

the Congress, peasant spokesmen attacked the legal reasoning behind the judge's ruling, which depended on an extreme interpretation of controversial injunction provisions of the Mexican Constitution. Peasant leaders virtually unanimously declared: "The lands will never be handed back." Relying on the strength of this opposition, Senator Jorge Cruikshank of the Popular Socialist Party broke away from previous uncritical support for Lopez to warn the president that reneging on Echeverria's decree would mean "civil war."

However, on the evening of Dec. 16 López Portillo's Agrarian Reform Minister Jorge Rojo Lugo, temporarily averted this danger by declaring categorically that "there is no danger that the decree by ex-President Echeverria will be revoked...the decree is within the law." Rojo Lugo made the statement following a meeting between López Portillo and the Pacto de Ocampo peasant confederation leaders.

Although centrist López Portillo has thus slightly relieved the environment of growing confrontation which existed throughout the week, it is evident that he is still attempting to conciliate the right-wing forces. A newspaper on the day following the Agrarian Minister's statements reported that the latifundists have received over 100 million pesos in payment for land which Echeverria had expropriated without compensation. Since the Dec. 16 statements by Rojo Lugo the right wing has continued its attacks on ex-President Echeverria's land distribution decree and has issued threats of economic sabotage.

Behind the right wing's drive for confrontation with the

peasant sector is their profound unease over being able to impose the levels of austerity which international monetary bodies are demanding.

Those who are more optimistic about imposing Chile-level austerity are insisting that the foreign debt be paid no matter what. Miguel Angel Conchello of the Monterrey-financed National Action Party wrote a national column Dec. 16 explicitly upholding the policies of Hjalmar Schacht, Hitler's finance minister as the model for Mexico today.

Natural Resources Minister Andres Oteiza declared Dec. 14 that Mexico will "continue to pay its debts, as always." But a wire from the Cuban press service Prensa Latina the next day confirmed that López has been meeting with high finance and Foreign Ministry officials to coordinate efforts to reschedule part of the enormous \$28 billion foreign debt. It is widely rumored that rescheduling is already the case for certain private sector firms such as the steel giant Fundidora Monterrey.

To date, however, there has been unity within government planning circles that exports must be encouraged at all costs to build up foreign exchange. The head of the showcase steelworks from the Echeverria period, Las Truchas, has declared that all of the mill's output will be for export. The new austerity budget announced Dec. 15 includes substantial increases in oil investment, in order to rapidly increase oil exports. The U.S. has shown keen interest in using Mexican oil as a wedge to break open the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

Manley Wins Presidential Election in Jamaica

Exclusive to NSIPS

Dec. 16 (NSIPS) — Jamaican Prime Minister Michael Manley won reelection as Prime Minister today. Manley, who has been a proponent of the New International Economic Order, won over 58 per cent of the unexpectedly high voter turnout. With 80 per cent of the vote counted Manley's People's National Party (PNP) had received 395,660 votes while the pro-capitalist opposition Jamaican Labour Party (JLP) received 294,967. The PNP is expected to win 48 of the 60 seats in the House of Representatives.

In his first remarks after learning of his landslide electoral victory, Manley described the vote as a "triumph for socialism and for the fight of the underdeveloped nations." "The people have given us their vote of confidence", said Manley, affirming that his government would continue its "third worldist" policies. Afterwards, Manley declared "We wish to be friends with all willing to accept us as we are, on our terms." JLP candidate Seaga, who had devoted the bulk of his campaign to charging that Manley was cultivating political ties with Cuba as a means of "establishing Communism" in Jamaica, conceded defeat with the statement, "I think we must accept it in light of the fact that people had a clearcut choice before them."

Most pre-election day coverage on Jamaica which appeared in the international press was filled with dire warnings of violence which was expected to taint the election results. The warnings, however, proved

unwarranted, as the stringent security conditions imposed by Manley throughout the island guaranteed a peaceful and free election process.

The situation now facing Manley is a difficult one. Economic sabotage directed against the vulnerable Jamaican economy is expected as Manley uses his popular mandate to carry through his pledges of expanded relations with Cuba and with other progressive Caribbean nations. The violent destabilization tactics used by Seaga's JLP goons before and during the election campaign are certain to be stepped up while the attempted assassination of Manley himself becomes an increasingly likely option for those interests threatened by Manley's outspoken role in the Third World fight for debt moratorium and a new world international order.

According to a pre-election article written by Shepherd Bliss, an associate of the Institute for Policy Studies, in the American Maoist newspaper, *The Guardian*, "There has been little thinking about what to do if Manley wins. No one seems to have considered that he may be assassinated." Leaving no doubt as to who the assassins would be, Bliss notes, "Among English-speaking Caribbean countries, Jamaica's direction is the most important for U.S. interest to control...The situation in Jamaica bears considerable importance for the entire Caribbean, as Chile marked a turning point throughout Latin America."