

TORCH

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NOVEMBER 15 - DECEMBER 14, 1980 / 25¢

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ESPAÑOL

From Buffalo to Atlanta: Epidemic of Racist Terror

By FRANK HOPKINS

A wave of brutal, "random" murders has hit the country, with killings reported in at least seven different cities. What ties all the incidents together is racism: Most of the victims were Black, the others were whites in the company of Blacks. All the victims were simply going about their own business when they were attacked.

In Atlanta, Georgia, 15 Black children have been kidnapped and murdered over the past 15 months. Every 21 to 29 days, another child has disappeared. All the victims were taken from their own neighborhoods—some even snatched from their own homes. Eleven bodies

(Continued on page 4)



Buffalo, New York, residents condemn racist killings at October 19 Unity Day rally.

Elections '80: A Move to the Right?

NOVEMBER 11—As Election Day drew nearer, we must admit that our feeling was largely one of relief. Soon all the election hullabaloo would be over—the tactical switching of positions, the empty promises, the never-ending images of grinning candidates.

But the actual results of the November 4 elections cannot be dismissed so lightly. In particular, many people seem frightened at the prospect of a Reagan administration and the right-wing policies Reagan promises to implement. We feel it necessary, therefore, to address the questions people are asking about what the Republican sweep on November 4 indicates, and what we can expect under a Reagan administration.

1. Hasn't the country moved sharply to the right?

Looked at simply from the point of view of who won, the answer seems to be yes. And certainly the ruling class, as well as sections of the middle class, have moved considerably to the right. But we don't believe that most people in the U.S. have become right wing.

Only 52.3 percent of all eligible voters went to the polls on November 4. We can assume that the people who

didn't vote—almost half the voting-age population—have not particularly moved to the right, since there was a viable right-wing candidate to vote for in Reagan. All told, Reagan received the votes of only 27 percent of eligible voters—hardly an overwhelming mandate for hardline right-wing policies.

Moreover, polls show that many working people who voted for Reagan did so as a vote against Carter (particularly the decline in the economy under his administration) rather than for Reagan and his long-standing far-right program. This too does not signal a big move to the right.

The ruling class, on the other hand, has made a marked shift to the right. As we have discussed in previous issues, this flows from the fact that their system is in for a deep crisis. Following the Great Depression of the 1930s and World War II, the capitalist class employed a "liberal" strategy for stabilizing capitalist rule—particularly a massive increase in the role of the state (the government) in the economy—known as Keynesianism.

This strategy did play a role in creating an era of capitalist stability and prosperity in the U.S. But it did so only by ignoring some old problems,

while creating new ones—in particular the enormous growth of government, corporate and private debt, which, coupled with the decay of industrial infrastructure, has been the major cause of permanent inflation.

With the beginnings of the present crisis, the ruling class has looked for—in the jargon of this election campaign—"new ideas." They are turning away from the liberal strategies and replacing them with more conservative ones. Behind this turn is a desire for a freer hand to increase the rate of exploitation of the working class to boost their declining profits.

The political troops for the capitalists' intensified drive for profits have been sections of the middle class, particularly whites, who have also turned to the right. They feel cheated; they were brought up on the "American Dream," which promised that anybody could "make it" if they simply worked hard enough. Economically atomized, they now feel powerless to fight the effects of rising inflation and high unemployment. Already open to racist ideas or racist themselves, many have come to believe that the problem is that people who are more

(Continued on page 17)

The Revolutionary Socialist League Needs Your Help!

On November 1, the RSL launched a drive to raise \$12,500 by January 15, 1981. To date, we have raised \$6,728, slightly more than half of our goal. Many of the initial contributions to the fund drive have come from our own members, putting us well ahead of schedule. But to reach our goal, we now need the support of Torch/La Antorcha readers.

These are both lean and challenging times for the revolutionary left. Well-financed campaigns are underway against unionization, affirmative action, desegregation, abortion rights, lesbian and gay

rights, passage of the ERA, etc. Incidents of racist violence occur almost daily in Buffalo, Atlanta, Chicago, Detroit, Boston and elsewhere. Meanwhile, the economy continues its downhill slide. Tens of thousands of people have been thrown out of work, prices climb, the cities rot and the quality of life grows worse.

We in the RSL believe that it is more important than ever to stand firm in our efforts to build the core of a revolutionary socialist workers' party. At a time when many are despairing of the vision of a

new socialist world of freedom and liberation, we think it is essential to tell the truth—that socialist revolution is the only alternative to fascism and war.

To reach our goal of \$12,500, we need the help of the many Torch/La Antorcha readers who have contributed generously to our drives in the past, as well as that of the new friends we have made since our last drive. Please make check or money order payable to Torch/La Antorcha or Rod Miller and send to: RSL, PO Box 1288, GPO, New York, NY 10116.

**our
readers
write...**

Send letters to:

TORCH, PO Box 1288
New York, NY 10116

More on 'El Grito de Dolores'

Dear Torch/La Antorcha:

I am writing about the article in the September 15-October 14, 1980, issue of the Torch/La Antorcha on the "Grito de Dolores." I believe the article contains some inaccuracies about the Mexican Revolution, particularly about the role of Father Hidalgo and Captain Allende.

Like many people of the time Hidalgo was a radical, but middle class, revolutionary. He wanted to overthrow the yoke of reactionary Spanish colonialism, replacing it with an enlightened bourgeois regime. He was willing to use the masses and was sympathetic to them, but at the same time feared a society run by the working and peasant masses.

Within six weeks after the Grito de Dolores, Hidalgo's forces had almost conquered all of Mexico. The sheer numbers of Hidalgo's poorly trained and poorly armed troops overwhelmed the professional Spanish forces, although with great sacrifice.

By the end of October, Hidalgo's forces, numbering 100,000, were on the outskirts of Mexico City. They could have easily captured it and ended the War of Independence. But, as one historian, Michael Meyer, put it, Hidalgo "was uneasy about turning his mob [sic] loose on Mexico City—they would have devastated the capital." By putting the interests of the middle class before the masses,

defend lesbian and gay rights. The CPUSA has for years refused to take up this struggle.

We would further suggest that Roe's faith in the First Amendment and the Bill of Rights is far more confused than our headline. We might remind the editor of *Sanity Now* that the framers of the Bill of Rights looked on most Black people as property and denied women the right to vote!

he ended up betraying the revolution. The war dragged on for years.

Later on, Allende (now in charge) had captured several ruling class political and military leaders. To show that the revolution did not oppose or threaten the ruling elite of Mexico, Allende released these leaders to the local ruling class in Monclova, Coahuila. These leaders were then able to set up an ambush resulting in the capture of both Allende and Hidalgo, decisively ending the first part of the War for Independence with the defeat of the revolution.

The article in the *Torch/La Antorcha* gives the impression that the superior military training of the Spanish army caused the defeat of the revolution. As recent events in Iran and Nicaragua have shown, the masses can overcome these obstacles. No.

The defeat of the revolution was a direct result of the betrayals of Hidalgo and Allende due to their bourgeois (even if radical) outlook.

The article ends by stating that "after eight years of fighting, the Mexican people won their independence from Spain." While it is certainly true that Mexico became independent of Spain in 1820, this was hardly a victory won by or for the Mexican people. After repressing the masses, the Spanish and Creole ruling class were perfectly content to remain a colony of Spain. However, in 1820 a revolt in Spain forced the Spanish King Ferdinand to accept a liberal constitution. Rather than submit to a liberal government in Spain, the reactionary Mexican ruling class declared independence, setting up an empire in Mexico.

Comradely,
Joe Galanti
Chicago

Sanity Now?

Torch editors:

In your August/September issue appears the headline "We Must Defend the Rights of Everyone" to the letter from Reggie [Reginald—Ed.] Frank of Soledad. No qualifications. Are you and the writer supporting the right of free speech for nazis and KKKs? In light of their record, we hold that scum in contempt, entitled to no rights whatever that progressive people should feel obliged to respect. The *Progressive* lost many supporters when it came out in favor of free speech for nazis on the spurious ground that the evils of their crooked-cross philosophy can be exposed in "the free market of ideas," ignoring the fact that there is no such "free market"—it is monopoly-controlled by the class

enemy and its venal mass media. So also did ACLU whose narrow petty-bourgeois minds are unable to expand and swing with the revolutionary times in which we live.

By the unwise choice of that headline, you contributed further to Brother Frank's confusion and also to that of our readers. A better one would be "In Revolutionary Words But Not In Deeds."

A reading of the historical writings of the framers of the First Amendment prove that they never dreamed it would be the cover for criminal deeds such as the phony religious cults busily subverting young minds, as well as the nazis/KKKs.

Magna est Veritas!
V.V. Roe
Editor & Publisher
Sanity Now

Editor's reply—We are sorry if the editor of *Sanity Now* and any other readers were confused by our headline. As regular readers of the *Torch/La Antorcha* are aware, the RSL gives no support whatsoever to the right of Klan or Nazi groups to spread their racist filth and terror.

We suspect that something else is going on here, however. According to Roe, our choice of headline "contributed further to Brother Frank's confusion..." What confusion is he referring to?

Brother Frank wrote that when he began reading the *Torch*, he asked himself: "Why is the League so interested in defending the rights

of gay people?" He went on to explain that he now understands that "in order to get working class and oppressed people ready for revolution you have to stress and defend the rights of everyone and gays are a great part of the oppressed masses." The headline came from this phrase in Frank's letter, and clearly referred to defending the rights of all oppressed people.

We don't think that Brother Frank is confused at all. Rather, we suspect that *Sanity Now*, which expresses close agreement with the Communist Party USA, is making a back-handed attempt to attack the view that revolutionaries should fight to

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Detroit Residents Fight Plan by City, GM to Cut Jobs, Destroy Community

By BOB ANDERSON

DETROIT, November 6—The government of this "Motor City" has shown once again whose interests it is there to uphold.

On October 31, the Detroit City Council voted 8-1 in favor of a proposal that would give hundreds of millions of dollars to help General Motors—the third largest corporation in the United States—build a new plant. The result would be that thousands of GM workers would lose their jobs and an entire multi-national, working class neighborhood would be destroyed.

The City Council vote followed an announcement by GM last June that it was closing its Fleetwood and Cadillac plants in the city, threatening to move the entire operation to another state unless the city of Detroit met its demands.

This is the deal: The city will use public money—\$200 million is the current estimate—to prepare a 465 acre site for GM to build a new, highly automated plant on the city's east side. The city will use our tax dollars to buy up hundreds of homes, businesses, many churches and a hospital. They will drive over 3,500 working people from their homes, bulldoze more than 700 acres (including the closed Dodge Main plant) and then give nearly all of it to GM. In addition, the city has agreed to give GM a \$10 million a year tax abatement for 12 years.

Altogether, the city will give over \$320 million (it will end up being much more) to General Motors, hardly an institution that needs charity.

9,000 jobs will be lost

Local politicians have claimed that by supporting the project they have saved jobs. The truth is that the Fleetwood and Cadillac plants, which GM plans to close, employed 15,000 workers before the latest round of layoffs. The new plant will be automated to carry out the same production with at most 6,000 workers. In other words, the city will be giving GM all this money and driving all these people from their homes to "save" 6,000 jobs—and lose 9,000 others.

Working people in the target area have been fighting to stop the project and defend their community. This is an integrated working class neighborhood: approximately 50 percent Black and 50



Above: Chrysler's Dodge Main plant in Hamtramck, closed since last January. Left: Laid-off Chrysler worker. This July GM closed its Fleetwood and Cadillac plants in Detroit. Now the city council is proposing to raze Dodge Main and 3,500 homes to provide GM with a site for a new plant to replace the two they've closed.

percent white. Poles, Blacks, Arabs, Native Americans, Albanians, and others have stood together to oppose the project. The city held a number of public hearings to try and sell the idea but met strong opposition each time. The final hearing took place at Kettering High School on October 14. Even though the school is several miles from the neighborhood, over 1,000 people turned out, the vast majority to show their opposition and disgust for the whole stinking deal.

GM and the city took two hours to present their case, including a slide show with pictures of "old-age" complexes where the many senior citizens from the neighborhood might be forced to live after they are driven from their homes. Using the two or three minutes allotted them, resident after resident got up—including some with more than 50 years in the area—to defy GM and the city. Many said flatly that they would not be moved. Several workers from the Fleetwood plant also attended and told the truth about how many jobs would be lost. Martin Andrews, who has 14 years at Fleetwood, explained that every worker with less than 15 years' seniority would lose his or her job.

The Poletown Neighborhood Council has been at the center of the organized opposition to the project inside the community. Over 100 residents regularly attend the meetings, and the group has worked to unite all races and nationalities in the area. The council has held two demonstrations against the project: one a picket line at GM's

world headquarters, a few blocks from the community, and the other at a local Catholic church where the priest had put out a newsletter supporting the project.

On November 3, the group held its first meeting since the City Council approved the project. About 150 people came out, and—though they were shaken and angered—their spirits are not broken. The city has sent out its first offers to buy their homes, which has stiffened their resolve to fight.

Mary Mitchell, a Black homeowner and mother of 10, told the meeting that the city had offered her \$13,500 for her home. This is what she paid for it six years ago! Since then, she has spent money on improvements. If she accepts the government's offer, she will have only \$3,500 to buy a new home after her mortgage is paid off. Others told of similar rotten offers.

The city has said it will provide up to a maximum of \$15,000 in relocation costs after people get out of their homes, but no one believes what the city says and most people at the meeting were determined to hold out.

Poletown group asks courts to halt project

So far, the main strategy of the Poletown group has been to oppose the project in the courts. On October 31, the group filed a suit against the city, claiming it is illegally using the right of eminent domain, which means the city could condemn the whole project area and evict those people who are refusing to

sell, to benefit GM, a private corporation. The case will be heard over the next few weeks, but the city could begin eminent domain proceedings by mid-December.

At the November 3 meeting, RSL supporters who live in the target area and have been active in the fight urged the Poletown group not to rely on the courts. GM controls the city government, GM and others like it run the whole country, and they can obviously get their way in the courts. We proposed a demonstration to organize our forces and build broader support. We and others are fighting to ensure that not one resident will be forced to move until they find new housing that meets their needs with the costs subsidized by GM and the city. We will have to get better organized to fight for these demands and to stop any evictions attempted by the city. All of this got a good response and the proposed demonstration is supposed to be the first agenda item at the next Poletown meeting.

To build the fight against the GM project, we need to open up the Poletown Neighborhood Council. We should have full discussions at the meetings on the best strategy for fighting GM and the city. If residents and supporters know they can come to the meetings, put forward their ideas on how to fight and that this will lead to concrete actions against the project, then we have the potential to involve many more people at a higher level of activity. We must also organize broader support. The only way to fight GM and the city is with a united working class struggle.

The most obvious alliance is between Fleetwood/Cadillac workers who will lose their jobs and community residents who will lose their homes. Several of the Fleetwood workers who attended the Kettering meeting will be called back from layoff in the next few weeks and will be in a better position to get out the truth about the new plant and organize against it. We should work to unite GM workers, residents and others to build the proposed demonstration. Sit-ins, demonstrations, organizing to stop evictions and other militant tactics will show working people that we can organize to defend ourselves.

Right now, however, it looks like the project is going through. The working class is not organized to wage the kind of battle that is necessary to win these and other demands. The leaders of the trade unions, our most powerful organizations, are just as bad as the politicians. They will not mobilize our forces to fight—in fact, there are reasons to believe that the United Auto Workers International leadership is secretly backing the project. If GM workers and the community residents can get together and fight to save jobs and defend the neighborhood, this will be an important step toward building the united working class struggle we so desperately need.

Working people treated like animals

In Poletown, people who worked all their lives to make the owners of GM and other corporations incredibly wealthy are being treated like animals. The owners of GM and the rest of the ruling class make all the major decisions in this country based on what will maximize their profits. They control the cops, the courts and the government. Working people have no control over their jobs, their homes or their lives. The only possibility left for the working class is to organize and fight to take over complete control of GM and the other major corporations and to run them based on what people need to live decent lives. We have to overthrow the government of the corporations and replace it with a revolutionary government of the entire working class. The fight against the GM project in Detroit is an important battle; many more will follow. Working class resistance is growing. □

(Continued from page 1) have been recovered so far, the latest on November 3.

In Buffalo, New York, six Black men were recently killed in less than three weeks' time. Between September 22 and 24, four men were shot in the head at close range. Then, on two consecutive evenings, October 8 and 9, two Black cab drivers were murdered, their hearts cut out. Also on October 9, a cross was burned in a predominantly Black community.

A series of sniper-style shootings has struck five other cities in the past year:

- Oklahoma City, Oklahoma—In October of last year, two co-workers, a Black man and a white woman, were murdered in a supermarket parking lot.

- Indianapolis, Indiana—On January 1, Lawrence Neese was gunned down while standing at the counter of a Church's Chicken stand. Two weeks later, 19-year-old Leo Watkins was shot while in a convenience store.

- Cincinnati, Ohio—On June 8, two Black teenagers were killed while on their way to a store to buy some soda pop.

- Johnstown, Pennsylvania—On June 15, a Black man and a white woman, who were engaged to be married, were gunned down while walking to his parents' house.

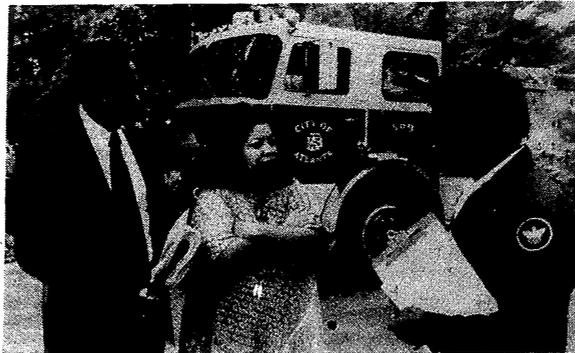
- Salt Lake City, Utah—In August, two young Black men were shot down while they were jogging with two white women.

A right-wing conspiracy?

All of this has led people in Black communities across the country to believe that there is some kind of organized conspiracy behind the murders. They suspect that some right-wing group, like the Ku Klux Klan or the Nazis, may be behind these incidents, trying to provoke racial violence on a mass scale.

There are good reasons to suspect this. For one thing, the same semi-automatic .22-caliber weapon was used to kill four of the six Black men murdered in Buffalo, while a high-powered rifle was used to kill the victims in most of the other cities.

For another, there is the recent arrest of Joseph Paul Franklin on October 28. Franklin is a 30-year-old white man who has bragged that he is a member of the Ku Klux Klan. He is suspected in the shooting of Vernon Jordan, president of the National Urban League, earlier this year and is wanted for questioning for the Salt Lake City murders. He is also known to have been in Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Oklahoma City and Johnstown



Atlanta fire captain questions family during house-to-house search for missing children.

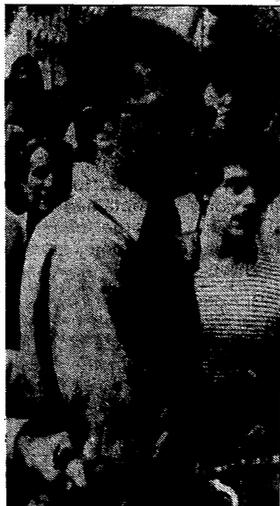
around the times of the ambush murders in those cities.

It could very well be that Franklin is involved in a lot of what's been going on. It may also be the case that he is not working on his own, but is with some right-wing terrorist group. Though cops in Atlanta, Buffalo and some other cities have been saying that their cases were "unique" and "unconnected," it's pretty clear that at least some of these murders are connected.

Capitalism is the link

At the most basic level, however, these murders have another link. That is the capitalist system. Capitalism means misery for the majority of people—Black, Latin, Native American, Asian and white. As the system rots, poor and working class people end up competing with one another for fewer and fewer jobs, less housing and lousier education.

This intensified competition leads to an increase in hostility to Black people and racism in general. It creates conditions that make certain whites open to the idea that the cause of the crisis is



Joseph Paul Franklin, accused of racist killings.

Black, Latin and Asian people, and that if white people—all white people, rich and poor—stuck together and put everyone else "in their place," no white person would have to suffer.

This, at bottom, is the ideology of all racists, from the Nazis and the Ku Klux Klan to the "respectable" racists in the ruling class and the government. While the latter are not yet prepared to endorse open racist terror, they are creating the conditions that encourage it. They know that a working class divided by race cannot fight back against the capitalists' attempt to solve the crisis at the workers' expense.

This is why it is Black schools where the funding stops first. This is why race-hate groups like the KKK and the Nazis are allowed to march and rally all over the U.S.—with police protection. It's why many times it's the cops themselves gunning down Black and Latin people.

Government fears Black rebellions

Today, it appears that local governments are actually doing something to defend the lives of Black people. But what is being done by the various authorities is only the result of pressure by Black people—and the big shots' fear of another Black rebellion. The Atlanta Journal/Constitution admitted as much in an article on October 19: "Blacks... have not forgotten that concerned Black parents had to scream 'for a long time' before city officials started treating the disappearances of Black children as related incidents and shifted their investigation into high gear."

"Since all the slain and missing children have come from lower-income neighborhoods, Blacks in those areas felt nobody cared what happened to their children, not even the 'high class' Black officials they had elected to serve them...."

"Meanwhile, fear is brewing

in the white community that the Black community is a powder keg that can be touched off by any small incident with racial overtones."

The real reason anything is getting done about the racist murders is that working class people, especially Black people, have been putting together a response. After the Buffalo murders, a group of 60 people planned a Black and white unity rally. This was quickly endorsed by city officials, along with religious and civil rights leaders. On October 19, 5,000 people rallied. Since that time, the racist violence in Buffalo appears to have subsided.

In Atlanta, a number of things have been done. First, as the Atlanta press stated, Black families put pressure on the authorities to do something about the kidnap/

murders. Second, volunteer search parties were organized to try to recover kidnap victims. These parties were set up in conjunction with the city government. The initial search party included 250 people. Now, hundreds more have joined in. Third, reward money has been offered for information about the city's murdered children. The reward money is now up to \$150,000.

How to end racist terror

The only lasting answer to racist violence is socialism. Only when working people of all races have control over their lives and the society we live in will racist terror come to an end.

The problem today, how-

Chicago Group Formed to Fight Police Violence

CHICAGO—An organization of Teamsters that was formed to oppose the racism of their union is now planning to organize a broader group to fight the police violence that is a constant in this city. The Teamsters Against Racism (TAR) and a group of non-Teamster anti-racists have called a meeting of the new group, the Coalition Against Police Brutality, for early January.

TAR was founded this summer in response to a ploy by leaders of International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT) Local 714 during the local's attempt to organize Chicago police into the IBT. On July 6, three Chicago cops beat to death a 51-year-old Black man, Richard Ramey (see *Torch/La Antorcha*, August 15-September 14, 1980). The three cops, all of whom had records for brutality, had stopped Ramey for smoking on an El (rapid transit) train. It was such a blatant case of murder, and the city was so scared of the Black community's possible response, that they did what isn't usually done in Chicago—they fired the policemen and indicted them for murder.

IBT Local 714 then moved in, helped get two of the cops new jobs as security guards, and held a dinner to raise money for their legal defense.

TAR circulated a petition denouncing this open support for racism, which several hundred Teamsters signed. On October 5, the night of the dinner, TAR held a demonstration in front of the IBT headquarters where it was held. Over 75 people came to the demonstration, including supporters of several left groups, among them the RSL.

The IBT later lost its bid to represent Chicago police in elections on October 16.

TAR has continued to be concerned with the Ramey case and plans to hold a demonstration when the three cops come to trial. But the group has begun to address the wider problem of rampant police violence. The leaflet being put out for the January Coalition Against Police Brutality meeting points to two more police murders that occurred in October alone: Paul Pearce, a 31-year-old white man who was handcuffed and then kicked to death when he protested the arrest of a friend for quarreling with her husband; and James Cash, a 31-year-old Black steelworker who was shot and killed by the Chicago police when he eluded U.S. Steel plant guards after running naked out of the South Works infirmary.

The exact time and place of the January meeting has not yet been set. Information on this can be received by calling the Chicago RSL at (312) 226-5915. We urge all anti-racist militants to attend this meeting—to help in this attempt to end the police reign of terror that has dominated Chicago for so long.

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ever, is that the majority of working class and Black people don't see that they can take control of society. In fact, many people think that the most they can do is to pressure the police to protect Black communities.

It is important for revolutionaries to work with working people and other community residents who are trying to find a way to defend themselves from terrorism. While doing so, revolutionaries can organize for solutions that train people to rely on themselves, and that build unity between working people of different races.

For example, revolutionaries should help build more rallies like the one on October 19 in Buffalo. And in the course of organizing these Black and white unity rallies, and at the rallies themselves, we should do our best to show people that the rally was a result of working class people organizing themselves. We should explain in leaflets, speeches and other forms, that the cops and the city hall politicians do not give a damn about the lives and rights of Black people.

Another thing that revolutionaries should do is to take the question of racist murders into the unions. The unions are working class organizations to defend our living standards and our rights. And the right to our lives is the

most important. We want the unions to endorse and mobilize for rallies and demonstrations. And we want to get the unions to set up armed defense guards in affected neighborhoods.

Right now, the state is acting like it is concerned about the murder of Black people. As soon as there is a movement that really fights for what people need, it will be clear that the state, in fact, is the biggest murderer of all. Today the cops are willing to look around a bit for what they consider an isolated murderer, but as soon as people start fighting for lasting solutions, the cops will freak out. That's what they're trying to avoid in the first place. This is why working and poor people cannot rely on the police for protection, but must take their defense into their own hands.

Finally, the struggle against the racist murders, is, in every case, also the struggle to end competition among different sections of working class people. This means that the struggle also has to become a struggle for jobs, housing and decent education for all. This speaks again to the need for the trade unions to mobilize for these struggles. As long as there is no strong united working class movement to fight for the things people really need, the situation remains set up for more and more racist murders. □

Trial of Klansmen Ends in Greensboro; Jury Deliberates

As we go to press on November 13, an all-white jury is still out in the trial of six Klansmen and Nazis accused of murdering Communist Workers Party (CWP) members at an anti-Klan rally last year.

That rally, held in a predominantly Black section of Greensboro, North Carolina, last November 4, was just starting when several carloads of Klan and Nazi supporters drove up. They took rifles and shotguns out of their cars and fired on the demonstrators, killing five supporters of the CWP. Later it was revealed that two undercover agents, one working for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and the other for the Greensboro police, were among the Klansmen who planned the trip to the CWP rally. The shootings were videotaped by several TV crews.

Throughout the trial, which opened August 4 in Greensboro, defense lawyers for the Klansmen argued that their clients attended the rally

merely to heckle and throw eggs; that they began firing only in self-defense; and that none of the shots fired by the defendants were the ones that hit the five people who died.

The defense presentations were heavily larded with patriotic appeals and attacks on the CWP. "They hate the police, the government, the Constitution more than the Klan," defense lawyer Robert Cahoon said, referring to the CWP. He told the jury the six Klan supporters were "essentially loyal, plain, hard-working American citizens who love their country and its flag."

The prosecution used the videotapes and witness testimony to clearly establish that the Klan and Nazi supporters carried out the murders with cool deliberation. "It wasn't self-defense that squeezed off those rounds," district attorney Michael Schlosser said in his closing remarks, "It was bias, bigotry and prejudice. They killed five people that day." Under North Carolina law a conviction for murder in

this case does not require proof that the bullets fired by the defendants hit their mark.

At the same time, however, Schlosser weakened the prosecution case by his commitment to portraying the CWP as an "equal evil" to the Klan. "If you acquit them," he told the jury, referring to the racist defendants, "you'll play right into the hands of the Communists. They'll say it's an indictment of our judicial system if you let these six killers walk out of here free." Schlosser's office has brought charges of rioting against several CWP members for their actions at the November 1979 rally. CWP members have not testified or cooperated with the prosecution in any way during the current trial.

The jury began its deliberations on Friday, November 7. Several times since then they have requested to review the videotapes and other evidence that was shown during the trial. This would tend to indicate that there are some disagreements or uncertainties among the jurors. □

Nazis Routed in Two March Attempts

CHICAGO—On two consecutive weekends, October 19 and 25, the National Socialist Party of America (Nazis) suffered defeats in their planned marches and rallies in this area.

On October 19, the Nazis were scheduled to hold a rally in Lovelace Park in the Chicago suburb of Evanston, Illinois. Evanston is a largely middle class suburb with a sizable Black community. It is home to Northwestern University and borders Skokie, a predominantly Jewish middle class community.

OVER 2,500 angry people turned out in Evanston to greet the Nazis. Many Jewish organizations and campus groups mobilized for the rally. Local 1010 of the United Steelworkers of America endorsed the anti-Nazi rally. And many left organizations also built for the rally—including the Revolutionary Socialist League, International Socialists Organization (ISO), Communist Workers Party (CWP), Workers World Party (WWP) and the Spartacist League (SL).

Before the Nazis arrived, one plainclothes Nazi milled around the anti-Nazi crowd, harassing individuals and bragging that he was a fascist. It is unclear whether he was

part of the same group that planned to rally, or from some other Nazi group. An RSL supporter found out about this guy and confronted him. RSLers with bullhorns told other anti-Nazi militants in the crowd what was going on. A large number of people came over to surround the fascist; he was spat on, kicked and chased away.

Soon after this, the Nazis in uniform showed up. They were protected by a fence that had been put up by the cops. Despite this, and a large number of cops, the Nazis didn't last five minutes. The

anti-Nazi crowd threw rocks and anything else they could get their hands on. When people began to tear down the fence, the cops rushed in to stop them but also began to cart off the Nazis. Nobody had heard a word the Nazis said. Their rally was a flop.

The Nazis, however, had one more action planned on October 25. This was to be a march into West Englewood, a predominantly Black community, from neighboring Marquette Park, an all-white community where the Nazis have their meeting hall. (Chicago is strictly segregated

into white, Black, Mexican and Puerto Rican neighborhoods.)

AN AD HOC coalition of groups including the RSL, CWP, ISO and Chutzpah (a radical Jewish organization) agreed to hold a rally at 71st and Western Avenue, the point at which the Nazi march would enter West Englewood, to block the racists. The SL came to one of the coalition's meetings (called by the CWP) to say that there wouldn't be enough people at the demonstration to stop the Nazis. The SL doesn't support anti-fascist demonstrations unless they are endorsed by union locals. Unfortunately, no union endorsements for this rally could be obtained. The SL, which had large forces in Evanston, didn't come to West Englewood.

But despite a cold rain and snow that continued all day, over 70 supporters of the different groups in the coalition did come to 71st and Western on the day of the planned Nazi march. In addition, the Progressive Labor Party (PLP), which had not joined the coalition but which had heard about the anti-Nazi rally, also came with about 50 supporters. PLP, however, refused to join the other group

and stayed on an opposite corner.

The two groups were joined by over 100 people from the West Englewood community. Most were young, and nearly all of the people who came out were clearly ready to fight the Nazis. Many carried sticks, clubs or bar bells.

When the Nazis didn't show up, the PLP marchers crossed over Western to march to the Nazis' hall. In solidarity with them, the coalition marchers and many community people also crossed over. All groups were pushed back by the cops.

THE NAZIS never attempted to get anywhere near West Englewood because of the militant crowd of over 250 people. They stayed in the park which the Marquette Park community is named after and had a rally of 15 people.

This final defeat for the Nazis was in some ways the most significant. The Nazis had planned a whole series of rallies in order to build publicity and attract other racist people to them so that they could pull off a march into the Black community. Instead, Black and white people rallied in West Englewood, building a small but important display of workers' unity. □



Evanston cops attack anti-Nazi demonstrators during October 19 confrontation.



Death sentence upheld in California

On October 23, the California Supreme Court upheld the death sentence of Earl Lloyd Jackson, a 23-year-old Black prisoner. Jackson's lawyer plans to appeal. If he loses, it could mean the resumption of legal murder in the gas chamber at San Quentin, where 42 men sit on death row, awaiting decisions on their appeals. The last execution in California was in 1967.

As a result of the mass struggles of the 1960s, the U.S. Supreme Court halted all executions in 1967. It declared existing death penalty laws unconstitutional in 1972, but only because they were unevenly applied. In 1976 it upheld new death penalty laws that had been enacted by Georgia, Florida and Texas. Since then, 34 more states have restored capital punishment, and three prisoners have been executed.

The rulers are trying like hell to make people accept the death penalty. The Supreme Court has laid down rules of how it should be applied to make it seem "fair." And now the experts are debating the most humane way to murder prisoners. (Some favor cleaner, "nicer" lethal injections over the more "barbaric" chair and the gas chamber.) The first victims for the executioner's ax were carefully chosen so as not to arouse too much support: Gary Gilmore in 1977 and Jesse Bishop in 1979, who said they wanted to die, and John Spengelink, killed in May 1979, a so-called drifter with eight felony convictions. All three were white—to obscure the racism of the death penalty. But more than half the prisoners on death row are Black.

Lewisburg keeps NAACP out

Last month the authorities at the federal prison in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, closed off the prison chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) to all outside members and officials of the organization. The keepers claim the direction and advice given by the NAACP violates prison policy of having all prisoner organizations self-governing. No specific incident led up to the six-month ban. It's nothing but a racist attack on the rights of Black prisoners. Not surprisingly, such organizations as the Junior Chamber of Commerce (Jaycees), which also has prison chapters, are not subject to such bans.

More jails....more prisons

The U.S. ranks third, after South Africa and Russia, in the number of people incarcerated—250 per 100,000 population. While 21 states are under court order to reduce their prison populations because of overcrowding, another 314,000 people were jailed in 1979.

"In 1979, Abt Associates of Boston did a sophisticated study for Congress. It found that the most important single contributor to prison population was . . . simply the availability of cells," said William G. Nagel, executive vice president of the Institute of Corrections, in a speech to a seminar for legislators. "Judges, prosecutors, police, and parole boards," he continued, "all adjust their practices to the availability of prison space . . ."

While the states claim they have no money for schools or hospitals, they are building more prisons—at a minimum cost of \$50,000 per cell. For example, New York state opened 300 new cells at Downstate prison in Fishkill this September; authorized construction of two new 512-bed prisons in Woodbourne and Wallkill; has tentatively approved a new prison in or near New York City; and plans to create hundreds of cells by renovating Sing Sing prison instead of phasing it out.

New Jersey is "upgrading" Trenton State Prison, built in 1836, to yield 800 maximum-security beds by 1983, and got voter approval of a \$34 million bond issue for a new medium-security prison. While the state has been unable to find a community that will accept a new prison, that may change as the economy gets worse. Prisons create jobs, both in building and staffing them. It looks like the capitalists want to solve their crisis by locking up half the unemployed and putting the other half to work as jailers.

—AL

Dear Friends,
As part of their never ending "anti-terrorist" drive and attempts to control and silence the forces of revolutionary change in the world, the federal

Bureau of Prisons (BOP) is using a tool by the name of Dr. Jeanne N. Knutson. Knutson is a "political psychologist" who, although claiming not to work directly for the BOP, has full BOP assistance and cooperation in her project to interview and "evaluate all prisoners in the Federal prisons who have been convicted of committing a crime for a political purpose."

KNUTSON has been conducting this research for the BOP for at least three years, and claims to have arrangements for additional research in two other countries. The head psychiatrist at the BOP jail facility in San Diego stated that Knutson's research is a project that the BOP would do itself if it had the money; instead they had to farm the project out to (Knutson) who could get grant funding. It is claimed that the research is funded through UCLA and the National Institute of Health; and Knutson is also associated with the "Wright Institute" in Berkeley.

Psychological profiles of those who engage in revolutionary armed struggle are of obvious use to the state: to aid the keepers of prisoners in developing behavior modification programs designed to change (control and silence) the revolutionary behavior and beliefs of political prisoners; to aid the police and military forces in targeting "potential" political-military activists; as a propaganda tool to confuse people generally with theories of individual deviant or aberrant psychological develop-

'A Warning To Prisoners'

ment in those who struggle for change.

Knutson's tactics include claims that she wishes to be a mouthpiece to all those poor "terrorists" who never got to tell their story to the judge or the press; claims that the research is positively intended to reveal what leads people to a total commitment to certain principles regardless of self-interest; claims that co-defendants have agreed to and given interviews; dropping names of known political prisoners and stating that everyone else had talked to her and given interviews.

CONTRARY to her claims, Knutson's and the BOP's true purpose is revealed in a 76 page document obtained by another revolutionary comrade who was approached for, and also refused, an interview. Titled "Social and Psychodynamic Pressures Toward a Negative Identity: The Case of an American Revolutionary-Terrorist," the document is based on one of Knutson's interviews. The premise put forward is that all "terrorists" do what they do because of a combination of 1) a radical family background, 2) unmet personality needs, and 3) severe life disappointments. The purpose of all this psychological evaluation is clearly stated on page 22 of the document: ". . . the eventual elimination of violence as a valued means to accomplish political ends."

Such reactionary theories to explain away peoples' righteous discontent with material

conditions are nothing new. The ruling class and its agents have always tried to prevent that people resist and fight back against national oppression, impe-

rialism, racism, sexism, and the theft of our wages, the erosion of our rights to life and health, the destruction of the planet, etc., because we had a parent die in our youth, a messy divorce, failed college entrance exams (all examples used in Knutson's document), or other personal and individual reasons.

Knutson, and her research project to evaluate every politically motivated prisoner in the federal system, is a clear agent of the forces of reaction; and prisoners everywhere should be warned to avoid her.

THROUGHOUT history people have united in common interest, fought, and died for the right to control their own lives and destinies, and in response to the concrete realities of their existence. Throughout history, people in struggle have armed themselves in these struggles in defense against the heavily armed forces of imperialism and reaction. People continue to fight today for societies organized to serve peoples' needs instead of serving the profit interests of a few rich and well-armed owners whose "power" rests on the force of arms and the theft, plunder and destruction of the world's resources.

All the anti-terrorist propaganda in the world can never stop the forward movement of the people united in their own interests.

Power to those who don't fear freedom!
Love and struggle,
Therese Coupez

ATTENTION FEDERAL PRISONERS! If you subscribe to the Torch/La Antorcha but do not receive your copy every month, we need to hear from you.

The Revolutionary Socialist League is a party plaintiff in a suit challenging the Federal Bureau of Prisons' practice of withholding publications from prisoners, particularly left-wing publications. The suit is *Abbott v. Richardson* and is being handled by the ACLU. The suit will be going to trial soon, and we will have to give depositions in December or January. So what we need to know IMMEDIATELY is:

- How often has your TORCH/LA ANTORCHA been withheld (or just not reached you) in the past two years?
- Are you properly notified every time it is withheld?
- Are you allowed to appeal? If so, with what results?
- Are you harassed by the keepers for filing appeals?
- Any other information that could help us in this suit.

Again, we need to hear from you as soon as possible. It would be best if we can use your name. But if you prefer to remain anonymous, just let us know.

Send letters to: Torch/La Antorcha, GPO Box 1288, New York, NY 10116, Attn. Lee Ramie. Mark the envelopes "Special Media Correspondence—Do Not Open."

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A Prisoner Writes

Toward a United Class: Criminals or Workers?

While going through some old files, I came across the following statement from Auburn prison in New York. We thought it was a really good article explaining why prisoners are workers, what their relationship is to the class struggle and what prisoners should be doing inside prison and when they get out.

The statement wasn't signed, so if anyone recognizes this statement as their own, or if you know whose piece it is, let us know. We'd like to hear from you and what you think of the struggle today. —Mary Rivers

Who are we and why are we in prison? These two questions should be uppermost in the minds of every man and woman behind prison walls. Criminologists (people who study crime and criminals) say we are sick and put us in prisons to "protect society," and to rehabilitate us. What these criminologists are saying gives us a clue to who we are. Because if you are trying to rehabilitate someone, what you are trying to do is: Restore him to what he was before he "went wrong."

What were we then, before we "went wrong"? Take a look around you; do you see any Rockefellers, DuPonts, or Hearsts? How many bankers do you see? I doubt if you see any, but there might be one or two. Why don't you see any of these ruling class people? Because prisoners don't come from the ruling class; they come from the working class. Why don't prisoners come from the ruling class? Because the ruling class built the prisons and they didn't build them for themselves; they built them for the working class.

If you doubt prisoners come from the working class, ask the people around you if they worked when they were in the streets, and how many jobs they have had. The large majority will tell you that they have worked at quite a few jobs. You should also take notice of the fact that whenever the unemployment rate goes up so does the crime rate and consequently the number of prisoners increases—there is definitely a relationship there.

This leads us to a solution to the question: Why are we prisoners? Under the capitalist system the economy goes through periodic crisis, because on the one hand, capitalists want to pay workers as

little as possible so they can make the most profit, and on the other hand, they want workers to buy back the things they are producing, at the highest price possible. When the prices are too high for the workers to buy up what has been produced, the capitalist produces less, and since he produces less, he needs less workers than he already has: So he starts laying people off, which creates competition among workers for the few jobs that are still available.

In such a crisis it is clearly the workers who do the suffering, and this is why prisons are necessary. Because if you can't get what you need by working, you get it any way you can. The capitalists can't escape this dilemma, so they build prisons to protect themselves against the workers who resort to crime to get what they need.

The ruling class also glorifies crime: In the movies, on television, and in books, so that workers will use crime instead of revolution to change their lot.

'Who am I and why am I in prison?'

If it wasn't you and I who are prisoners it would be someone else, because under capitalism crime must exist and prisons are therefore necessary. This is why rehabilitation is a sham. The capitalist knows he can't cure crime, so he goes through the motions of trying to. And in doing this he is telling people that it is the prisoner who is sick and that the system—which is really what is sick—is alright. But this doesn't mean there is no such thing as rehabilitation. There is real rehabilitation, which is returning to the working class we came from as a staunch fighter in the struggle against this sick system.

This brings us to the importance of answering the two questions: Who am I and why am I in prison? Once you have correctly answered these questions you will see that you are part of the great revolutionary working class, and that your interests and the interests of the working class are the same—the overthrow of capitalism and the introduction of socialist society. For as long as capitalism exists there will be prisons and prisoners. And one of the

things socialist revolution will bring about is the abolition of prisons and the reuniting of prisoners with the working class.

'Our goal should be destroying system'

We must ask ourselves, how have we been struggling in the past and what form should the struggle take in the future? In the past prisoners all over have waged a heroic struggle against oppressive conditions in prison. And this struggle has taken the form of strikes, lock-ins, and even open rebellion such as the Attica uprising in 1971. These actions usually centered around demands for better living conditions, higher wages, etc., in short, immediate needs. But this isn't where the struggle ends, for surely, our goal isn't to reform prisons into a paradise.

Our goal and the form the struggle should take should be centrally concerned with destroying this whole rotten system which makes it necessary to have prisons. This system is capitalism. The only way we can fight to eliminate this system is by uniting with the great masses of people who are exploited daily by that system—capitalism. Of

course, we cannot unite physically with the working class while we are yet in prison, but we can show our unity by supporting that struggle and letting people know that we support their struggle, and the people in the street will support our struggle against the oppressive conditions in prison. In the final analysis it is the same enemy and the same fight which confronts both prisoners and workers, so we must unite to fight the common enemy.

Since we are in prison we must use the means we have at our disposal to bring the struggle forward. And one of the ways we can do this is by studying the conditions that exist and the best way to advance the struggle. We should gain an understanding of what capitalism is, how exploitation takes place, and what are the best weapons to combat that exploitation. If we can do this we will be arming ourselves for the battles that will take place in the future. We can also arm ourselves by building unity among ourselves here in prison. If you look around the yard you will see that this unity is not at a very high level at this time, people isolate themselves into little groups and guard against infringements by other groups. This is playing right into the hands of



the administration, who want us divided so that we will have no strength and never realize our common interests, which is getting rid of their rotten system. This unity will be built only through struggle, primarily by fighting against the oppressive conditions we deal with every day.

'We must take our place...'

Another thing we must deal with is the fact that some day most of us will be going back to the mainstream of society, and we have to decide, now, what we are going to do when we get out. Will we go back to crime or will we once again become part of the working class? If we go back to crime we are only perpetuating the system which put us in prison in the first place, and we are taking the chance of going back to prison if we get caught—every one of us knows that if you are into a hustle sooner or later you will get busted, and this is reflected in the saying "if you want to play, you got to pay." On the other hand, if you return to the ranks of the revolutionary working class you will be struggling toward the inevitable overthrow of the whole system which makes prisons necessary, and therefore you will be taking a course which advances your own interests and the interests of the class you belong to—the great multi-national working class.

To sum up what has been said then: The majority of prisoners are definitely from the working class, and therefore have great revolutionary potential. Once we realize this, the road ahead is much clearer—we must take our place beside our brothers and sisters in the street, who are struggling to get this oppressive system off our backs and write a new page in the history of the world. If we do this, if we all unite to fight the common enemy, no oppressive system, no matter how strong, will be able to resist the will of the people in their revolutionary struggle. Auburn State Prison New York

Getting Out Soon?

Are you being released soon? If so, you can still receive the Torch/La Antorcha FREE for six months. Just let us know where to send it.

We are providing these FREE six-month subscriptions because we know that when you get out, you don't necessarily have the money for a paid subscription. And we don't want to lose touch with you just because you're out now. In fact, we want and need to tighten our relationship with you—and convince you to join us in building a revolutionary socialist party.

When you're back on the street, why not pass your copy of the Torch/La Antorcha around? One of the best ways you can help build the Revolutionary Socialist League is by introducing people to our newspaper. And let us know what you're doing when you get home. The struggle doesn't end when you walk out of the cage—it only begins on a different level. Continue to struggle! Contact us in any of our branch cities (see listing on page 16), or write to our National Office and maybe we could arrange to meet you somewhere. There are always lots of activities going on in which your participation and experience could be a big help. Or there are classes on revolutionary politics you could join.

Finally, we know that a lot of you don't have your own subscription to the Torch/La Antorcha—that you read someone else's copy. If you are being released, you can still get a FREE six-month subscription to the newspaper. Just drop us a line with your new address and the name of the prison you were in.

New Charges Against Autoworker Who Shot Racist Foreman

CHICAGO—The Cook County State's Attorney has changed charges against Brother Jearl Wood from aggravated assault to one count of attempted murder, one count of armed violence and two counts of aggravated battery. Wood, a Black worker from Ford's Chicago assembly plant, and his supporters first learned of the new heavy charges on November 7.

Wood was an assembler in Ford's Trim Department on af-



Ford worker Jearl Wood.

ternoon shift until he was fired this summer for shooting slavedriver General Foreman Cecil Harrell.

Harrell had been harassing Wood for almost two years. On August 22, Harrell abused Wood with racist remarks and railroaded him out of the plant. Wood did not even get a hearing at Labor Relations. Nor did he receive any union representation. Returning a few minutes later, Wood shot and wounded Harrell. Later that night, Wood gave himself up voluntarily.

The heavier charges against Wood point out the need to build stronger support for Wood among his co-workers and friends. **Supporters of Wood at Ford agree that he should not have to take the rap for defending himself against the harassment that many co-workers receive and especially against Harrell's racist abuse.**

Ford management knew what kind of person Cecil Harrell was and how he drove the workers under him. This is a central issue in the struggle to free Jearl Wood. Many of Wood's co-workers do not yet understand this. They incorrectly believe the main issue

is how Brother Wood handled Harrell's harassment and racist provocation on August 22.

But this is not the first time an autoworker has responded to management harassment by shooting a foreman. For example, in the last 10 years,

James Johnson, Ike Jernigan, Robert "Smitty" Smith and other autoworkers did the same thing. **This type of incident can happen again so long as Ford keeps abusive slavedrivers on staff.** This type of incident is also likely

to happen until United Auto Workers Local 551 has an active policy of getting foremen like Harrell fired. (Wood is a member of UAW Local 551.)

Co-workers and family members have attended court proceedings with Jearl Wood on September 25, October 17, and November 7 and 10. Brother Wood's case is continued to the Sixth District in the courtroom of Judge George M. Marovich, 16501 S. Kedzie, Markham, Illinois, on Tuesday, November 18, at 9 a.m. Be there! □

Jamaican Workers Support Jearl Wood

Brother Jearl,

We have read about the racism and victimization which you have experienced in the current issue of the *Torch/La Antorcha*, monthly newspaper of the Revolutionary Socialist League, our sister organization in the U.S.

We in the Standing Strike Support Committee of the Revolutionary Marxist League of Jamaica are in full solidarity with you in your struggle for freedom and justice. The attack you are facing from the capitalists of Ford Motor Company and the capitalist courts of the U.S. are part of the efforts by the international capitalist class to make the international working class and especially its most oppressed sections (such as Blacks, Latins, women, etc.) pay for the present crisis of the worldwide capitalist system.

Here in Jamaica, the working and oppressed people have to be daily resisting the capitalist attacks in the shape of layoffs, price increases,

police and military brutality, etc. However, time and again these working class struggles are cut short due to the trade union misleaders who sell out the workers' rights to the capitalists.

We encourage you to keep up the fight and to see your fight as part of a worldwide struggle to smash the system of capitalist wage slavery, which is keeping us in bondage, once and for all. Our task is to unite all class-conscious working people around the world into an international revolutionary communist party to lead this struggle for international socialist revolution.

We are firmly with you in your fight for freedom. We hope that you will join us and our comrades of the RSL in the fight for freedom of all the world's working and oppressed peoples.

**Yours for the socialist revolution,
Patsy Christie
Chairperson, SSSC Steering Committee**

LABOR IN STRUGGLE

Dallas strikers face defeat

As we go to press, a strike by over 600 transit workers in Dallas, Texas, is apparently headed for defeat. The workers, who belong to Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1338, walked off their jobs on October 1, over the city's refusal to settle a long list of unresolved grievances. The strike was a major challenge to the state's anti-labor laws, which ban public employee strikes, collective bargaining and union contracts for public workers.

The walkout was also a threat to the ruling Dallas business community. A group of bankers and business leaders, the Dallas Citizen's Council, which has handpicked all city council delegates for 40 years beginning in 1936, still dominates the city's political life. The council has turned the city into an anti-union stronghold; only eight percent of the workers in Dallas are unionized.

In line with this policy, the officials of the Dallas Transit System (DTS) refused to negotiate with the union. They also fired 475 workers, announcing that they could reemploy for their jobs but would lose their accumulated seniority. During the strike scabs and supervisors kept a skeleton bus system running. Although the strike is still going on, 75 mechanics and 150 drivers have agreed to return to work under the DTS conditions. About 390 workers are still holding out for an amnesty, including retention of their seniority rights. But the DTS says it will retain the scab drivers hired during the strike. If the strike is

not won, over half of the 340 striking drivers are likely to lose their jobs.

Bus drivers win in Boston

School bus drivers in Boston voted to return to work on November 2 following a militant three-week wildcat strike against ARA Services, a private firm hired by the school board to implement Boston's court-ordered busing plan. The drivers, members of United Steelworkers of America Local 8751, walked off their jobs on October 9 to protest both ARA's failure to observe safety and maintenance procedures required by law, and its systematic violations of their union contract. They were supported by Boston's Black community, which recognized that the strikers' demands were in the interests of their children.

The company reacted to the strike with a union-busting campaign that included court injunctions and the firing of 19 drivers—including the entire union executive board and stewards' council. In the settlement the company was forced to rehire the fired drivers, while the issues that set off the strike went into arbitration.

In earlier events related to the busing struggle, Gerald O'Leary, a member of the school board who supports the racist anti-busing campaign, was arrested on October 2 and charged with demanding \$650,000 from ARA in return for giving it the busing contract. On the same day, white gangs attacked Black students at South

Boston High School. The South Boston Information Center, which is leading the anti-busing forces, later organized a white boycott of the school.

Sydenham shut after protests

Sydenham Hospital, which served residents of New York's Harlem community, was shut down by the city on November 1. Earlier city attempts to close the hospital had provoked a militant mass response by community activists, including a 10-day occupation of the hospital's emergency room in September. But after police ejected the group occupying the hospital on September 26, leaders of the Coalition to Save Sydenham (CSS), which had led the struggle to save the hospital, abandoned mass protests. Instead, they began to angle for a deal with local and national Democratic Party leaders; they promised to help get out the vote for the Democratic ticket in the November elections in return for federal funding for the hospital.

As part of this maneuver, the CSS leaders called their last rally for the afternoon of October 30, the day President Carter was scheduled to visit the city, even though it was a weekday and working people in the community would not be able to attend. When Carter refused to come to the rally, the CSS leaders cancelled it altogether. The CSS's losing effort to play political games with the Democratic Party contributed to the failure of the mass campaign to save Sydenham. It also crippled the opportunity to use the Sydenham struggle as the basis for building a citywide movement against the cutbacks in social services.

—PB

Uni

By WILLIAM

On October 11 most notorious companies in J.P. Stevens, so contracts ever represented by mated Clothing Workers Union Stevens is the na largest textile ma ing about 36,000 ers in 81 diffe almost all of t South. Previousl pany had succ sisted signing a tract, despite 1 active organizing ing this period, came a symbol t management alik rate opposition t orts to organize i

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Union Contracts Won at J.P. Stevens After 17 Years of Struggle

By WILLIAM FALK

On October 19, one of the most notorious anti-union companies in the country, J.P. Stevens, signed its first contracts ever with workers represented by the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU). Stevens is the nation's second largest textile maker, employing about 36,000 hourly workers in 81 different plants, almost all of them in the South. Previously, the company had successfully resisted signing a union contract, despite 17 years of active organizing efforts. During this period, Stevens became a symbol to labor and management alike of corporate opposition to union efforts to organize in the South.

In the settlement itself the ACTWU won only modest gains for the workers it represents. Some 3,500 workers in 10 plants in North Carolina, South Carolina and Alabama won union recognition, grievance and arbitration procedures, seniority rights, and a dues check-off system. These workers will also receive retroactive wage increases equal to the hikes Stevens granted its non-union workers at other plants to hinder union organizing at these facilities. In addition, union workers will now receive any wage increases or benefits granted by the company to non-union plants in the future. Finally, the company agreed to sign similar contracts with any plants organized by the union over the next 18 months.

In return for these gains, the ACTWU leaders agreed that for the next 18 months their organizers would not use their court-ordered right to enter plant canteen break areas and other company property to organize. This is a concession that may seriously hamper future organizing drives. The union leaders also promised to end both their consumer boycott against Stevens' products and their "corporate campaign" aimed at isolating Stevens in the business world. The union also agreed not to single out J.P. Stevens in future organizing campaigns.

Despite these concessions, the signing of a contract at Stevens is a real victory. In the most immediate sense, unionized Stevens workers have won recognition for the first time, and will have a better chance to organize other plants in the future.

On a broader level, the Stevens victory could contribute to opening up the South

for union organizers. At present, only around 10 percent of Southern workers belong to unions. Consequently, wage scales in the region are low, while management has more freedom to impose miserable working conditions, to hire and fire at will, etc. Hundreds of corporations have moved all or part of their operations to the South in recent years to take advantage of these factors. Meanwhile, many unionized workers in the North are

developed an arsenal of weapons to defeat the union. For example, the company refused to bargain seriously with the union or sign any contracts. It fired or punished pro-union workers, and actively incited racist attitudes among the white workers to divide them from the Black workers. At the same time, it relied on local anti-union government officials to intimidate union supporters. In Milledgeville, Georgia, for instance,

streets are over." Although the ACTWU sent out organizers to sign up members, it did not give these efforts the necessary resources or backing.

Instead, the ACTWU's main efforts went to a three-pronged strategy that left rank and file workers with little to do. These included: 1) an official AFL-CIO boycott of Stevens products; 2) a barrage of lawsuits and Labor Relations Act complaints against the

who were fired and later ordered rehired, for example, did not go back to their jobs. In the years before the court verdict they had usually moved and found new jobs.

Corporate campaign hurt companies

The corporate campaign was the most effective part of the union's strategy. In one successful action, two Stevens executives were forced to resign from the board of directors of the Manufacturers Hanover Trust Bank after the ACTWU and other unions threatened to withdraw millions of dollars in union funds from the bank.

In another, the chairman of the New York Life Insurance Company quit the Stevens board of directors while the chairman of Stevens left the board of New York Life, after the ACTWU planned to contest the elections to the board of directors of New York Life. The union challenge would have forced the company to spend several million dollars mailing ballots to every New York Life policy holder.

Overall, the union's legalistic approach was one of the reasons it took so long to force Stevens to agree to a contract. Yet, in the end, the persistence of the Stevens workers paid off.

In January 1980, Whitney Stevens took over as chairman of the company and began angling for a deal with the union. He felt that the company, which was losing ground to its competitors, had become too preoccupied with the union-busting campaign. Moreover, he recognized that given the ACTWU's history of settling for weak contracts, it was possible to accept a settlement which would cost Stevens very little, while freeing top managers to restore the company's competitive edge.

The ultimate effects of the ACTWU's victory remain to be seen. Stevens has already said it would continue to oppose union organizing efforts, while promising to "play by the rules" from now on. The ACTWU leadership, judging by their previous behavior, is hardly likely to mobilize Southern textile workers for a mass rank and file-controlled organizing drive at Stevens or anywhere else. It will be up to the workers themselves to extend the recent contract victory while overcoming its limitations. □



Stevens workers in Roanoke Rapids approve their first union contract October 19.

faced with the choice of giving up their struggle for a decent life or losing their jobs to runaway plants. Consequently, every union victory in the South is a gain not merely for Southern workers, but for the working class as a whole.

Company went all out to break union

The ACTWU's first victory against Stevens came in 1974, when workers at the Roanoke Rapids mill in North Carolina voted to join the union. This organizing drive and one of its leaders, Crystal Lee Sutton, were the basis for the movie "Norma Rae." While the film distorted the organizing struggle, it did give a fairly accurate picture of the oppression faced by Southern textile workers, including low wages; arbitrary, racist and sexist actions from management; "brown lung" disease from cotton particles; and other occupational disabilities like deafness and chemical poisoning.

Following successful union drives at Roanoke Rapids and nine other mills, Stevens de-

veloped an arsenal of weapons to defeat the union. For example, the company refused to bargain seriously with the union or sign any contracts. It fired or punished pro-union workers, and actively incited racist attitudes among the white workers to divide them from the Black workers. At the same time, it relied on local anti-union government officials to intimidate union supporters. In Milledgeville, Georgia, for instance,

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Union tops wanted 'civilized' campaign

In addition to this union-busting campaign, Stevens workers were hampered by the tactics adopted by the ACTWU leadership. While the workers faced firings and police harassment, ACTWU leader Sol Stern insisted that "we live in the era of civilized labor relations now. The days of organizing battles fought in the

company; and 3) the "corporate campaign," which was aimed at pressuring the more liberal capitalists in the Northeast, with whom the ACTWU has had a friendly relationship for years, to press Stevens to agree to a compromise settlement.

Of these tactics, the boycott was probably the least effective. Only about one-third of Stevens products are sold retail and even these are sold under several different brand names. In practice the boycott usually boiled down to printing "Don't Buy Stevens" notices in various union newspapers, rather than an effort to mobilize trade union support for the Stevens workers.

The lawsuits did at least force Stevens to spend a lot of time and money defending itself. But they illustrate the real weakness of a union organizing effort that relies on the courts for victory. The NLRB can take over a year to decide a case, while court action against a company which violates an NLRB ruling takes about two years. In practice, the court suits gave Stevens lots of time to defeat and demoralize the workers. Most of the union supporters

How the System Robbed a Working Class Mother of Her Baby

Dear Torch/La Antorcha,

Here is an example of how backward, racist, and mixed-up the government/welfare/medical system is:

In March, this year, I delivered a healthy baby at a major hospital. One month later, protective services (the police/state arm) of social services took my baby from me under a temporary court order. The fact that I had only just been laid off from CETA in early March made no difference. What was seen was that I was obviously a poor, white, unwed, working class woman, and therefore unfit to be a mother.

I HAD never been on welfare (ADC, general relief) in my life. During the days when I was carrying my baby, I was working and going to the prenatal clinic wing of the maternity hospital. My visits were paid for by an agency of the government. My hospital bill was paid for by Medicaid. That was the only assistance that I got.

I was never informed of my rights. I was sent to the "high-risk" clinic for an excessive thyroid problem. After an argument (a silly one) with one of the clinic doctors, he asked me to see a clinic psychiatrist. I refused. A clinic psychiatrist was sent to see me anyway. I

Finally a psychiatrist came in to see me. He told me I was alright. I should see family services, enjoy my life and my baby. My baby was released to me and everything was fine.

Two weeks later, I was visited in my home by a so-called protective service worker. She asked me many personal questions: Where was I from? Where was my family? etc. On her second visit, I mentioned that the baby had only gained an ounce in two weeks. When I took him in for his two-week-old check-up at the hospital-family clinic, I was assured he was doing okay.

The second visit by the protective service worker was short. She told me good-bye, that we would not need to be followed-up anymore. Two days later, she called me and demanded that I go with her to take the baby to the hospital because of his low weight gain. I was breast-feeding him at the time. I said I had his first-month clinic appointment for him in three days. I would check his weight there. In my family, there is a history of a hereditary disease like the sickle cell anemia that many Black families have.

FIVE HOURS later, the protective service worker showed up at my home with another worker and two cops and a court order to take my baby from me. One of the cops threatened to break down my door. I protested this treatment at the local police precinct but I never got any satisfaction.

The protective service worker told me that a hearing would be held in a few days to determine whether I had neglected my baby. Till then, I could not get him back.

Through savings, contributions and loans from my friends and family, I managed to hire a good lawyer. The Revolutionary Socialist League helped me to find this lawyer. I had been involved in a rent strike throughout the previous spring, summer, and fall and I had worked with lawyers then.

My one-month-old baby was taken away from me and sent to a hospital different than the maternity hospital where I had my baby. This new hospital was far from me. Vandals had wrecked my car and I had to rely on public transportation and rides from friends and family members.

During the hearings that followed, legal and medical terms floated around like "failure-to-thrive," "possible neglect," "possible harm to the baby's life." I was becoming more and more concerned that

my baby had this hereditary disease. Doctors and the social workers all agreed that that was ruled out—he did not have the disease. Still I wondered.

Because the protective services and doctors were able to show probable cause that I had neglected my baby (loss of weight gain was their only proof), my young baby was sent to a foster care home. I was allowed to visit him and breast-feed him once a week when it was "convenient" for his social worker.

AT THE FIRST hearing, not enough evidence was presented, so no final judgment was made. The court referee ordered me to sign a medical release for my son and me or else, "You will never get your baby back." I signed on my lawyer's advice.

The doctor who originally argued with me and referred

me to a psychiatrist told my mother I was okay, then said I needed psychiatric help. No "help" was given to me. Instead, the court referee ordered a "study" done on me. By this time, I was all nerves. In order to get this study, I had to ask protective services to get me a referral.

At the second hearing, enough evidence was presented to show probable neglect. I agreed to the charges because "protective services" threatened to have my baby adopted out. By agreeing, my Mom and Dad were able to gain custody of my baby son.

Even though in April my protective service worker said that they were not trying to take my baby from me, that is what they were trying to do. The "protective services" are racist. They tried to claim that because my baby is bi-racial—half-Black and half-white—

that I and my parents could not raise him because we are white! Period.

The referee during the hearings was rude, arrogant and sexist. He tried to make me out a whore, he tried to claim that I did not know my own name, he tried to insult me in a number of ways, he tried to claim that when I was pregnant I refused to have a physical examination and so on.

FINALLY, once my baby was put in my parents' custody, his health was checked by my family pediatrician. He was found to have this hereditary disease. We had to immediately put him in a hospital, where he had to have two blood transfusions. He would have died without these blood transfusions.

This is the legal, medical, and social service system under which poor and working people must live. This is why I think workers must be organized in a revolutionary party to tear down capitalism's walls and build a society where working people can live free and decent lives.

Sincerely,
LM
Ohio

Chicago's Cook County Hospital Bans Abortions

By NATASHA BELL

The latest of a long series of attacks on public health care for the poor in Chicago began the morning of October 10, 1980. George W. Dunne, president of the Cook County Board of Commissioners, advised the administrative staff at Cook County Hospital that no more abortions were to be performed in that facility, except when the mother's life was in danger.

NOT EVEN the other members of the County Board, who oversee the operation of Cook County Hospital, the major public health care facility in Chicago, had taken part in making the decision.

When County Hospital's executive staff and House Staff Association submitted a resolution to the Board condemning the abortion ban as discriminatory against poor and minority women, the Board was forced to take up the question at its regular meeting on October 20. On that date, more than 200 people on both sides of the abortion issue crowded into the usually very uncrowded Board meeting room. But before anyone in the audience was allowed to speak, it was announced that Dunne had already referred the issue to the Hospital Subcommittee.

In a later statement to the press, County Commissioner John Stroger, chairman of the subcommittee, promised to call for public hearings "sometime in November." Stroger, who is Black and considered one of the more liberal commissioners, also stated: "I think President Dunne did the right thing. I'm pro-life... but I will conduct an objective hearing." To date no such hearing has been scheduled.

Few women, however, for whom County Hospital is the only health care they can afford, will find comfort in the sexist lip-service that this commissioner gives to "objectivity."



The most tragic part of this attack on both the right of all people to decent health care and the right of women to control their own bodies has been the lack of an organized militant response by the working class and minority women affected. In fact, it is due precisely to the lack of a militant women's movement that Board President Dunne was able to get away with his decision in the first place.

IT should be clear to all poor, working class, Black and Latin women by now that we have no rights under capitalism—only oppression. What we know to be our rights, the ruling class considers privileges, to be given or taken away as they see fit. The privileged ruling class and its stooges such as the Cook County Board will only give up as much as they are pressured and forced to. Rather than beg them to give us back what should have been ours all along, the truth is, we will only get what we are willing to fight for. □

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was confused. After a 15 minute discussion, the doctor left. I read my chart. I was labeled a schizophrenic paranoid. I was never told this.

After my baby was delivered I was visited by the hospital social worker. She informed me that a psychiatrist would have to release me from the hospital before I could leave and take my baby home. She also told me that protective services would visit my home, to make sure that the baby and I were doing okay. I had no choice in this. This was decided for me. I never received any aid from social services.

Last August, the workers of Poland rose up in a rebellion that brought the country's state-capitalist ruling class to its knees. In the face of a nationwide strike wave involving hundreds of thousands of workers, the ruling Polish United Workers Party (PUWP) on August 31 promised sweeping economic and social reforms, including the right to form unions independent of party and state control.

However, the Polish workers emerged from this struggle with only a partial victory. The PUWP survived the rebellion with its monopoly of political power intact. The Gdansk Inter-Factory Strike Committee, which led the strikes, agreed not to form an opposition political party. It also promised to respect the Polish constitution, recognize the leading role of the PUWP in the state, and accept Russia's domination over Poland. Moreover, the settlement protects the existence of the government-controlled official unions, and grants the Polish courts jurisdiction over the independent unions.

In early September, in reviewing the outcome of the Polish struggle, we stated that "The recent settlement represents at most only a temporary truce in the Polish class struggle." Events have confirmed this. The Polish rulers have used their total control over the state apparatus to try to undermine the gains won by the workers. The workers, organized in part into the new independent union federation, Solidarnosc (Solidarity), have resisted these attempts and continued to fight for the realization in practice of what they won on paper in August.

The situation in Poland thus remains extremely unstable. If the Polish workers are not prepared for the confrontations that lie ahead, the state-capitalist ruling class—with the backing of its Russian overseers—will consolidate its rule and roll back the gains already won. In this situation, there is every reason to expect that the regime will unleash a reign of terror against the most militant sections of the Polish working class, marking a defeat for the entire international working class in its quest for freedom.

We are devoting the center section of this month's *Torch/La Antorcha* to the workers' struggle in Poland. The first article discusses what has happened since the settlement was signed in August, including the state of the workers' movement. The second article explains why the Polish workers' struggle disproves the social-democratic contention that lasting, meaningful gains can be won through a reform of the system, rather than its revolutionary overthrow.

Polish Workers Clash With Gov't Over Independent Trade Unions

By PAUL BENJAMIN

The agreement that was signed between striking workers and the Polish state-capitalist government this past August 31 did not end the struggle of the Polish people for economic and social reforms.

Since August 31, large sections of the Polish population have followed the workers' lead and begun to organize to fight for their own interests. In particular, peasants in Poland's 80 percent privately owned agricultural sector have begun to form farmers' unions. For example, in mid-October peasants from the countryside around the capital of Warsaw met at the village of Zbrosza to form such a union. (*Manchester Guardian*, October 16, 1980.) Teachers, journalists, scientists and a host of other groups have also formed unions and are pressing their own demands on the government. Even some rank and file members of the ruling party, the misleadingly named Polish United Workers Party (PUWP), are demanding more voice in choosing the party leadership.

But the focal point of the struggle has been the registration of the new, independent unions by the Polish courts, a move required by the August 31 settlement.

After the signing of that agreement, up to eight million workers abandoned the official government-controlled unions to join Solidarnosc (Solidarity), the independent union federation led by strike leader Lech Walesa. While Soli-

darnosc drew up its constitution to submit to the courts, plant managers and local PUWP officials launched a campaign of harassment against Solidarnosc supporters, provoking a wave of local strikes. In Kielce workers at a local plant walked off their jobs on September 12 after the plant manager warned that they would lose their pensions if they left the official union. Strikes also took place in Kalisz, Bialystok, Lodz, Myszkow and other cities. (*New York Times*, September 12, 1980.) On September 24, Solidarnosc submitted its constitution for registration by the court. For one month, the court sat on the application.

On October 24, the court finally acted on Solidarnosc's application and registered the union. However, before doing so the judge added a clause to its constitution on the leading role of the PUWP, and eliminated clauses dealing with the union's right to strike, claiming that the government had not yet passed strike legislation.

This verdict set off a storm of protest among Polish workers. Around 3,000 workers, assembled at the courthouse to await the ruling, chanted, "Strike, Strike!" as Walesa and other union leaders left the courtroom. In Walbrzych angry workers accused union leaders of betraying them. (*Le Monde*, October 27, 1980.) In Warsaw, the local Inter-Factory Committee began to prepare plans to counter a possible military intervention, including consulting veterans of the 1943 Warsaw rebellion against Nazi rule.

In two days of heated meetings the Solidarnosc national commission debated how to respond to the court ruling. Delegates from Gdansk argued for an immediate strike unless government representatives agreed to meet with the committee in Gdansk. They were opposed by representatives from Jastrzebie and Szczecin, who claimed that the registration of the union was a major victory, and that the government would never drop its amendments to the statutes. These delegates even opposed appealing the judge's ruling to higher courts. Walesa himself was against a strike, but supported a legal appeal, and called for setting up a workers' commission to draw up their grievances and meet with the government.

These differences within the Solidarnosc movement first surfaced at the end of Walesa's tour of southern Poland, at a national committee meeting held in Jastrzebie on October 20. At the meeting representatives from Gdansk, Warsaw and Walbrzych took the lead in arguing that only strike action or the threat of strikes would force the government into registering the union and implementing the other promises included in the settlement. According to reports in *Le Monde* (October 22, 1980), they also criticized the Jastrzebie committee for compromising the union's independence by cooperating too much with the government, and for trying to expand its jurisdiction at the expense of other committees in the region. In reply, delegates from Jas-

trzebie, Szczecin and Lodz argued that their critics had "fallen into the habit" of strikes, and that their threats would provoke the government into abandoning the settlement.

These differences represent in part the varying levels of militancy existing in different regions of the country. Workers in northern Poland, particularly around Gdansk, tend to reject any compromise which weakens the settlement. As one Gdansk worker said: "Gdansk is very militant, and the workers are even more militant. If we introduced what people are saying in the factories, the rest of the national commission would run away." (*New York Times*, November 7, 1980.) The Gdansk workers and their supporters appear to include about one-third of the national commission, drawn mainly from the largest factories and industrial centers. However, they wield an authority outweighing their numbers, stemming from their leadership of the rebellion. Workers in the south, on the other hand, joined the rebellion only in its final stages, and have tended to follow a more conciliatory strategy.

In the interests of maintaining a solid front against the regime, on October 28 the delegates adopted a compromise resolution that included the threat of a strike on November 12, as well as further court action. They also drew up 10 demands, including government acceptance of the original statutes, publication of them with a notice that the court amendments had been rejected, registration of the peasant organization

(Continued on next page)



Angry workers demonstrate outside Warsaw courthouse following October 24 ruling which amended Solidarnosc statutes.

(Continued from previous page)

affiliated with Solidarnosc (which had been denied registration on the grounds that it wasn't a workers' organization) and release of printing equipment and other supplies sent to Solidarnosc from abroad but held up at the border by customs officials. (*Le Monde*, October 29, 1980.)

Tensions mounted throughout Poland over the next two weeks. On November 6, Solidarnosc announced plans for a series of protest strikes if the Supreme Court rejected its appeal. The government warned against new strikes and attacked "counterrevolutionaries" in the independent trade unions. On November 9, Polish television showed Russian and Polish troops and tanks in joint military maneuvers in an obvious threat against the workers, and turned back foreign reporters with visas trying to enter the country.

But the next day the Supreme Court ruled that the lower court "had no right" to amend the statutes. It accepted the union's proposal to add an "annex" to the statutes reaffirming the pledges of loyalty contained in the original Gdansk settlement. This "court decision" was actually the result of a compromise hammered out between union and government negotiators only hours before the ruling. Nevertheless, it represents another retreat by the PUWP.

Thus the PUWP leadership remains on the defensive in the face of the growing workers' movement. Stanislaw Kania, who replaced Edward Gierek as First Secretary of the PUWP and effective ruler of the country in September, has promised over and over again that the settlement is "irreversible." He has also promised to reorganize the economy, wage a campaign against corrupt government and party officials, loosen censorship regulations and promote more democracy within the PUWP itself. The government has already granted some concrete concessions, such as cutting the workweek from six to five days, and providing wage increases for most Polish workers by the end of October rather than spreading them out through next June as originally planned.

But the ruling class's ultimate goal is to undermine the independent unions and the August 31 agreement as a whole. As the accompanying article explains, the existence of independent unions controlled by the workers themselves threatens to undermine the very basis of state capitalist rule in Poland.

In addition, the ruling class cannot satisfy the economic demands of the workers on a long-term basis. It faces a major economic crisis which includes a \$20 billion foreign debt, a 16 percent rate of inflation, and food and material shortages. Meanwhile, production of coal, sugar beets, potatoes and other goods needed to pay off foreign debts has dropped 20 percent because of the concessions won by the workers. The ruling class has no choice but to discipline the workers—including taking away gains already won—if it is to stabilize the economy.

The Polish ruling class is also under enormous pressure from the Russian and East European state-capitalist rulers to roll back the workers' gains. In October, political leaders in East Germany, Czechoslovakia and Rumania issued warnings that they were ready to come to the aid of Polish "communists" against "anti-socialist" elements. (*New York Times*, October 21, 1980.) The East German government went so far as to severely limit travel between the two countries on October 28.

These rulers fear that the Polish rebellion will spread into their own countries unless it is checked, just as other East European revolts have spread in the past. In 1953, an uprising by East German workers set off major demonstrations in Poland and strikes in Hungary. And in 1956, mass strikes in Poland inspired the Hungarian workers' rebellion. There are already a few signs that the latest Polish revolt is having the same effect. In Estonia, a country on Poland's eastern border conquered by Russia in World War II, students in Tallinn staged demonstrations in early October. Estonian exiles in Sweden also reported that workers in Tartu went on strike against higher production quotas.

These fears were the motive behind the meeting between Kania, Prime Minister Pinkowski and Russian Communist Party boss Leonid Brezhnev in Moscow on October 30. After the meeting these leaders issued a joint statement in which Russia pledged its confidence in the Kania regime. The real meaning of this statement is that the Russian rulers have agreed to give Kania, whose earlier attempts to sabotage the independent union movement failed, more time to gain control over the Polish workers through peaceful means.

Since the Kania/Brezhnev meeting, therefore, a new strategy appears to be emerging. This approach involves the ruling elite "accepting" the existence of

the independent unions, while devoting its major efforts toward trying to bring them under control—that is, make them independent in name only. To this end, Henryk Szablak, a PUWP leader in Warsaw, has called on party members to join the new unions and work actively to ensure their loyalty to the government. (*Economist*, November 1, 1980.) Another aspect of the new strategy has been articulated by Mieczyslaw Rakowski, a member of the PUWP Central Committee. Rakowski has advocated a strategy of trying to isolate the militant wing of Solidarnosc by offering the union "co-responsibility in the exercise of power" if it accepts the leading role of the PUWP. (*Le Monde*, October 8, 1980.)

In other words, the ruling class would make a deal with Lech Walesa and other reformist leaders of the unions that would give them official power and status, but only at the price of Walesa and Co. agreeing to use the unions to discipline the workers in the interests of "solving Poland's economic problems," that is, stabilizing Polish state capitalism. If such a deal could be arranged, the state capitalists hope the mass of workers would eventually become demoralized and the new unions could be integrated with the state and the remnants of the old unions. The result would be a defusing of the present situation and a return to the status quo.

If, however, this strategy does not succeed in resolving the Polish crisis, the Russian leaders may well decide that they can protect their domination of Eastern Europe only by invading the country, even though this would undoubtedly mean civil war.

Walesa clamps lid on militants

Many signs point to a willingness on the part of Walesa, some section of the Solidarnosc leadership, and opposition groups which support them, to go along with the rulers' cooptive strategy. Walesa himself declared at the first national meeting of Solidarnosc delegates in September that the workers "have to help" party leaders who are willing to negotiate with them, saying: "They aren't all bad, and some deserve our consideration." (*Intercontinental Press*, October 13, 1980.) During his southern tour, he argued that while continuing to organize their unions the workers must avoid confrontations that strengthen the hands of the hardline

elements in the PUWP. They should counter the press blackout of their activities by boycotting the mass media, and criticize the delay in registering Solidarnosc by a mass letter-writing campaign to the court. (!) (*Le Monde*, October 22, 1980.)

To carry out this strategy Walesa and other Solidarnosc leaders have tried to clamp a lid on the more militant wing of the workers' movement. Walesa personally intervened to end a wildcat strike at the Ursus tractor factory near Warsaw after returning from his tour. He calls strikes "useless" and a danger to the economy, and claims they must be used only as a last resort. (*Le Monde*, October 22, 1980.)

Thus Walesa has become increasingly isolated from the Gdansk workers who catapulted him into the leadership of the recent mass strikes. This became evident at the meetings in Jastrzebie and later in Gdansk itself, where Walesa opposed their calls for

militant action. Accordi (October 29, 1980), Walling eliminating the pre-darnosc—the day-to-day body that is dominated delegates—in order to influence.

Walesa's strategy is a major opposition group: Catholic Church, which has influence in Poland supports the settlement of the need for internal October 23, Stefan Card the primate of the Church, met with Kania, a joint statement pledged with the government in security and internal p. *Times*, October 23, 1980. Vatican's Polish couns reporters that "It is the Catholics to rescue the Polish United Workers' Ouvres, S

Can Workers in Po

By RON TABER

Among those praising the struggles of the Polish workers have been reformists and social democrats of various kinds. They have pointed to the victories of the workers as proof of the viability of a reformist perspective for transforming society, both within Western capitalist countries and in the Stalinist state-capitalist societies. And they have argued that, by the same token, the Polish events prove the bankruptcy of traditional Leninist strategy, specifically, the need for a working class revolution to overthrow capitalism and for a revolutionary party to lead the workers in this struggle.

For example, in *These Times*, a leading social democratic newspaper, gloated in its September 3-9 issue: "Others have claimed that change in Poland would take place only in the course of a violent, bloody revolution. They were wrong . . ."

In fact, the Polish events prove nothing of the kind. Unfortunately, this may only become apparent after the Polish workers have suffered a profound defeat at the hands of a ruling class hell-bent on reconsolidating its power.

Reformist tendencies have long argued that violent, working class revolu-

tions—revolutions that s ing state and set up new mass democratic organi workers and other oppre are either impossible or u modern capitalist societie to the so-called "backwa The only way to transfo their view, is to do so p gradually, by fighting r reforms, changing a little little bit there, ultimately capitalist society into socialist community.

The social democrats' Polish events demonstrat of their approach rests up related, and often unspo tions. The first is that workers have actually w demands, particularly the independent trade unions and this is the foundation proach, is that the s ruling class can be forced more or less permanent independent trade unions society. Both these cor false.

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Independent unions not yet won

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Russian President Leonid Brezhnev (right) greets PUWP leader Stanislaw Kania at October 30 Moscow meeting.

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militant action. According to *Le Monde* (October 29, 1980), Walesa is considering eliminating the presidium of Solidarnosc—the day-to-day leadership body that is dominated by the Gdansk delegates—in order to lessen their influence.

Walesa's strategy is supported by the major opposition groups in Poland. The Catholic Church, which wields enormous influence in Polish society, supports the settlement, but insists on the need for internal stability. On October 23, Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński, the primate of the Polish Catholic Church, met with Kania and later issued a joint statement pledging cooperation with the government in the interests of security and internal peace. (*London Times*, October 23, 1980.) Earlier, the Vatican's Polish counselor stated to reporters that "It is the task of Polish Catholics to rescue the discredited Polish United Workers' Party." (*Informations Ouvrières*, September 13,

1980.) The Club of Catholic Intellectuals (KIK), which provides legal and economic advisors for the Solidarnosc leadership, is counseling the union leaders to follow this advice. Both during and after the August rebellion, KIK leaders opposed the raising of any political demands. They also advised the union to cooperate with the government and plant managers through the formation of joint worker-management committees. (*Wall Street Journal*, September 22, 1980.) The delegates rejected this as a threat to the independence of their organization.

KOR, the best known dissident group, is also supporting Walesa and other Solidarnosc moderates. For instance, KOR representatives termed a general strike "adventurist" at the national commission's October 27 meeting. KOR is to the left of the KIK in that it opposes joint worker-management councils as a threat to the union, and believes mass social pressure short of

political opposition will be necessary to enforce the settlement. However, KOR's strategy may be collapsing under the conflicting pressures of the workers' demand for reforms, and the regime's need for stability. According to *Le Monde* (October 15, 1980), some members now believe a political organization is necessary in order to coordinate the workers' campaign to enforce their demands, while others are moving toward agreement with the KIK, and the organization's future is in doubt.

The workers themselves are at this point fighting only to reform Polish society, rather than to overthrow the whole system. The consciousness of the working class as a whole remains extremely mixed. The same workers who refer to the PUWP leadership as the "red bourgeoisie" continue to decorate their new union halls with crucifixes and pictures of Pope John Paul II, just as they did during the strike. Many have tremendous illusions in the possibility

of peaceful reform in general, and in the Catholic Church, Walesa, and other reformist opposition leaders in particular. Moreover, they correctly fear that the Russian ruling class may still intervene in Poland to protect its domination of the country. Nevertheless, the conflicts within Solidarnosc itself indicate that a layer of workers is emerging which is determined to fight to enforce the promises included in the August settlement, even if this means opposing Walesa's conciliatory strategy.

The future of the struggle in Poland remains uncertain. Although a compromise has been reached over the Solidarnosc statutes, a host of other demands remain unresolved. The room for further compromises is growing small because of the internal and external pressures on both the Solidarnosc leadership and the PUWP. Unless the workers begin to prepare now for the all-but-inevitable conflict with the ruling class, the gains of the August rebellion will be lost. □

Workers in Poland Win With Reform Strategy?

tions—revolutions that smash the existing state and set up new ones based on mass democratic organizations of the workers and other oppressed people—are either impossible or unnecessary in modern capitalist societies, as opposed to the so-called "backward" countries. The only way to transform society, in their view, is to do so peacefully and gradually, by fighting for piecemeal reforms, changing a little bit here and a little bit there, ultimately transforming capitalist society into a democratic socialist community.

The social democrats' case that the Polish events demonstrate the viability of their approach rests upon two inter-related, and often unspoken, assumptions. The first is that the Polish workers have actually won their demands, particularly the demand for independent trade unions. The second, and this is the foundation of their approach, is that the state-capitalist ruling class can be forced to accept the more or less permanent existence of independent trade unions within Polish society. Both these contentions are false.

The Polish workers have achieved great things; they have organized a national movement, culminating in a national strike that forced the ruling class to promise concessions that would ease the plight of the workers, give them some political rights and some maneuvering room to organize to improve their living standards. Since then, the workers have continued their struggle and appear to have built up at least an embryonic trade union structure independent of the old Party-run unions. Finally, they have—so far—prevented the state-capitalist bureaucrats from regaining the initiative and re-establishing full control over Polish society.

Independent unions not yet won

But what the Polish workers have not done is to actually win independent trade unions. The workers have not consolidated their gains. As a result, the struggle is not over; in fact, the biggest battles may lie ahead. The regime may succeed in defusing their

crisis peacefully as it did in a similar situation in 1956-57. But, if it does not, the result will be a new and violent confrontation between the Polish workers and the Polish state capitalists, backed up by the Russian army, in which the workers, unprepared for such a conflict, will most likely be the losers. In either case, the workers' present struggles will be defeated and the currently touted strategy of the reformists will be shown to be a failure.

The main reason such a defeat is likely is that the social democrats' second assumption—that the Polish ruling class will accommodate itself to the long-term presence of independent trade unions—is pie in the sky. Truly independent unions, that is, unions that are actually controlled by the workers, are a threat to the very existence of the Polish ruling class and state-capitalist society as a whole.

The ruling class in Poland consists of the topmost layers of a bureaucracy organized around the state apparatus. Unlike the capitalists of traditional capitalism (capitalism in Western Europe, the Americas, Japan, etc.), the state capitalists do not own the means of production, the factories, mines, mills, means of transportation and communication, the banks, etc., individually and directly. Instead, they "own" and control them collectively through their control over the state which "owns" them. It is through this control that the state capitalists exploit, that is, pump surplus value out of, the workers in the process of production. And it is through their control over the state that they accumulate capital by reinvesting the bulk of the surplus value to build up and modernize the means of production. While the relation between the working class and the ruling class is basically the same as under traditional capitalism, the internal structure of the ruling class, the relationships within that class, are different. This fact is of crucial importance.

Under traditional capitalism, the employers—individual capitalists, corporations, institutions, etc.—however connected they are in fact, appear to be, and to a degree are, separate from each other. Moreover, the state, while a tool of the capitalist class, appears to be (and also to a degree, is) independent of individual capitalists. As a result, the workers do not automatically see that

the capitalists represent a single class and that the state is the capitalists' tool; and by and large the workers wage their struggles in a fragmented way, on a local or at best an industrywide, level. Only rarely, in times of extreme crisis, do the workers direct their fight against the state and the capitalist class as a whole. While traditional capitalism's pluralistic structure may therefore result in considerable "labor unrest," it does give the system considerable underlying stability.

In state-capitalist societies, on the other hand, the state is the sole or major employer; the ruling class is united around the state, and the state and the ruling class do not appear to be (and aren't) separate at all. In fact, they are virtually identical; the state-capitalist bureaucrats are merely the human representatives of the state. As a result, every struggle the workers launch is necessarily a struggle against the state and the bureaucrats, who together constitute the enemy. For this reason, even low-level struggles over wages, hours, working conditions, elementary rights, etc.—struggles that are not explicitly political, let alone revolutionary—have a tendency to escalate, in what appears to be a merely quantitative way, into mass political struggles against the state, the ruling class as a whole (rather than a section of it) and hence the entire system.

Democratic rights a threat to state

This can be put somewhat differently. Under traditional capitalism, the working class is divided and fragmented by the fact that the workers work for different employers, in different plants, industries, regions, in addition to differences of race, sex, nationality, etc. They appear to have interests based not primarily on class but on other, more pluralistic, factors. In other words, the workers' consciousness is fragmented and divided. United class struggle against the capitalist class, when it occurs, is the result of a long, tortuous struggle through which the workers learn that the capitalists constitute a class, that the state is not neutral and that they, the workers, have a unified

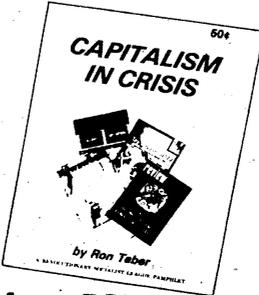
set of interests—class interests—in opposition to those of the capitalist class as a whole.

Under state capitalism, while the workers may be divided by race, sex, nationality, region, etc., the basic unity of the class is posed directly by the fact that they all work for the same set of bosses who not only oppress and cheat them at work, but also manipulate, threaten and bully them in every aspect of their lives. Consequently, the workers have a much greater sense of themselves as a class than do the workers in traditional capitalist societies. When they mobilize to fight for their interests, the need for a united class struggle against the state and the ruling class as a whole is posed almost immediately. This helps explain the volatility of the class struggle in many state-capitalist societies, such as in Eastern Europe, and the dynamic of the current Polish events in particular.

The state-capitalist ruling class knows that the structure of the system does not divide and fragment the workers and their consciousness automatically. They therefore strive to keep the workers atomized directly, by using statist means, including of course a vast secret police apparatus, network of informers, etc., to prevent the workers from communicating with each other and organizing. This, rather than any abstract ideological concern, explains why state-capitalist elites are so

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anxious to deny the workers any democratic rights, particularly the right to organize independently of the state and party, that is, to organize themselves at all.

With this in mind, it should be obvious that the Polish ruling class has absolutely no intention—today or at any other time—of granting the workers the right to have truly independent trade unions. They know that independent trade unions and the continued rule of their own class are incompatible. To accept the permanent presence of such unions would be to voluntarily seal their own doom, to commit collective suicide, something which no ruling class in history has ever done.

If, at the moment, the Polish state capitalists appear to be willing to allow the workers to set up their own unions, this is not because they have reconciled themselves to the presence of such institutions. It is because they have decided that such an appearance is an essential part of a strategy to prevent the workers from winning independent unions; the rulers need the time and the opportunity to regain the initiative and smash the workers and their unions.

At the present time, the Polish bureaucrats, along with their Russian backers, do not want to take the risk of military action to crush the workers. They are afraid that any action on the part of the Polish army might not be effective, since it is not clear that Polish soldiers would fire on their brothers and sisters. The state capitalists also fear that intervention on the part of the Russian army might unite much if not most of the Polish nation against such an invasion, and thus bring about a mass rising, turn Poland into a bloody battlefield, threaten state-capitalist rule throughout Eastern Europe, destroy what is left of detente with the West, and drive the world closer to World War III. While such costs do not necessarily rule out a Russian invasion at some point in the future, they are sufficient to convince the Polish bureaucrats and their Russian counterparts to play out their other, non-military, options to defeat the workers' movement.

If these non-military approaches don't work, however, and the workers continue their strikes and organizing, the Polish state capitalists and their Russian backers will almost certainly resort to military measures.

In sum, the two assumptions upon which the social democrats base their contention that the events in Poland prove the viability of their approach—that independent unions have already been won and that the Polish ruling class can be forced to accept the long-term existence of these unions—are false.

Workers' leaders pursue reformist course

Unfortunately, it is not just the social democrats outside Poland who have built their perspectives on these sand castle propositions. While they know that independent unions have not been won, the most prominent leaders of the struggles in Poland, Lech Walesa and his allies in Solidarnosc, as well as Jacek Kuron of KOR, have based their entire strategy on the same reformist assumptions. As a result, they are leading the Polish workers to almost certain defeat.

In addition to the notion that it is possible to win independent trade

unions within the context of state capitalism, Walesa's strategy is based on a related, equally dubious, assumption. This is the idea that there is a section of the state-capitalist bureaucracy in Poland which wants a substantial liberalization of the Polish regime and hence is an ally of the workers.

As far as we know, no such section of the bureaucracy exists. There are certainly differences within the ruling class over how to respond to the

existence—identity, wealth and power—is tied up with the exploitation of the working class and the accumulation of capital through the state apparatus. They do not believe the working class can actually run society (they would call that "anarchism" and "ultra-leftism") and they have no intention of allowing it to get the chance.

To them, "liberalization" primarily means cutting back the scope of central planning and allowing more play for



Gdansk rebellion, 1970. Polish workers rose up against ruling class in 1956 and 1970. After each uprising "liberal" rulers took over the government, made all kinds of promises to pacify the workers, and then later broke them. Kania is following a similar policy in the wake of the August mass strikes.

present crisis; some bureaucrats undoubtedly prefer taking a hard line against the workers, others want to make concessions.

But those who advocate making concessions to the workers propose to do this not because they favor the concessions, but because they believe that by making concessions today they can more effectively take away the concessions tomorrow. To see such bureaucrats as allies of the workers is therefore ludicrous.

Past Polish leaders Wladislaw Gomułka and Edward Gierek came to power in the wake of working class upsurges as "soft-liners" promising concessions to the workers. Both withdrew the concessions as soon as they had succeeded in derailing the mass movements. They both, in turn, became hard-liners, and were replaced by new "soft-liners" when their policies provoked new working class upsurges. In fact, Gierek replaced Gomułka in precisely this fashion, went through the same cycle and has since been replaced by Stanislaw Kania, who also comes on the scene as someone prepared to "make concessions." How many times does this have to happen before the illusion that the "soft-liners" represent allies of the working class is laid to rest?

It is possible that there is a significant grouping of real "liberalizers" within the Polish bureaucracy. But it would be a grievous error to base a strategy on allying with them. In the first place, it is highly doubtful that there are enough of them or that they have anywhere nearly enough power in the bureaucracy to be a significant force.

Secondly, these liberalizers would be no more the allies of the workers than Kania, Gierek, Gomułka and the rest of the bureaucrats. All these people are capitalist bureaucrats. Their entire

market forces in the economy. It may, but need not, involve easing, but not eliminating, censorship and giving people, particularly the intellectuals, a bit more leeway. Rather than improving the living standards of the workers and increasing their hold over the economy, the purpose of such "liberalization," whether in Czechoslovakia in 1968 or Hungary today, has been to "improve" state capitalism, that is, raise productivity, worsen working conditions and increase unemployment—all in all, to improve the ability of the ruling class to pump surplus value out of the workers and accumulate capital.

The liberalizers are therefore no allies of the workers. Where they pretend to support the workers' interests it is to use the working class as a political counterweight to their opponents within the state-capitalist bureaucracy. Once the liberalizers' goals are met, or if the workers show signs of going beyond the liberalizers' program, the liberalizers will turn on the workers in an instant. Even if a substantial liberalizing faction of the bureaucracy existed in Poland, it would be sheer folly to base a strategy on building an alliance with them.

Nevertheless, this is what Walesa and those in the Solidarnosc leadership who agree with him appear to be doing. To put such a strategy into practice, they are pursuing a course that will undercut and eventually destroy the workers' movement itself. Walesa's approach, not unlike that of the liberalizers, involves using the workers as a pressure group to improve his bargaining power in negotiations with the government. "Unless you grant us our demands," he in effect is telling the government, "I cannot keep the workers under control; they will continue to strike and disrupt production." This puts him in the position of acting as a mediator between the regime and

the workers.

To play this role, however, Walesa has to try to hold back the workers' struggle. He has to tell the mass of workers, many of whom are just beginning to organize and struggle, that they should not do so, in order to avoid "provoking" the hard-liners in the government or the Russians. And he must try to prevent the most militant workers, those who are getting tired of negotiating and want to organize a new general strike to win their demands, from gaining too much influence among the other workers.

The longer negotiations drag on without result, the more he is threatened by the militants and the more he must rely on manipulation to keep them isolated from the rest of the workers. Yet, the more he resorts to such measures the more he divides the movement, weakens it, and thus undercuts his ability to bargain with the regime. Over time, his position will become untenable. Thus Walesa's dilemma is one that reformists have found themselves in every time they place themselves at the head of a mass working class upsurge and try to contain it within pro-capitalist boundaries rather than lead it to the overthrow of the entire system.

The result of such "leadership" has always been either: 1) to help the ruling class resolve its crises relatively peacefully, giving it a free hand to repress by firing, imprisoning or killing the workers' leaders. This is what happened in Poland in 1956-57. Or, 2) to set the stage for a violent confrontation with the armed forces of capitalism in which the workers, having been led to believe that by being reasonable they could avoid such an eventuality, are thoroughly unprepared. This is what happened in Chile in 1973.

A dangerous road lies ahead

Today, Lech Walesa and his allies are spreading tremendous illusions among the mass of the Polish workers, specifically that his reformist approach can both win independent trade unions and ward off a military response from the Polish government and the Russians. As a result, he is leading the workers blindfolded into a trap. Either the bureaucrats' cooptive strategy is effective, in which case the workers will have gone through months of terrific struggles and organizing efforts for naught. Or, if the bureaucrats' maneuvers fail to defuse the situation more or less peacefully, the workers will find themselves facing the Polish and/or Russian army without having made the appropriate political, military and organizational preparations.

In either case the workers will suffer a profound defeat. Precisely which of these two fates awaits the workers in Poland is not clear. What should be clear is that unless the workers break from the reformist path advocated by Walesa and reformists worldwide and begin to arm and organize themselves and the rest of the Polish people for a revolutionary struggle to overthrow the entire Polish ruling class and Polish state capitalism as a whole, they will be defeated one way or another.

In other words, the outcome of the present struggle in Poland, we are afraid, will prove not the viability of the reformist perspectives, but precisely the opposite. It will prove that by following the reformists' lead, the Polish workers can only lose. □

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By FRAN:

NOVEMBER

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Joint military operation un

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Right-Wing Junta Takes the Offensive

By FRANZ MARTIN

NOVEMBER 5—Since the August general strike called by left-wing forces in El Salvador, the ruling rightist military/Christian Democratic junta has launched an offensive against the national liberation movement.

Late in October, the rural northeastern province of Morazan was sealed off by government troops while an army of 5,000—reportedly including some U.S. military advisors—entered the area to disperse guerrilla forces. No reporters have been allowed into Morazan since the offensive began, but reports from guerrilla and Catholic Church sources indicate that government troops are using helicopter gunships, incendiary bombs and napalm against the civilian peasant population. At least 40,000 have fled the area, by Red Cross estimates. The government claims to have killed 150 guerrillas and destroyed several of their training camps.

Morazan and its neighboring provinces along the mountainous border with Honduras have been guerrilla strongholds for years. The recently formed Peoples Liberation Army, which is a joint military force of all the groups fighting the junta, claims to have 15,000, armed and trained combatants. About 3,000 of these are based in Morazan province, though most reports indicate that they are not well armed.

Joint military operation underway

The junta's military offensive was carefully timed to coincide with the signing of a peace treaty between El Salvador and the equally right-wing government of Honduras. El Salvador and Honduras have technically been at war for 11 years over a border dispute. This prevented them from solidifying a political/military alliance to control the leftist guerrillas who threaten both regimes. But immediately after the treaty was signed on October 30, both countries announced a joint military operation against the thousands of Salvadoreans, both civilian and guerrillas, who have gathered in primitive camps along both sides of the Honduras border.

At the same time, the junta announced an extension of the state of siege which it has imposed on the country for over seven months. This "emergency measure" is designed to control the bloody civil war by crushing organizing efforts of the liberation forces. Among other things, it allows searches and arrests without warrants, prohibits street rallies, and imposes strict press censorship.

U.S. sends aid to junta

In the minds of the rightist junta members, there are good reasons for optimism. First, the most recent major action by the left—the attempted general strike in August—was not as successful as its leaders had hoped, largely because of intense government repression.

Second, the junta, which was once considered a center/right coalition, has been able to eliminate its remaining centrist forces without opposition. The group of younger, reform-minded officers grouped around Colonel Adolfo Arnaldo Majano were all removed from positions of influence in September after it was revealed that Majano was secretly negotiating with the Fuerzas Armadas de Resistencia Nacional (FARN—Armed Forces of National Resistance), one of the main opposition groups.

Third, U.S. support for the junta has been reaffirmed and U.S. aid increased. Already this year El Salvador has received \$92 million in economic aid and \$5.7 million in military aid from the U.S. In addition, the U.S. is training several hundred Salvadorean military officers in counter-insurgency techniques at a



Victims of terrorist attack lie unburied near San Miguel.

U.S. Army school in Panama.

And recently, the U.S. ambassador to El Salvador, Robert White, expressed the view that right-wing extremists in El Salvador are no longer a threat. This is a clear signal to the junta that the U.S. favors a government policy which concentrates its repressive forces exclusively against the left.

For its part, the left appears to be moving toward a higher degree of organizational unity. Recent creation of the Peoples Liberation Army and the Farabundo-Marti National Liberation Front (both of which are broad left coalitions) represent steps in that direction. Military tactics of the left seem to be concentrated on economic sabotage, especially directed against the transportation and electrical power systems of the country. The junta is predicting a major guerrilla offensive in December to disrupt the essential harvest of cotton, coffee and sugar and further weaken the crippled Salvadorean economy. □



WORLD IN REVOLUTION

New protests erupt in Azania

Black workers and students in Azania (South Africa) are continuing their struggle for freedom against the white minority ruling class. On November 7, Black students participating in a nationwide school boycott damaged 12 anti-riot vehicles during a struggle with police in New Brighton township, near Port Elizabeth. Four students were killed and 16 wounded in the fighting. In Soweto, over 3,000 people went into the streets on October 16 to protest a visit by Pieter Koornhof, the government's Minister for Black Affairs. Freedom fighters blew up railroad tracks in Soweto in conjunction with the demonstrations. Koornhof was made an "honorary citizen" of Soweto by the township's community council, a group of toadies who took office in an election boycotted by 94 percent of the voters shortly after the 1976 Soweto uprising. The award outraged Blacks in Soweto, who are denied citizenship in their own country under the white regime's racist apartheid system.

The ruling class, meanwhile, is continuing to grant piecemeal reforms in the hope of heading off a full-scale rebellion. On October 31, Prime Minister Pieter Botha's government announced proposed legislation which would allow "legal" residents of the Black townships—defined as "bona fide employees and servants"—the right to live in them indefinitely. As of now, all Blacks in the townships are "temporary sojourners" subject to expulsion to the so-called "Black homelands." At the same time, the government is tightening up restrictions limiting immigration into the townships. These measures are part of an overall strategy aimed at creating a relatively privileged urban Black working class loyal to the white regime. However, the recent demonstrations show that such divide-and-rule tactics have failed to stem the Black revolt in Azania.

Iraq gaining in war against Iran

As we go to press, the Iraqi government, which invaded Iran on September 16, appears to be achieving its immediate objectives in the war. The Iraqi army is slowly gaining control of the oil-rich province of Khuzistan. On October 24, Iraqi troops captured Khurranshahr and are currently besieging Abadan, the center of the Iranian oil industry. Iranian fuel supplies have fallen sharply as a result of the Iraqi gains and, as a result, the Iranian air force is flying fewer missions. Blackouts are occurring two or three times a day in Tehran because of lack of fuel for the city's oil-fired power station. On November 9, the Iranian government tripled gasoline prices to cut consumer consumption. However, Iraqi casualties are going up in the fighting around Abadan, and President Saddam Hussein's regime is calling on men over 65 to volunteer for war-related duties.

Although the U.S. remains officially neutral in the war, it is trying to gain every advantage it can from it. Its immediate goal is the release of the hostages captured during the U.S. embassy takeover last year. The Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's regime is under pressure to return them because it needs Iranian assets in the U.S., which were frozen after the seizure of the embassy, to repair its military machine and its economy. On November 2, the Iranian Majlis (parliament) issued its terms for the hostages' release. U.S. diplomats met with Algerian officials, who are acting as go-betweens in the negotiations, and drew up a response to the Iranian demands on November 11. The Iranian government has not yet issued an official reply.

More broadly, the U.S. ruling class hoped that an Iraqi victory in the war would weaken the Khomeini regime and increase the influence of the moderates, such as President Bani-Sadr, in the government. The U.S. imperialists are now afraid that Iraq may be going too far. On October 20, Secretary of State Edmund Muskie stated that the U.S. was opposed to "the dismemberment of Iran" while President Carter declared: "It is in our interests to have a strong Iran." They fear that an Iraqi conquest of Khuzistan could lead to the break-up of the Iranian state. This would give the Russian ruling class, which has a long common border with Iran and 100,000 troops in neighboring Afghanistan, a chance to pick up the pieces and extend its influence in the Middle East.

Was It a Defeat for Socialism?

JLP Sweeps Jamaican Elections

Below we are printing a statement by the Revolutionary Marxist League of Jamaica (RML), the sister organization of the RSL. It was written just after the general elections in Jamaica on October 30.

The Jamaican elections brought the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) to power after eight years as the opposition. The JLP's leader, Edward Seaga, was sworn in as the new prime minister on November 1. Defeated in the election was the People's National Party (PNP) government led by Michael Manley. The article refers several times to the Workers' Party of Jamaica (WPJ). The WPJ is the country's major pro-Cuba, pro-Russia organization.

The JLP has won the 1980 Jamaica general elections by a landslide; it looks as if the party will take 51 of the 60 seats in the parliament. The PNP, which won 43 of 60 seats in the 1976 general elections, has thereby gone down in a stunning defeat—a defeat which has seen 10 ministers in the previous PNP government, including leading PNP left-winger and former Minister of Finance Hugh Small, losing their seats.

It is clear that both the PNP and the JLP engaged in thuggery and voting fraud in certain constituencies on election day. Also, PNP General Secretary D.K. Duncan charged that members of the security forces aided the JLP in these abuses and otherwise obstructed the PNP's participation in the voting exercise. However, the JLP's victory was so great that these incidents could hardly have affected the overall results in any significant way.

The tremendous sweep of the JLP's victory shows a massive swing away from the PNP across the country and within all classes of Jamaican society. What accounts for this is the PNP's failure to provide answers to the persistent economic decline, wide-

spread violence and civil strife, and other symptoms of the severe national crisis which has affected the country.

A defeat for liberalism

In typical liberal fashion, the liberal capitalist PNP tried to deal with the crisis while balancing between the various social classes. It ended up pleasing nobody and losing support in all quarters.



Manley.

Thus, in 1977 the PNP went to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for a loan. While maintaining its radical anti-imperialist rhetoric and poses, under the agreement signed with the IMF, the PNP unleashed a barrage of attacks on the working and oppressed people. The working masses were exposed to some of the most terrible hardships—crippling shortages, skyrocketing prices, massive layoffs and factory closures leading to sharply rising unemployment. Many middle class people also experienced a steep drop in their living standards and a lessening of their chances of "getting ahead" socially.

The working people rebelled

against these conditions through strikes, demonstrations and other forms of protest. For their part, growing numbers of middle class people turned away from Manley and the PNP. Meanwhile, a lot of the capitalists were not satisfied even though the workers were being heavily attacked and they were guaranteed a 20 percent rate of profit. These capitalists wanted the masses attacked even harder. They wanted a government that would run Jamaican capitalism in a blunt and straightforward way. Consequently, they overwhelmingly backed the reactionary pro-imperialist JLP.

Particularly during the last two years, therefore, the PNP's popular support has dwindled steadily. PNP supporters locally and abroad have pointed to right-wing propaganda, U.S. destabilization activities, capitalist economic sabotage and the partisan, pro-JLP bias within the security forces as reasons for the PNP's defeat. While these factors undoubtedly helped the JLP, the PNP's downfall fundamentally represents a defeat of that party's liberal politics. Through its vacillating, rightward-drifting policies, the PNP drove the working and oppressed people into the clutches of the reactionary JLP.

A revolutionary working class policy needed

Only a bold revolutionary working class policy could have held the support of the working masses and poorer middle class people. A policy based on measures such as:

- 1) rollback of prices on basic items to pre-IMF levels;
- 2) takeover without com-

pensation of all industry, beginning with those factories that have been closed down, under workers' control;

3) takeover without compensation of all land holdings over 25 acres; distribution of these lands to small farmers, landless youth and agricultural workers;

4) cancellation of the massive debt the capitalists have run up over the years and use of the country's foreign exchange earnings to finance the purchase of essential goods; efforts to win international working class support for this stand, especially in countries with left-leaning governments.

The RML was the only organization that put forward such a revolutionary policy. But the RML was not in a position to run candidates in the election. In the absence of such a clear, revolutionary working class alternative, working and oppressed people, recoiling from the PNP's liberal capitalist policies, landed squarely in the JLP camp.

Contrary to what the reactionaries are saying, therefore, the elections do not represent a victory over communism: neither communism nor real socialism were offered in the October 30 election. The PNP represented a liberal capitalist party on a rightward course. The Workers' Party of Jamaica (WPJ) simply tailed that party.

It is true that especially since the ouster of Eric Gairy in Grenada the local reactionaries and the U.S. imperialists have been seriously worried about the growing influence of the Russian and Cuban state capitalists and their local allies, such as the WPJ, in Jamaica and the Caribbean region. During the last two or so years, the JLP has been running a vicious anti-communist campaign, notably around the Cuban Ambassador Ulises Estrada and the activity of Cubans in Jamaica.

This venture was made easier for it by the heavy political support which the WPJ and other local left groups, along with the Cuban and Russian state capitalists, gave to the PNP. This close alliance of these supposedly communist forces with a government which was harshly attacking the masses served to discredit communism in the eyes of many working and oppressed

people. It is therefore not unexpected that some working people voted JLP out of anti-communist sentiments. However, since not even a so-called communist party like the WPJ—let alone a revolutionary Marxist organization such as the RML—ran in the recent elections, the result cannot be accepted as a defeat for communism.

A victory for reaction

However the results are certainly a victory for the forces of reaction gathered around the JLP. It is highly noteworthy that the first official act of the new JLP government was to demand the recall of Cuban Ambassador Estrada. This shows that despite their denial of any intentions to suppress communist views, Seaga and the JLP will in practice clamp down hard

on communists and other leftists.

It is also notable that although Seaga and the JLP have promised in the past to wipe out victimization, since the JLP victory, JLP thugs have been hounding PNP supporters out of government housing units. Yet up to Forward press time, Seaga has not even made an appeal to his supporters to stop these atrocities. In some cases, members of the security forces and especially the army have been involved in carrying out these outrages.

This is a very serious matter. In its manifesto, the JLP promised to take steps to beef up the security forces, includ-

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Seaga.

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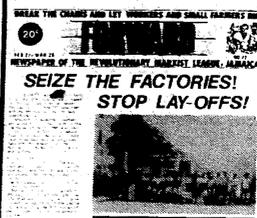
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(Continued from page 16) disadvantaged themselves—Blacks, gays, etc.—are benefits from the system which in turn take class to pay for programs. The capring up and using of anti-communist sentiments to slash regulations, and through a market which in reality benefit the corporations.

The results of the election do show that the forces of the middle class and right-wing movements, backed by the bourgeoisie, have gained more society relative to the working class. Among them, however, there is a desire for change to get better—a clear right-wing victory.

2. Nevertheless, Reagan was elected. How can we expect more rights?

The answer to this question, like the first one, is simple—if we simply

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U.S. Elections

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disadvantaged than themselves—Blacks, Latins, refugees, etc.—are getting all the benefits from the government, which in turn taxes the middle class to pay for the social programs. The capitalists are stirring up and using these sentiments to slash social services, to fight for less government regulation, and to try to push through a massive tax cut, which in reality would mostly benefit the corporations.

The results of the elections do show that these sections of the middle class, organized into the increasingly powerful right-wing movement and backed by the capitalists, have gained more power in the society relative to other sections. Among most people, however, there seems to be a desire for change—for things to get better—without having a clear right-wing expression.

2. Nevertheless, given that Reagan was elected, can't we expect more right-wing policies?

The answer to this question, like the first one, is also yes—if we simply look at the

surface. Reagan will undoubtedly give a somewhat more right-wing tinge to government policies both here and abroad. But Reagan, like many presidents before him, has already moved—and will continue to do so—to the “center,” to more moderate policies.

For example, during the campaign, Reagan backed off his opposition to social security and reversed his support for anti-union right-to-work laws. Since the elections, he has decided not to liquidate the Department of Education, a move strongly advocated by the right wing. Reagan—and the capitalist class behind him—knows that to carry out a hardline right-wing program would be to provoke a fight-back among workers and the oppressed that would make the recent Miami rebellion seem mild by comparison.

In addition, the right-wing policies that Reagan does carry out would have been followed if Carter—or Anderson or Kennedy for that matter—had been elected. As we have indicated, the ruling

class itself has shifted to the right, and whoever is the president—Democrat or Republican, “right” or “left”—must try to satisfy its needs and goals, and those of the system as a whole.

Most important, people should keep in mind that what we do will play a big role in how far right the government and the ruling class move. Right now, the various social movements—from the labor movement to the Black, women's, lesbian and gay, etc., movements—are weak and on the defensive relative to the right wing. Before the elections, the pro-Democratic Party leaderships of these movements put a brake on most organizing and strug-

gles, so as not to hurt Carter's chances of re-election. They tried to channel all discontent into support for tepid politicians. With the elections over, however, these leaderships will be under increasing pressure to take more militant action in defense of our living standards and rights—and will be increasingly exposed if they do not.

The potential exists to take the initiative away from the right wing. To do so, the workers' movement will have to break from its class-collaborationist policies and leaderships and wage a struggle against the bosses' offensive. The Black, Latin, women's and gay movements will have to break from notions that

electing more Black, Latin, women or gay officials is the road to political power, and start organizing to meet government and racist and sexist attacks. And, most of all, **everyone** who is the target of the right wing's program should unite to defend each other and fight for our common interests.

These steps will not come easily or all at once. But the low voter turnout and the rejection of the Democratic Party on the part of many workers show that many people are open to, and looking for, new methods of fighting, new solutions. This may be more important than any elections in determining what happens in the next period. □

Jamaican Elections

(Continued from page 16)

ing the urgent establishment of two additional army camps in Montego Bay and Ocho Rios. What this means is that working and oppressed people can expect a repetition of the widespread police/military brutality and repression which occurred under the JLP from 1962-72.

On the economic front, the JLP has promised to reactivate idle industrial plants, create thousands of new jobs, put money in working people's pockets, and otherwise generally turn the economy around. But the JLP can no more firmly halt the island's present economic slide than the PNP was able to. For the present crisis of Jamaican capitalism is part of a developing crisis of the entire world capitalist system. It is a crisis that is deeply rooted in the contradictions of private capitalist ownership and control of the means of production. It can only be solved by revolutionary socialist measures.

But the JLP's economic strategy is an openly right-wing and pro-imperialist one. The JLP is bent on strengthening private capitalist control of the Jamaican economy by means of measures such as selling off certain government-owned enterprises to private

sector interests, easing taxes on the capitalists and imposing restrictions on trade union activity. This will involve actions like the imposing of a compulsory “cooling off” period in industrial disputes and outlawing wildcat strikes.

The JLP also intends once again to make the local economy almost wholly dependent on U.S. imperialism for foreign exchange, markets and other economic input. A return to the U.S.-dominated IMF is central to this. Though Seaga claims that the IMF is only one possible source of foreign exchange, he made sure to have discussions with the IMF even while he was the opposition leader. While the JLP will most likely get better terms from the IMF than did the PNP, any agreement with the IMF will mean many of the same hardships that the working people faced in the last two years of the PNP regime.

In addition, the JLP regime can be expected to pursue the neo-colonial Puerto Rican model. This involves pawning the country to U.S. investors in return for some more jobs in sweatshop-type industries such as garment manufacturing. With the cooperation of the capitalists and general subsidies from U.S. imperialism, it's likely that the JLP

will be able to provide a few more low-paying jobs, some more items in the supermarkets and certain other economic improvements. But these developments will prove mostly cosmetic. The working people will still be asked to pay for the crisis of capitalism.

The JLP's victory doesn't mean that we must draw back from the struggle. It is precisely strong working class action that will limit the right-wing appetite of the JLP and its backers. Left-wing militants, communists and class-conscious workers must step up the struggle against military/police repression and PNP/JLP terror, and for jobs paying decent wages, housing and the other things that we need to live. This must be done especially in the trade unions. The best of the worker militants must be welded into the cadre of the vitally needed revolutionary communist workers' party.

It must be realized however that the revolutionary working class struggle will face greater obstacles. The JLP's election victory has strengthened the hands of the capitalists and imperialists and hardened right-wing sentiment among sections of working people. The struggle for revolutionary socialism continues, but the pace will be much slower and every inch, every gain, bitterly contested. □

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