be viewed as attempts to force this country to hold on to irrelevant traditions.

St. Lucians do not want "another holiday" for their independence anniversary, just for the sake of having a day off and feting to their hearts' content. We sense there is serious concern among those who are protesting now about the fact that such a crucial event in our history is being so drastically downplayed.

That the low-key observance this year, and again last year, has been the decision of the very Government which fought so determinedly and courageously for St. Lucia to shake off the shackles of colonial domination, is ironical.

That we should choose to put our best foot forward on December 13, St. Lucia Day, which we celebrate as National Day, and at the same time, slight the day of our liberation from colonialism is even more ironical, given the fact that in recent years, we have been made to realise that Christopher Columbus never "discovered" St. Lucia as we were once led to believe.

In fact, the historians are now telling us that Columbus never set foot on St. Lucia and could have been somewhere else on December 13 1502. Of course, one could also argue whether Columbus ever lived?

One understands the Government's desire to hold on to December 13, if only because of the tradition and the earlier beliefs that were thrust upon us. But it should now be obvious that what we have been doing is wrong. We cannot any longer be asked to honour a day that never was, National Day or Discovery Day, and yet ignore the day of our political emancipation.

Under the Labour Party, Independence Day 1980 and 1981 caught this country deeply embroiled in the now famous Louisy-Odlum leadership struggle. In 1982, we were on the campaign trail for new elections. Last year, and again this year, under the UWP, we have had an observance true, but it has fallen short of what the great achievement of political independence should signify.

As we started out by saying, we gathered very forcefully this week--when St. Lucia celebrated its fifth independence anniversary--that there was a great movement of St. Lucians who are displeased that the day was not observed in a more fitting manner.

It is our view that if we St. Lucians are to be endowed with the nationalism and patriotism we are told we should possess, every effort should be made to observe our important dates appropriately.

February 22, 1979 was for real. It was the day when this country cut the last political string to Britain and went out on its own. December 13, 1502 no longer holds any factual meaning for us. The historians have told us as much. The Government should move now to right this wrong and make the February date our biggest occasion.

CSO: 3298/597

TIME OF INDEPENDENCE CALLED 'DISASTER, WASTED YEARS'

Castries THE WEEKEND VOICE in English 18 Feb 84 p 2

[Editorial]

[Text] On Wednesday, St. Lucia observes the fifth anniversary of its attainment of full political independence from Britain. On reflection, it occurs to us that while the first year's of a country's independence ought to be trying and a period of foundation-laying, in St. Lucia's case, our first five years can be categorised as wasted years. [as published]

It is a strong statement to make, we admit, but no one looking objectively at St. Lucia between 1979 and 1984 can fail to conclude that our post-independence era so far has been a disaster.

In February 1979, this country severed the last remaining political ties with Britain amid greater expectations. Less than five months later we went to the polls and changed a Government. History will record that the period between then and early 1982 when the people of this country decided they could take no more--with Hurricanes David and Allen in between--were years of sheer chaos.

In those years, our economic fabric was rent assunder, and some of our more cherished institutions were degraded and tarnished. Projects which should have provided the new stimulus for future economic growth and development came to a halt, and even those positive efforts that were made suffered from the agony of the Labour Party's rule.

The casualties were many. Like the national consultation on education which was to mark the beginning of moves towards badly-needed education reforms. Like the Beausejour youth project which was to have served as a model for a future attack on the problem of youth employment. The list is a long one.

Between 1979 and now, we have had two general elections with all that goes along with them: the polarisation of our small population, and the engendering of animosity, hatred and violence. We have even had a new political party. We have had an unusual surge of indiscipline among our people, vandalism, drug abuse, unemployment have all reached new proportions.

Have we not therefore, squandered our crucial first five years of independence? Does not 1984 find St. Lucia literally starting all over again? And starting almost from scratch as well?

But in all this episode of disaster, St. Lucians must have matured some; we must have become wiser too, even though it has been a high price to pay.

Independence brings along with it certain responsibilities in a people. It demands new commitments, the forging of national unity and brotherhood, the fostering of national pride and love of country. Have we not defaulted on our independence?

Small wonder there won't be any parades and celebration on Wednesday. It would have been a national joke if there were. We actually have nothing to celebrate after five years.

But we have begun once more to build our country. The very fact that this opportunity has presented itself means that all has not been gloom. St. Lucians should use this year's anniversary, in all its quietness and low-key status, to rededicate themselves to the task of nation-building as never before.

CSO: 3298/597

TRADE MINISTER MALLET WANTS NO CHANGES IN CARICOM

Castries THE WEEKEND VOICE in English 18 Feb 84 p 1

[Text] St Lucia's Trade Minister George Mallet says he is against any fundamental change in the provisions of the Caribbean Community treaty as was being mooted in some quarters in the region.

According to a Caribbean News Agency (CANA) report yesterday Mr. Mallet said that in spite of its problems, Caribbean governments had a duty to resolve differences and make regional cooperation work.

He also said that member countries of the organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) will be pushing for "special considerations" during the next conference of the Caribbean Common Market (CARICOM) Council of Ministers.

The Council decided at its meeting last month to hold a special session within three months in Trinidad and Tobago to deal with a construction in intra-regional trade.

The meeting, official sources said, is now shifted to Guyana from April 15-16.

Mallet said the OECS countries were particularly hard hit by restrictions placed on their exports into Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica and Guyana.

"Right now," declared Mallet, "the doors are virtually shut on our exports into these countries. Guyana has no money and seems to be in a special case. But we are all anxious to get into the markets of Trinidad and Tobago," the most important for the (OECS), and Jamaica.

"Cut backs on imports by our manufacturers," he added, "are aggravating our unemployment and social problems. We feel that Trinidad and Tobago can afford to absorb our comparatively small volume of imports within the framework of its significant global trade policy."

Trinidad and Tobago imposed licensing last October in a move aimed at curbing foreign currency outflows.

Mallet said that he could "understand and even sympathise with the views of some Trinidadian businessmen, especially in the garment industry, that our

exports of manufactured garments into their country place them at an unfair advantage given our comparatively low production costs based largely on wages variation."

He, however, feels that the small island States of CARICOM should be given "special consideration." St. Lucia and other OECS countries plan on advancing this argument at the next Council meeting.

Intra-CARICOM trade currently averages around nine percent of the Community's total volume of global trade, Mallet said, "even this in real terms, is very important to us. All of the member countries have benefitted from CARICOM."

Mallet said the benefits of CARICOM must not only be viewed in terms of trade, but in the areas of functional cooperation, such as education, air and sea transport and meteorology, economic and political issues.

Mallet, commenting on suggestions for a reconstituted CARICOM Treaty, said he is against any fundamental change in its provisions.

He said that in spite of "all its shortcomings, CARICOM is the best thing we have got, and we have a duty to resolve our differences and make this experiment in regional economic co-operation work for the benefit of the peoples of the Caribbean."

Mallet feels that "there may be some justification for thinking that the unanimity rules are too wide and constitute a veto on some very crucial issues." But he advised that the CARICOM Governments "concentrate on how we should amend Chaguaramas Treaty, if necessary, to restrict the rules relating to a consensus. We must not," he added, "seek to use our differences on this unanimity issue in order to fundamentally change the character of the Caribbean Community."

CSO: 3298/597

COMMITTEE TO DECIDE ON WORK PERMITS FORMED, CRITICIZED

Committee Responsibilities

Castries THE VOICE in English 22 Feb 84 p 1

[Text] A Work Permit Committee to advise the Minister of Labour concerning the issuing of work permits to non-nationals wishing to come to Saint Lucia for employment will be launched this afternoon at 3 p.m.

The Committee will also be responsible for thoroughly investigating work permit applications and submitting a report with a recommendation to the Minister.

The Committee is given a term of reference which includes the studying and improving of the work permit application form and the work permit to include all necessary information pertaining to applicant.

According to a spokesman for the Ministry: "The Committee has an important duty to perform in view of the high level of unemployment. Everything has to be done to secure the limited jobs for nationals. Only when someone trained in a particular skill is not available will a work permit be granted with a national counterpart attached to the person to understudy him so the national can take over after a period of time.

The Committee established by Cabinet will consist of eleven members with Mr. Johannes Leonce, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Labour as Chairman and Mr. Cuthbert Ford, Senior Labour Inspector as Secretary.

Criticism of Government Action

Castries CRUSADER in English 25 Feb 84 p 4

[Letter to the editor]

[Text] Dear Sir:

Trust the Government for bolting the stable-door after the horse has bolted!
Trust the Government for using flimsy padlocks in bolting the stable door!

Your newspaper has repeatedly exposed the goings-on in the area of Work Permits. The Minister of Labour was reportedly hauled over the coals in Cabinet for the goings-on in the area of Work Permits. But the Government never once admitted that the Minister of Labour was handling the Work Permits portfolio badly. The damning statements made by Guyanese and other nationalities about the Work Permits procedure here were never refuted by Government.

Today the Government tries to cover the cess-pool by appointing a Work Permit Committee as an Advisory Body to the Minister! What a farce? The Committee has absolutely no Statuary identity. It is just an Ad Hoc body that will tender advice to the Minister which he can easily ignore if it's worth it.

What is most interesting is that the Compton Government is prepared to make an empty gesture to cover up the corruption in Work Permits by appointing an Ad Hoc Committee without legislative teeth but in the vital area of price control where there is a Statutory Price Control Committee appointed by the previous Labour Administration to look after prices, the present Government refuses to make such a Committee operative.

Are we to conclude that it is less politically dangerous to interfere with Minister Mason's grease-gun than with Minister Mallet's grease-gun? Or that such Committees need not jam the grease-gun?

Watch it!

CSO: 3298/598

BRIEFS

MINISTER OF INFORMATION'S VISITS--Newly appointed Minister of Information Romanus Lansiquot has started a series of visits to media houses on the island. Mr. Lansiquot, Minister of Community Development, Social Affairs, Youth and Sports was recently assigned the added responsibilities of Broadcasting and Information. During the week, the Minister accompanied by his permanent secretary Mrs Aldith Isaac, called at THE VOICE where he conferred with the newspaper's editor. During the discussions, the Minister was informed of some of the problems confronting local media personnel. Specifically, the question of the lack of training opportunities for journalists was raised. The Minister was also informed of the difficulties which the newspaper was encountering in obtaining information from certain Government Departments. He promised to look into both complaints. The Minister has also had discussions with the General Manager of Radio St. Lucia and Chairman of the St. Lucia Broadcasting Corporation, as well as the staff of the Government Information Service. He is due to meet executives of other sections of the media in the coming weeks. [Text] [Castries THE WEEKEND VOICE in English 18 Feb 84 p 18]

UNION ACTIVITY--The St. Lucia Seamen Waterfront & General Workers Trade Union says it is continuing its efforts to mobilize and build a strong and vibrant workers movement in St. Lucia. The Union said it has applied to the Vieux-Fort Town Council for recognition on behalf of recently recruited employees of the Council, and was continuing its membership drive having held several meetings with non-Unionised employees. "The Union is at this moment holding negotiations with the St. Lucia Electricity Services Ltd. on behalf of its members. Negotiations are due to commence shortly with Windward & Leeward Brewery, and with the northern hotels on behalf of its members there. In the meantime the Union has written to the Labour Commissioner to convene an urgent meeting between the Union and the Port Council for the purpose of negotiating compensation and gratuity payments for the senior employees of the Port Authority. The Union is anxious to settle this matter as the Port Authority has threatened to terminate the employment of all daily paid employees who have reached the age of sixty-five years" the release said. [Text] [Castries THE VOICE in English 22 Feb 84 p 5]

CSO: 3298/598

EDITORIAL ASSAILS U.S. FOR MILITARY POLICY IN CARIBBEAN

Kingstown THE VINCENTIAN in English 2 Mar 84 p 4

[Editorial: "Caribbean Arms"]

[Text] "Guns Will Make Us Powerful. Butter Will Only Make Us Fat." Herman Goering, Nazi.

No where are politicians looked upon for ethical or even consistent behaviour, but it is nothing short of astonishing the rapidity with which Eastern Caribbean governments have, with no reference to the people, embarked upon the United States-inspired militarization of our region. [as published]

By some fantastic twist of logic the implication, the potential dangers and consequences of arms and the training of people to use them in one island, Grenada, are swept aside for an entirely dangerous acceptance of these elsewhere. We are asked now to believe there are good guns and bad guns, good training and evil training, good militias and wicked militias.

Having swallowed one notion that communism formed a conspiracy (from abroad) to arm Grenada, we proceed to the next in which a benign and sympathetic Reagan administration provides the means by which we might protect ourselves from ourselves.

What is factual in the existence of a group which will be uncharacteristic of the rest of the society, that this group will have at its disposal weapons and training which amounts to a new source of power, that this power is not being developed through the efforts and struggles of people attempting to change and strengthen society, which involves a process of learning and becoming, but is instantly available force.

What is possible is that we will find this force, like similar but much larger ones in Latin America reverting to form and planting itself firmly between the poor and their aspirations for a better society.

We in the Caribbean must resist the tendency to underestimate the value of our experience. Contained here is the potential to solve our many social problems. Our region can be transformed, by ourselves, through our efforts, our judgements and the playing out of our conflicts into the creative and developing society it presently is not.

Even if there is disagreement about what to say "yes" to, we need have not a moment's hesitation about what to say "no" to. Surely the training of this force is one certain "No".

Incidentally, appearing here and there among the "thank you America" T-shirts is the old familiar face of Anti-Americanism scowling at the appearance of the Ugly American himself in our midst. It has already been noted in hostile and ugly behaviour towards foreigners. Resentment is ugly and we will pay the price for it economically. If tourists are going to pass us by and factories fly away to St. Kitts it is time to examine the underpinnings.

CSO: 3298/599

POLICY STAND OF BEQUIA IMPROVEMENT MOVEMENT EXPLAINED

Kingstown THE VINCENTIAN in English 17 Feb 84 p 5

[Letter to the editor]

[Text] Dear Madam,

We have to sympathize with Ollivierre of La Pompe, Bequia, because his ignorance, hostility and inability to discern between facts and theories have greatly blurred his thinking. Were he sufficiently intelligent to recognise a situation as it is and sufficiently honest to adhere to the truth, he certainly would not have written the nonsense he did in his letter dated 28 January 84 to THE VINCENTIAN of 10 February 84.

He departed from the truth when he said

"The Bequia Improvement Movement is supporting and campaigning for the New Democratic Party", because the Movement is doing nothing of the kind. It is a non-political Movement and is not supporting or campaigning for any political party. It is strictly a community Movement which is preparing to demand human and democratic rights for the people of the Grenadines as expressed in the Charter of the United Nations.

[Lines missing] and plans to achieve its objectives without the assistance of any political party. This position of the Movement has been repeatedly stressed at our Meetings, and so Ollivierre's accusation is deliberately false. He contradicts himself when, after stating his claims that we are supporting and campaigning for the NDP, he says we are not encouraging people to have better relations with the NDP and in our speeches are urging people away from the party". This glaring contradiction exposes the hopelessness and insincerity of his position.

He continued saying "The Government of St. Vincent can be criticized but one must know what to say. It is very important that you criticize factually and not what you think. Only fools go about criticising something they know nothing about." That is exactly that of which he is guilty with respect to his criticism of our Movement. Had he been an intelligent and honest reader of my articles which have been appearing in the Vincentian and particularly of my recent letter to the Hon. Prime Minister dated 5 December 83

a copy of which appeared in the VINCENTIAN recently, he certainly could not have guilty of talking nonsense. [as published] Were he competent to accept my challenge, I would have asked him to point out to me specifically the instances where I presented opinion as fact in any of my articles or letters. He evidently knows nothing of our Movement and yet undertakes to criticize it and with such bitterness.

Again, he condemns us saying that we expect the U.S. Government to assist St. Vincent & the Grenadines after we criticize them for supplying the Government with guns to keep the Cubans out. I, personally, would tell President Reagan to his face that he definitely was wrong in giving the OECS islands \$15 million worth of military equipment instead of \$15 million for the improvement of their medical, educational, and electrical services, telephone and road systems, and air communication. A small part of the said \$15 million could have given Bequia its urgently and desperately needed airport and St. Vincent its required and necessary international airport to accommodate the jet airliners. We certainly have no apology to make concerning our position on this question. Arming St. Vincent, Dominica, Barbados, St. Lucia and Grenada to the teeth could not possibly keep the Cubans out if Castro decided to enter them with his armed forces. They would collapse before Cuba's onslaught like ninepins. Their only safety lies in their protection by the United States of America. The gift of \$15 million in armaments, therefore, is calculated to prevent the oppressed, neglected and mistreated people of the said islands from forcibly overthrowing their corrupt Governments who keep themselves in power by detaining and maintaining the extant and shamefully high rate of illiteracy in their respective States, particularly St. Vincent.

Ollivierre accuses the Movement of seeking to obtain secession from St. Vincent, and that we are engaged in securing the people's signatures to support plans for secession. Here again he is guilty either of dishonesty or of a very poor training in and understanding of the English Language. The Movement is definitely not seeking secession from St. Vincent. We are about to demand partnership between St. Vincent and the Grenadines in the fiscal affairs of the Grenadines. We are no longer prepared to tolerate acceptance of the crumbs from our master's table. We are determined to obtain our just and rightful share of the Nation's revenue either by proper appropriation in the country's annual Budget or by our responsibility for the collection and expenditure of the Grenadines' revenue. To illustrate our need, the State's Budget for 1983-1984 was fixed at approx. \$139 1/2 million, but of this only approx. \$2 1/2 million was earmarked for expenditure in and for the Grenadines. The population which entitles the Grenadines to one-tenth of the Budget's proposed expenditure on the State's Ministry Home Affairs (\$5,706,013) Ministry of Education & Youth Affairs (\$1,729,724) Ministry of Trade and Agriculture (\$9,482,823) Ministry of Communications and Works (\$28,055,076), Ministry of Health (\$5,369,510) Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Tourism (\$2,846,076) Public Works Department (\$7,972,200), Post Office (\$1,531,241), Prime Minister's office (\$14,821,628), after the deduction of one-tenth of the total of \$77,514,301 as the Grenadines' share of the said total national expenditure shown in the foregoing services.

[as published] This means that the Grenadines are entitled to the expenditure on them of one-tenth of the balance \$69,762,871. Therefore, the Grenadines should have an annual appropriation of approx. \$6,976,287 for their roads, medical & educational services, agriculture, telephone and postal services, transportation, sport, and development of their tourist trade. But careful estimation indicates an annual expenditure of only approx. \$2 million on the Grenadines which means that the Grenadines have been cheated of approx. 5 million annually. But this figure is far below the true presentation of the facts, because the Grenadines' contribution to the Treasury in revenue annually exceeds by far that of most of the other Districts of St. Vincent combined excluding only that of the Kingstown area so that on a percentage based on contributions to the Treasury, the Grenadines' annual entitlement actually exceeds \$5 million. In the consideration of this matter, Indirect Taxation has to be given special and particular attention. An honest and competent examination of the matter will present us with the revelation that the funds of which the Grenadines were deprived from 1973-1983 could easily have permitted the construction of an airport in Bequia, a modern tourist and medical and business necessity barbarously denied the people of Bequia inflicting a serious decline and recession in their tourist trade, welfare and prosperity. In view of such a critical situation, it is time for the people of the Grenadines to make a bold stand for their rights in a supposedly democratic country a part of whose motto is Justice.

If Mr. Ollivierre feels he is qualified to discuss these matters constructively with us, we would be delighted to have him attend our next meeting. We, however, very much doubt his ability to do so, because, having a copy of his original letter, we know he had to have someone rewrite his letter for him before he sent it in to the VINCENTIAN.

We do admit that we are not qualified to discuss Party Politics, but we are fully qualified and competent to consider and handle communal politics. We would like to advise him to stop his stupidity and refrain from attacking a knowledgeable Movement without facts and competency in his hands.

Cecil D. McIntosh, Bequia,
13th February, 1984.

CSO: 3298/599

WORKINGS OF NEW UNIT TO PROMOTE PRODUCE MARKETING REVIEWED

Kingstown THE VINCENTIAN in English 17 Feb 84 p 3

[Text] By the Information Unit of the Ministry of Trade and Agriculture.

Beginning this month in St. Vincent, a new organization that will attempt to match produce buyers to farmers has begun operations.

Known as the "Marketing Intelligence Unit", this organization will survey prices of various produce on a weekly basis, and will provide farmers with a list of what is selling for how much. The same list will provide consumers with a list of what is available at what price.

Backed by both the Ministry of Trade and Agriculture and the Marketing Corporation, the unit is coordinated by Pete Helgren a Peace Corps Volunteer.

Helgren explained that the unit will do several things:

"Firstly, we're looking to give the farmer the best possible price for his produce. Right now he doesn't plant with any particular market in mind and he's never really sure of what kind of price he's gonna get.

"On the consumer end the unit is going to help by reducing gluts and shortages so that consumers can count on a constant price throughout the year. That way the consumer isn't paying \$2 for tomatoes now and then \$5 in August."

Helgren conducts his surveys by going through groceries and Market Square, writing down prices as he goes. He creates a composite for the week, that can be compared to other weeks.

Some of the produce survey include string beans, cabbage, cucumber and tomato. [as published] The unit's first report, released last Friday-- (Feb. 10) after only the second survey was already hinting at the potential of the unit as a disseminator of marketing information. [as published]

That report, for example, could show that the price of string beans had increased from \$1.75 to \$2 in just one week but that the prices of many other goods dropped slightly.

Cabbage dropped from \$2.17 to \$2.10; cucumbers from \$1.37 to \$1.10; and egg plant from \$1.38 to \$1.

The report was researched enough to claim that tomatoes and sweet peppers are the best buys of the week, and could forecast that prices this week should, "Remain steady to slightly lower, the exception being cucumbers, which were relatively scarce on Thursdays."

The Ministry of Agriculture has agreed to run the report once a week on its "Farmer's Diary" radio program on RSVG 705 at 6:10 a.m. as one means of promoting the unit.

Helgren said there has been a fairly good reaction to him in Market Square, with most people being helpful. But he added some people "are a little suspicious of me going around and collecting prices all morning long."

His presence will be to their advantage, he tells them, because over time his work will be able to help market-keepers find more ready sources of produce at better prices.

Currently the unit is collecting only retail prices, but in the near future it hopes to collect wholesale prices, production quantities and export market demand figures. Helgren hopes all that information will help farmers, traders and consumers with buying and selling fresh produce.

Helgren gives credit for originally proposing the unit to Elizabeth Stevens, a former Peace Corps Volunteer, who worked in the Ministry's Information Unit until last December, when she left to attend college in Costa Rica.

"This will basically bring more order to the market," Helgren predicted.

CSO: 3298/599

BRIEFS

PLANT CLOSING--Kingstown, St. Vincent--An industrial dispute over the firing of a staffer has triggered the closure of a three-year-old American-owned electronics plant in St. Vincent and the sacking of its 136 employees. The company, Pico St. Vincent Limited, announced the closure as the island's labour relations authorities sought to adjudicate in the case in which Louis Glasgow, a shop steward at the plant, alleged she was unfairly dismissed. Glasgow, who had been on suspension for allegedly refusing to obey an order from supervision was eventually dismissed for alleged abuse of a senior on a street outside the factory. The case was heard by labour commissioner Geoffrey Venner at the week-end, but before the hearing was over Pico's general manager Bernard Bailey and engineering manager Kevin Beer, both Americans, shut down operations and left the island. They claimed their lives and those of their families had been threatened by trade union officials and workers. Bernard Hitchcock, president of the company, who flew into St. Vincent to investigate the dispute, made a brief appearance at the hearing, but only to state that his company had already agreed to close operations here. (CANA) [Text] [Bridgetown THE NATION in English 1 Mar 84 p 7]

CSO: 3298/599

ECONOMIC INDICATORS SHOW LIQUIDITY UP, MONEY SUPPLY DOWN

Caracas EL UNIVERSAL in Spanish 29 Feb 84 p 2-7

[Article by Omar Nucete Velandia]

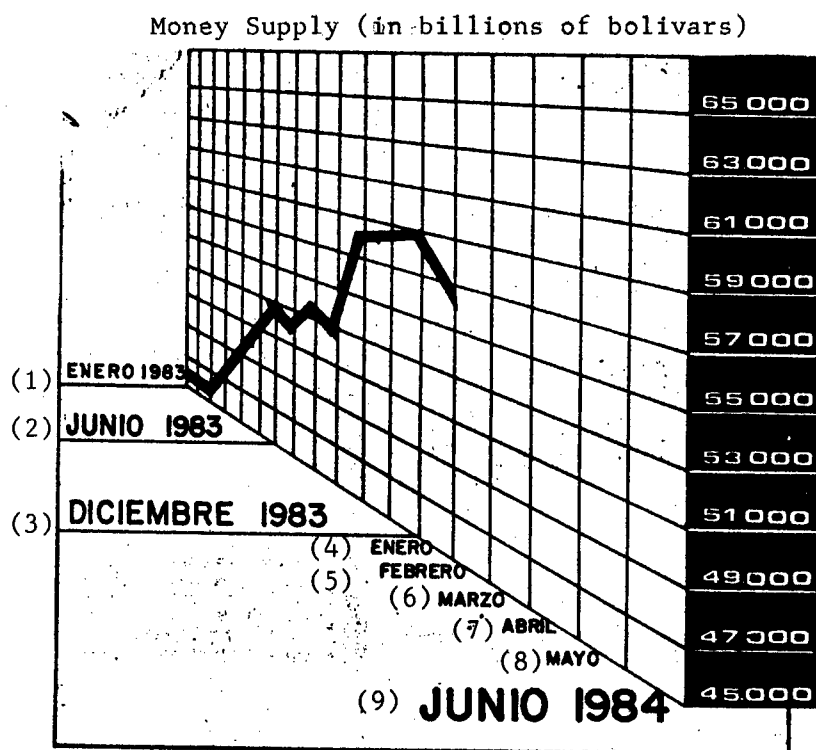
[Text] Although due to seasonal factors the monetary variables have not increased significantly during the first month of the year, present levels of liquidity can be considered satisfactorily high; there is a substantial surplus that should be channeled toward the most efficient productive apparatus in order to emerge from the crisis that has plagued the Venezuelan economy in recent years. Government officials are studying the possibility of establishing tax incentive for businesses that manage to increase productivity. Although it may seem difficult to quantify, this is one way of raising production levels, lowering costs and combatting the scourge of inflation effectively.

The performance of the monetary variables during the month of January was influenced, as noted above, by seasonal factors, and in this regard we can observe that the money supply, which is determined by the amount of coins and currency in the hands of the public, along with demand deposits, fell by 5.04 percent below the previous month's level. Moreover, monetary liquidity, which is determined by savings and time deposits in addition to the money supply, rose by 0.42 percent. This circumstance was due to a substantial increase in time deposits.

As of this edition, for the purpose of comparing percentage variations in these indicators with the figures released by the Central Bank, we have modified our methodology. Thus, like the Central Bank, we shall include savings certificates in time deposits. The differences that can be observed between the overall figures presented by these indicators and those released by the Central Bank are due only to the nature of the sample.

The Central Bank does not take finance companies into account in its calculations, while in these indicators the results obtained month by month from those institutions are reflected. In addition, unlike the Central Bank, we did not take the BTV [expansion unknown] figures into consideration, as we felt that they are not part of liquidity at this time.

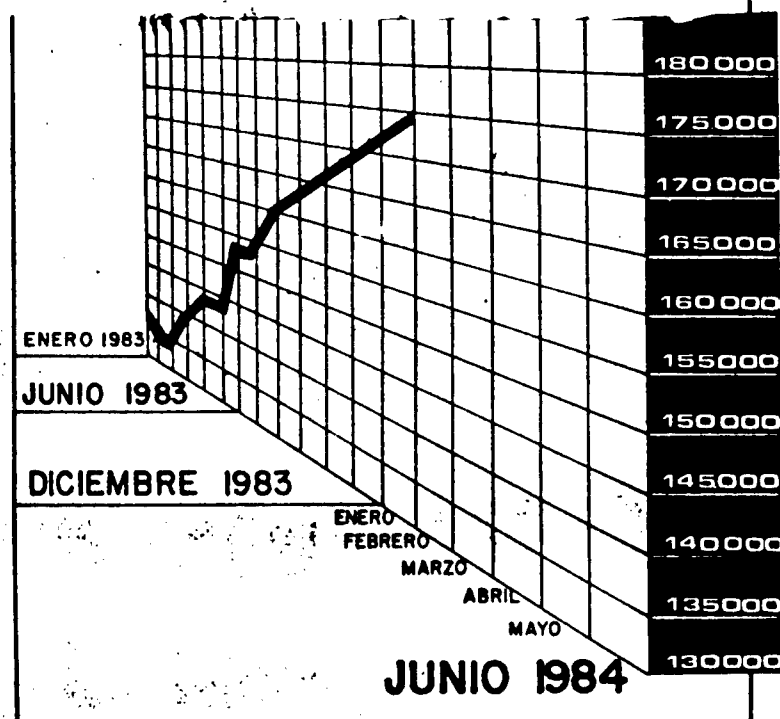
In the extended liquidity figures, in addition to mortgage bonds considered by the Central Bank in its calculations, we considered unsecured bonds and financial bonds held by the public.



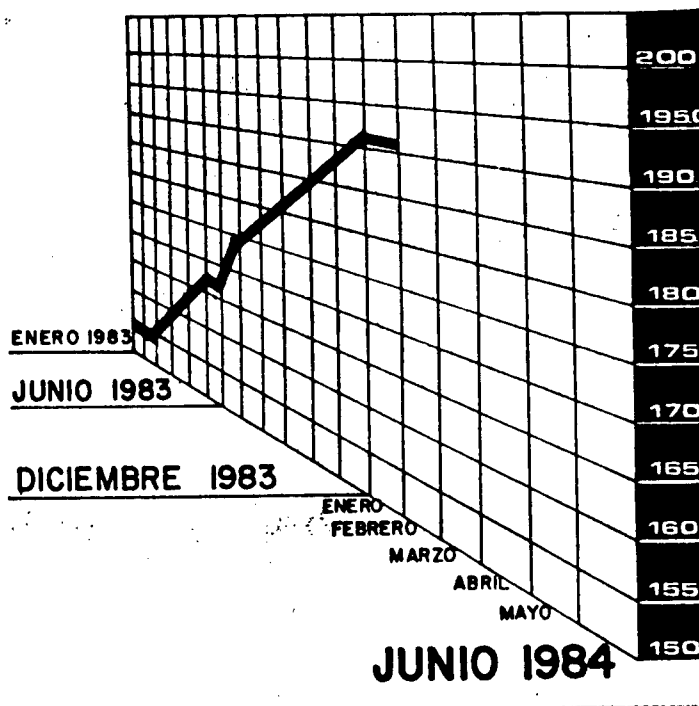
Key:

1. January 1983
2. June 1983
3. December 1983
4. January
5. February
6. March
7. April
8. May
9. June 1984

Monetary Liquidity (billions of bolivars)



Expanded Liquidity (billions of bolivars)



Monetary Liquidity in Thousands of Bolivars

MES (1)	AÑO (2)	MONEDAS BILLETES Y DEPOSITOS A LA VISTA BS. (3)	CIRCULANTE VARIACION BS. (4)	DEPOSITOS AHORROS BS. (5)	DEPOSITOS PLAZO Y CERTIFICADOS DE AHORRO BS. (6)	LIQUIDEZ MONETARIA VARIACION % (7)	LIQUIDEZ MONETARIA VARIACION % (8)	CEDULAS BONOS FI- NANCIEROS Y BONOS QUIROGRAFAS BS. (9)	LIQUIDEZ AMPLIADA BS. (10)
Enero	(11)	45.973.325	-0-	27.245.356	63.984.020	137.202.701	-0-	24.179.661	161.382.362
Febrero	(12)	45.244.781	(1.58)	27.194.566	62.977.272	135.416.619	(1.30)	23.960.856	159.377.475
Marzo	(13)	46.170.438	2.05	27.723.092	65.334.156	139.227.686	2.81	23.396.637	162.624.323
Abril	(14)	49.308.112	6.80	28.324.017	65.257.680	143.489.809	3.06	22.901.025	166.390.834
Mayo	(15)	50.928.609	3.29	28.979.730	64.408.311	144.316.650	0.57	22.309.091	166.625.741
Junio	(16)	53.760.528	5.56	29.223.175	70.325.762	153.309.465	6.23	21.275.305	174.584.770
Julio	(17)	52.390.433	2.55	29.552.360	72.508.836	154.451.629	0.74	20.960.819	175.412.448
Agosto	(18)	53.331.630	1.80	29.980.498	75.006.976	158.319.104	2.50	19.882.208	178.201.312
Sep.	(19)	53.226.970	0.11	30.336.772	77.537.039	161.100.781	1.76	20.360.733	181.461.514
Oct.	(20)	57.187.174	7.44	31.079.440	78.139.869	166.406.483	3.29	19.482.073	185.888.556
Nov.	(21)	58.185.174	1.74	31.728.995	78.153.242	168.067.491	0.99	16.671.092	184.738.503
Dic.	(22)	58.863.589	1.17	33.155.175	80.857.478	172.276.242	2.86	19.061.425	191.937.667

Key:

1. Month
2. Year
3. Coins, Currency, Demand Deposits - Bolivars
4. Change in Money Supply - Bolivars
5. Savings Deposits - Bolivars
6. Time Deposits and Certificates of Deposit - Bolivars
7. Monetary Liquidity
8. Change in Monetary Liquidity - %
9. Mortgage Bonds, Unsecured Bonds and Financial Bonds - Bolivars
10. Expanded Liquidity - Bolivars
11. January
12. February
13. March
14. April
15. May
16. June
17. July
18. August
19. September
20. October
21. November
22. December

8926

CSO: 3348/312

BANDAGRO PRESIDENT ACKNOWLEDGES POSSIBLE BANKRUPTCY

Caracas EL UNIVERSAL in Spanish 8 Mar 84 p 1-14

[Article by Alirio Bolivar]

[Text] The Agricultural-Livestock Development Bank (BANDAGRO) is totally out of capital. The foreign debt amounts to about 3.9 billion bolivars, with a principal of 100 million. The treasury situation is desperate, and the organization is not the most desirable for a specialized financial institution.

Fortunately, the national government has announced that it will assume the foreign debt, and it is hoped that the National Treasury will reimburse the institution 1.2 billion bolivars for the difference in interest rates.

[Question] Can it be said that the bank is bankrupt?

[Answer] Yes, we must admit it. The staff is very demoralized, and that is also a serious problem because human resources are very important. Moreover, the institution is far below the assets of its owners, about 55 percent. The farmers should feel that the bank is their own, because if its doors close, they will be hurt the most.

The questions posed by this reporter were answered by Dr Fanny Bello, the economist who heads BANDAGRO. Yesterday she attended an informational meeting of the Chamber of Deputies Committee on Agriculture and Agrarian Policy, which is studying the problems facing the nation's agriculture sector in order to seek solutions.

Despite the critical situation, Dr Fanny Bello believes that the bank can be saved if sound management practices are implemented and operational expenses are reduced. But what is more, the farmers should cooperate; they should contribute to the credit and financial recovery of the bank, because otherwise the agricultural year could be lost, and that would be a disaster, especially during this economic crisis.

Fanny Bello has high hopes for the bank's recovery, stating that it can be brought back to health and returned to the state. That is what the farmers are for, and they are serious, honorable, humble and hard-working people.

She announced that the decree that will regulate agricultural refinancing is now ready, but at the same time she sounded a warning: "All those who took out loans and abandoned their farms, who deliberately went bankrupt to avoid paying, or those who allowed a security to lapse, should stay away from the bank. Those deadbeats, who are responsible for the sector's bad reputation, who never dirtied their hands working the land, should go directly to the Attorney General's Office and the General Controller's Office of the Republic to make statements when they are called."

She warns those farmers who are interested in settling their affairs with the bank and are sued by private law firms that they should demand to see documentation authorizing such legal action, and should inform the BANDAGRO offices.

Some priorities have been established for granting credit. The first choice will be given to those farmers who are solvent with the bank; second choice will go to farmers who are in default but can prove that they fall under Decree 2,568, which covers calamities; those who have had problems collecting from the Agricultural Marketing Corporation; next those who have had problems collecting on their harvest (in the case of sugarcane); those who have met their investment plan and do not have enough capital at this time to generate income; and finally, those who received loans for the first time and had a bad experience, but who have a favorable technical report.

The loan committees will be made up of three principal farmers, three alternates and the manager of each bank branch. Dr Bello has asked the associations to submit names for these committees.

In addition, BANDAGRO is holding talks with agroindustry, with the producers of certified seeds, and with Palmaven, so that they can obtain purchase orders that the institution will issue to farmers to ensure that they do not lose the agricultural year while waiting for money to come in to cover the winter and summer seasons. The vegetable industry has priority, given its emergency situation.

Dr Fanny Bello admitted that the bank's checking account service is bad, but stated that efforts are being made to improve it. She therefore asked that farmers open an account, even if only for 1,000 bolivars, so that the bank can obtain funds. This will contribute to the bank's recovery.

At present BANDAGRO is carrying out a study on the purchase of equipment and other business activities in which the institution was involved and which incurred great losses. In addition, any bank officials who granted loans irresponsibly will be penalized.

This is the picture painted by Dr Fanny Bello for members of the Chamber of Deputies Agriculture and Agrarian Policy Committee, and for the press. She expressed confidence at all times in genuine farmers and in the industrialists and businessmen who have devoted their lives to farming, which they have done responsibly. They will help the bank recover (which is feasible), for the good of the country.

The president of BANDAGRO concluded by stating that she will meet with all the farmers' associations in the country to request their aid in this kind of co-management, because they are the primary resource in the recovery of an institution that is indispensable for the development of our agriculture.

MEP SECRETARY GENERAL ON PARTY IDEOLOGY, OTHER ISSUES

Caracas BOHEMIA in Spanish 20-26 Feb 84 pp 68-73

[Interview with Jesus Angel Paz Galarrraga, secretary general of the People's Electoral Movement (MEP), by Jesus Seguias; date and place not given]

[Text] The secretary general of the MEP reaffirms that his party is leftist and explains the reasons for all of its defeats since its founding. He also voices optimism about the future of the Left and reveals that he will not serve as secretary general for another term.

[Question] How do you assess the MEP's performance at the 4 December elections, taking into consideration that it was one of the few parties whose vote total increased a bit in relative terms?

[Answer] We did get 12,000 more votes, but our percentage was not up, so we have to acknowledge that we made no headway. Yet we do see something positive in this, because over the previous 5 years and especially over the past 2, the MEP has had some internal problems. The first faction that sprang up on us was called CIMA; it had some national party leaders and eventually backed COPEI [Social Christian Party]. Then, towards the end, a faction that called itself Marxist-Leninist was formed; it included very competent leaders, such as Salom Mesa, who had been the MEP presidential nominee for the primary elections that the Left had scheduled. The other objective fact that makes our lack of progress less deplorable, if not acceptable (because it never is) is that the MEP trend in previous elections had been quite sharply downward. In 1973 and 1978, in fact, we were down around 30 and 40 percent. To put it in medical terms, recalling my former profession, we managed to stop the hemorrhaging, and we feel that we are going to expand from this point on.

The MEP Hemorrhage

[Question] Why do you think you were able to stop the hemorrhaging?

[Answer] Well, I think that after the two internal developments that I mentioned, the party is more ideologically homogeneous and, therefore, its actions are more consistent...

[Question] Do you think that the Venezuelan people make those sorts of ideological distinctions when they go to vote? Do you think that the country really cares whether someone is a democratic socialist or a Marxist-Leninist socialist or even a Social Democrat or a Christian Democrat?

[Answer] The majority do not. Our people do not because their political and ideological sense is not developed enough. What I was saying (and perhaps I didn't explain myself clearly) is that achieving greater internal homogeneity enabled us to be more consistent in our actions. The other factor that unquestionably came into play is that MEP has been one of the leftwing parties that have been the most steadfast and consistent from the standpoint of the policy of unity. Finally, the candidate that the MEP, as well as other organizations, ran, Dr Jose Vicente Rangel, had a great many qualities that made him attractive to a more or less significant percentage of the country's progressive and revolutionary electorate.

The Path to Political Death?

[Question] It's odd but when the MEP split from Democratic Action (AD), it got more than 600,000 votes; this was in 1968...

[Answer] On the small ballots we got 700,000 votes.

[Question] ...and today the MEP garners about 120,000 votes...

[Answer] ...129,000 votes.

[Question] ...129,000 votes, which in relative and absolute terms represents quite a sharp drop. When the MEP abandoned its Social Democratic stands (to utilize the language that is in vogue), radicalized its platform, took some of the paths charted by international Marxism-Leninism and began using more radical language, when all of this happened, there was a stampede of MEP members over to AD, and your party began falling apart. After these 16 years, which is enough time for a political party, at least enough time for an assessment, do you think that those radical stands helped the MEP in its political expansion?

[Answer] Well, in the first place, when the MEP was formed, it was a fundamentally emotional movement in the wake of the coup d'etat that they staged against Luis Beltran Prieto in AD. Secondly, we should remember that today's leftwing parties were involved in the armed struggle in 1968: the MAS [Movement Toward Socialism], MIR [Movement of the Revolutionary Left], the Communist Party, the Socialist League. At that juncture, then, candidate Prieto and the MEP represented in a way almost the entire Left. It stood to reason that as the party

underwent an ideological settling out and continued on the Social Democratic path toward socialism, it would obviously shrink. But that was a risk that we ran deliberately, because otherwise the most logical thing for those of who held very important positions in AD to do was to stick with AD. Afterwards, however, this type of struggle, which is long and trying, which means opposing very powerful interests and which means seeing certain doors that used to be open closed, becomes vanguard work in a way. But the majorities that have brought about social change throughout the world began as minorities. In light of these figures and from what I said in my first answer, I would say that as a party the MEP now has a foundation on which it is going to begin growing.

Switching Roles

[Question] Your explanation sounds odd because some people on the Left are going back to the positions that the MEP used to support. While the MEP is growing more radical, others are taking the former MEP paths.

[Answer] The people who are doing that are making a historical mistake, because in our opinion, and we said so in an article, it is not that the people of Venezuela are rejecting the Left's message; it is just that the people of Venezuela are not voting in large numbers for a badly divided Left engaged in petty squabbles and with a strong dose of individualism and messianism. That kind of Left does not inspire confidence. For this reason, the first thing that the Left has to do is strive to unite. This does not mean that we cannot and should not look beyond the Left. Our doors have to be open to progressive sectors in the country, sectors that are not socialist, that do not define themselves as leftist. But I cannot understand (and this is the historic mistake) why each tiny leftwing party or each individual leader would want to do this work alone, in isolation, instead of doing it together. The historic mistake is to try to fill spaces that are already taken by other political forces, to try to look like AD...In that case, people vote for the known quantity, AD.

War on the Privileged Few

[Question] But Doctor, what the AD people are criticizing is your governmental approach to solving problems, not your Social Democratic stands. When people vote for COPEI instead of AD, they are not opting for a Social Christian approach; they are opting for an approach that offers them solutions to their immediate, specific problems. So I think that the radicalization of the Left's message (and this is what we are seeing in Venezuelan politics) does have a negative impact. In other words, I would think that Venezuelans would have misgivings about a Marxist-Leninist message being proclaimed in the street, about the dictatorship of the proletariat and about people who say that they would give their lives for the Soviet Union and who have some doubts about whom they would back in a confrontation between the Soviet Union and Venezuela.

[Answer] Well, Mr Seguias, my comment on your comment is that we are not preaching in a radical tone.

[Question] I was talking about the substance of your message, not just the tone.

[Answer] The tone and the message can speak of real change without using words that frighten people, but they obviously do adversely affect the interests of that five percent of privileged people in the country. For example, when the time comes for proposals about how to raise new revenues to meet the country's needs, once government has been straightened out, the difference between us and AD or COPEI is that we will say that the new revenues ought to come from inside the country, from excess profits, from a capital tax. Now then, if this is radical, then in that case we are radicals. But it's a long way from this to your comment, which I assume you based on your interview with my good friend Jesus Faria, the secretary general of the Communist Party. Not all of the Left says that it is Marxist-Leninist and that the Soviet Union comes first. As far as the MEP in particular is concerned, it has not declared itself Marxist-Leninist, but it does say that the interests of the privileged five percent in Venezuela have to be affected.

Deception?

[Question] But it so happens that the MEP has, nonetheless, joined with these Marxist-Leninist groups to offer the country a radical political program...

[Answer] But what the alliance says is down in writing. I would like to avail myself of your question to point out that the lack of unity on the Left is not due to any absence of documents in which we have noted and analyzed our differences so that we can proceed on the basis of the common ground we have. For example, when we discussed the possibility of an alliance with the MAS and the MIR, we approved a document entitled "Common Platform of the Leftwing Coordinating Commission." And when we discussed Rangel's candidacy in the Alliance for the Unity of the People, which neither the MAS nor the MIR belonged to, we discussed the platform, that is to say, what we were offering the Venezuelan people. I maintain that 95 percent of the Venezuelan people could endorse these two documents without any problem, because they offer answers to our present economic and social situation. They do not tell the people that we are going to form a socialist government, nor are the measures advocated to deal with this situation socialist. Now then, the Communist Party belongs to this alliance; Communist parties join such alliances all over or almost all over the world. What we have to look into is...

[Question] Pardon me, but the fact is that not only does the Communist Party belong to the alliance, but all of the members of the alliance,

except the MEP and New Alternative, have openly declared themselves Marxist-Leninist or at least espouse Marxist thinking. So the Venezuelan people perceive them as they are, not as you would like to portray them in a platform and on a few pieces of paper. The people go by what they do, what their specific political programs say and, moreover, what the personal conduct of leftwing leaders has been during recent elections.

[Answer] This brings me to an explanation of the members of the alliance, because you are talking exclusively about the parties that have in theory declared themselves Marxist-Leninist. Let's leave out the word Leninism for the moment and talk about Marxism, because I'm going to pinpoint the position of the MEP. We cannot conceive of any socialist party that does not have a Marxist foundation, just as we cannot conceive of any party with a Marxist foundation that regards it as dogma. Now then, the broad alliance that supported Jose Vicente Rangel included not only the Communist Party and the Socialist League but also New Alternative, which has not declared itself Marxist-Leninist; its spectrum was, in fact, too wide. His candidacy was also backed by many independent figures, whom I must mention here so that you can see the broad ideological spectrum they represent: Rafael Pizani, Francisco Tamayo the scientist, the criminal lawyer Elio Gomez Grillo and a great many independent groups that have never declared themselves Marxists. I also wanted to say, however, that as your question noted, the ideological definitions of some but not all of the components of the alliance might carry some weight. My response to that fear would be as follows: There are countries in Latin America as well as in Europe in which the communists have come to power, despite which the government's program is not communist, much less a program aligned with the Soviet Union. Under Siles Zuazo in Bolivia, the Communist Party is part of the government, and under Mitterrand in France, the Communist Party is in government. There are objectively no grounds for the fear of communist policies.

Optimism

[Question] The situation must undoubtedly be very complex for the MEP at the moment, because practically the entire Left has entered a crisis period, with some of its major leaders having resigned. The MEP itself experienced such a crisis before the elections. So today the Left is at the most critical juncture in its entire history. How does the MEP view the future of the Left, which is starting to fall apart on all sides?

[Answer] I think that this is a temporary phenomenon and that the Left will soon be reconciled here in the country. What I have seen recently have been the developments in the MAS, and as far as New Alternative is concerned, the only thing that I have read about is Americo Martin's resignation. But I haven't seen anything of this sort in the MIR or the Communist Party or the MEP.

The Post of Secretary General

[Question] Moises Moleiro just confirmed to us in an interview that he wants to resign as secretary general of the MIR and that he thinks that the post should rotate among all the leaders of the party and that it should be regarded neither as a life post nor as the all-powerful body within political parties, as it has traditionally been in Venezuela. You are the secretary general of the MEP and you, along with other leaders, have run the party during its 16-year existence. Under your leadership, the MEP has fallen apart politically and organizationally, and its vote totals and national influence have declined significantly. Under your leadership, the MEP has declined from the country's number one labor force to a regrettable status. Under your leadership, the MEP, which used to be the number one student force in the nation, practically no longer exists in Venezuelan educational centers. In other words, from your personal standpoint as a leader, what do you think should be done about the MEP's political leadership and about yourself in particular?

[Answer] I am a very calm man and I am going to answer all of your questions very cordially. But I want to get back to what I initially planned to tell you, and then I will respond to the personal political question, which is perfectly valid however, that you posed to me. When you interrupted me, we were talking about how I connected the Left with the series of problems or crises that have arisen in the various organizations, and then you jumped from there to the resignation of the secretaries general. I want to make this point first. There is a very deep social and economic crisis in Venezuela, and it was not overcome by Luis Herrera, nor is it going to be overcome by my good friend and fellow pediatrician Jaime Lusinchi with his Social Pact, because the Social Pact is an alliance between the privileged 5 percent and the Venezuelan masses, the other 95 percent. As the crisis deepens in Venezuela, there will develop a political space, to use a trendy word. And once some leftist sectors wake up from their daydreams and realize that there is only one path and that the path is the unity of the Left as the hub of the people's unity, the Left will have a historic role to play in that space. Now I'll get to the secretaries general. I think that I have to correct what you said. The MEP was the number two, not the number one labor force and the number two student movement.

[Question] When Gonzalez Navarro was president of the CTV [Confederation of Venezuelan Workers], he belonged to the MEP.

[Answer] He was a member of the MEP but he was president of the CTV before the split. But at the showdown at the CTV Congress we failed by a few votes to get Gonzalez Navarro reelected. But this little bit of history is not the point. My answer is the same one that I gave at the outset. When it was founded, the MEP was a very powerful movement, but a movement without ideological consistency. Given the

interest that Prieto's candidacy aroused, the MEP was rife with opportunism because people thought that after 1 year of doing battle within the MEP, Miraflores was around the corner. So when we made the decision, which everyone supported, to build a different MEP, the quantitative element gradually dissolved, and we moved into a qualitative stage. I don't understand this rash of resignations by secretaries general. And now I'm going to tell you what I think personally. All of the respect that I have for them notwithstanding, I honestly feel that all of those resignations are for show. Perhaps the only resignation that can be justified is the resignation of the MAS Board of Directors, because it thought and told the country and its cadres that according to the polls it had 800,000 or a million votes and that its candidate was going to get a half million votes. The disparity was so great that the board's illusion constituted a legitimate issue for discussion. But I don't understand, for example, why Julio Escalona resigned from the Socialist League, unless internal matters were involved. The Socialist League even increased its vote total. Nor do I understand why (going by your information, because I haven't heard about it) Moises Moleira is going to resign just because he didn't get many votes. I would say that he didn't do badly, because the MIR split into two factions (the so-called MIR-Americo at that time and the MIR-Moleiro). The MIR by itself, which was the Moleiro faction according to the Supreme Court ruling, won more than 100,000 votes. The impression, therefore, is that the resignation was for show. In my personal case, for many years now, and not just to join the wave of resignations, I have been telling the party's leaders that I wanted to make way for the organization's new generations. This was not possible at the convention that we held 3 years ago, because what we later discovered was a splinter movement was seeking the secretary general's post. Moreover, its candidate, contrary to the preachings of his supposedly Marxist-Leninist faction, was a rightwing diversionist because he really wanted a rapprochement with COPEI, which was in power. Aside from my political conviction about making way for the next generation, for 3 years now I have had a serious personal problem, because I have to devote half of my time to my wife, who suffers from a disease that requires my attention both as a husband and as a physician. Therefore, and this is the news item, I am not going to be in the running for secretary general again at the MEP's next national elections, which will be held late this year. But this has nothing to do with what is happening at the moment.

We Are Marxists

[Question] Do you think that the MEP is evolving by identifying with Marxist stands, which are being questioned today by the very people that began as Marxists and that feel today that Marxism is not consistent with certain realities, or on the contrary could we conclude that the MEP is regressing by taking the paths that its former members have abandoned?

[Answer] Well, we have to determine what Marxist stands we are talking about. I said before that I could not conceive of a Socialist Party without a Marxist foundation as a method of historical analysis, as a source of certain historical concepts, such as the class struggle. We believe in the class struggle. At the same time, however, it is anti-Marxist to regard Marxism as a dogma or as the Bible. It is also a serious mistake not to accept another ideological or historical source in MEP thought. So, the contributions that Venezuelans have made are important, and I am not just going to cite Bolivar's thought, which was a forerunner of anti-imperialism. It is definitely unacceptable not to take into account our national realities and not to bear in mind that the interests of the world's socialist nations could often run counter to the interests of the Venezuelan revolution. But joining other alliances, "pulling a fast one," changing things on the surface so that nothing really changes in the crisis plaguing Venezuela, that is a consequence of the *raison d'etre* of the social struggle. You can understand that those of us who for many years held key posts in AD (with Prieto as president and Paz Galarraga as secretary general for 6 or 7 years) were not going to leave a party that was in power to do the same things from the opposition. It would not have been worthwhile.

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LUSINCHI TO STEP UP CAMPAIGN AGAINST DRUG TRAFFICKING

Caracas EL UNIVERSAL in Spanish 1 Mar 84 p 2-34

[Article by Carlos Romero Faz]

[Text] While drug trafficking gangs become increasingly powerful, with unlimited funds and aircraft that can fly nonstop from Caracas to New York, the Narcotics Division of the PTJ [Judicial Technical Police] has just 26 detectives and 4 patrol units.

This observation was made by Justice Minister Jose Manzo Gonzalez at the conclusion of a meeting with President Jaime Lusinchi that was also attended by Interior Relations Minister Octavio Lepage and the directors of the DISIP [Directorate of Intelligence and Prevention Services] and PTJ, Hector Aponte Lopez and Leopoldo Maggi, respectively.

Reporters mentioned to Minister Manzo Gonzalez that even though harsh blows have been dealt to drug trafficking gangs, the ringleaders of these bands have not yet been captured.

"This is an extremely powerful organization," the minister said, "with unlimited funds, partly from the sale of the drugs that we have confiscated, and with aircraft costing \$2 million each and able to fly nonstop from here to new York. Much of the success that we can have in combating this scourge depends on the resources of the agencies in charge of pursuing the gangs and on the secrecy of the investigations."

"In any event," he added, "I am pleased to report that the president of the republic has decided to continue the intensive investigations and to arrest and bring to trial the culprits, whatever their political, economic and social status. We will not be lenient at all in this regard, because what is involved is defending not only the health of Venezuela and its young people but also our national sovereignty "

Do the agencies in charge of combating this crime have enough funding?

"I shouldn't say so, but I'm going to: The PTJ's Narcotics Division has 26 agents and 4 vehicles; in the 1970's it had 120 agents. So we have the political paradox that as drug trafficking and use has

increased, the funding for the division and for the PTJ has declined. However, the president has decided to beef up these agencies so that they are more effective in the battle against drugs."

A Grave Threat

Interior Minister Octavio Lepage commented that drug trafficking is perhaps the gravest threat hanging over the country.

When asked about the insufficient funding for police agencies, he replied:

"In 1983, 18 million bolivars was earmarked for the PTJ to combat drugs. This year's budget, drafted by the previous administration, calls for just 1.2 or 1.5 million bolivars."

The interior minister went on to mention that Minister Manzo Gonzalez jokingly said about this situation that the budgeted funds were equivalent to the price of 3 kilograms of cocaine.

"It is grotesque," he remarked, "that there is so little funding to tackle a problem of such dimensions. We have to somehow find the money and keep on going."

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JAIME LUSINCHI'S HONEYMOON REPORTEDLY OVER

Caracas BOHEMIA in Spanish 5-11 Mar 84 p 20

[Article by Sanín: "Short Honeymoon"]

[Text] The short honeymoon of Jaime Lusinchi's government has waned and died under the weight of the package of measures. Now the struggle inherent in the realities of power is really beginning. The euphoria and joy have ended. This has always happened to the new governments in Venezuela, whose popularity has been undermined and deteriorated, and has ended because of a categorical, inexorable imperative.

One need only review, carefully read and analyze in depth the views expressed regarding the recent measures, to learn that, from a political standpoint, the AD [Democratic Action] party has lost its first battle upon returning to power. On the side of the Lusinchi government and its economic measures are the large business owners of FEDECAMARAS [Venezuelan Federation of Associations and Chambers of Commerce and Industry], the importing merchants who will still receive dollars at 4.30, the AD leaders, Jovito Villalba and a very small number of CTV [Confederation of Venezuelan Workers] leaders.

Opposing the Lusinchi government and the measures are all the opposition parties (COPEI [Social Christian Party], MAS [Movement Toward Socialism], MEP [People's Electoral Movement], PC [Communist Party], MIR [Movement of the Revolutionary Left], Socialist League, OPINA [National Opinion Party], etc.) But they are also opposed by most of the labor leaders from CTV, CODESA [Committee of Autonomous Unions] and CUTV [United Central Organization of Venezuelan Workers], the rank and file unions of the workers' confederations, the taxi drivers and transportation workers as a whole, housewives and the entire middle class in general.

At the same time, all the university professors and prestigious economists, such as Maza Zavala, Malave Mata, Domingo Alberto Rangel, etc., have expressed reservations and criticism concerning those measures, because they regard them as detrimental to the Venezuelan population.

The honeymoon has ended. Within a few months, let's say in July of this year, when a poll is taken, we shall observe how the government's credibility and the president's prestige have declined. Within 2 years, the terms will have been

reversed: AD will again be an unpopular, minority party. This shows that the vote on 4 December was based on a cyclical, circumstantial process. This nation is not AD-affiliated, but rather naive and credulous, and in the habit of succumbing to the dirty tricks of the AD members, who are masters of the art of winning elections so as later to govern poorly.

The honeymoon has ended and now the unfortunate, mediocre treadmill of the AD bureaucracy will start, as has happened under the same party's four governments. The realities have ended up stifling the hopes and dreams of change. Lusinchi had an opportunity to sponsor a real change from the government, but we are observing AD, like all the Social Democratic groups, continuing to be completely bound to the system of development-oriented populism, with partners and allies among the importing grande bourgeoisie.

Lusinchi has ordered vague, stop-gap, touching-up measures to partially cure a serious ailment. It is more or less the same policy as that of the previous government with regard to the economy, the sole difference being that we are not involved in an election campaign, with the addition of accommodation to the dictates of the International Monetary Fund. While COPEI or Luis Herrera sinned by tactical omission, because it was difficult to order measures at an election time, AD and Lusinchi have lost the splendid opportunity afforded by the start of a constitutional term, and have succumbed to the same mistakes as those of the previous regime, with an additional feature: Neither Herrera nor COPEI went along with the business-owning class, as AD and Lusinchi have done now.

The honeymoon has ended and now inflation is really beginning, with price increases of 50 percent for nearly all products in the categories of items and services. Unemployment will rise, because that government aspiration for a 10 percent increment in personnel in the enterprises will not have any implementation. And all that will be left for the workers will be that meager bonus of 100 bolivares for transportation, which a laughable minority of the working class will receive.

When a genuine program of substantial reforms was expected in the structures of the state and the administration, the AD government, as always, has resorted to hot or lukewarm cloths that will only raise the patient's temperature. Lusinchi has not announced an overall policy, but rather a partial, empirical remedy, in an attempt to prolong the honeymoon of popularity. The deterioration will be sooner and more intensive than we imagined, for attaining the means for a better living. Of course, the municipal entities will gain, with dollars at 4.30, but we shall see in 1988...

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END