

# TORCH

NEWSPAPER OF THE REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST LEAGUE

VOLUME 7, NUMBER 12

DECEMBER 15, 1980-JANUARY 14, 1981/25¢



## Right-Wing Attacks Escalate:

**Poland and  
the Crisis of  
the Left**

See page 15

**Philadelphia  
Conference  
Forms Black  
Independent  
Party**

See page 3

**'Gang of Four'  
Trials Cap  
Victory for Deng  
Faction in China**



See page 12

**SECCION  
EN  
ESPAÑOL**

- **All-white jury acquits Nazi/Klan murderers in Greensboro, North Carolina** —See page 5
- **Ex-cop shoots up gay bars in New York's Greenwich Village; two dead** —See page 9
- **Congress moves to roll back civil rights gains** —See page 16

## Ultra-Rightists Plan Coup in El Salvador

By FRANZ MARTIN

The right-wing offensive against the national liberation struggle in El Salvador has escalated dramatically in the past few weeks. On November 27, in a staggering blow to the organized liberation movement, a right-wing paramilitary squad, aided by the Salvadorean army, killed six leaders of the broad opposition coalition, the Frente Democrático Revolucionario (FDR—Revolutionary Democratic Front), and are thought to have murdered 20 others in a well-planned raid on a leadership meeting in San Salvador, the nation's capital.

As the top-level meeting of oppositionists began in a Jesuit high school, 200 armed men surrounded the building. According to witnesses, approximately 180 of them were dressed in police and military uniforms. While helicopters hovered over the building a group of 20, in civilian clothes, entered the school and removed the leftists' political leaders at gunpoint. Shortly after, the bodies of six men, including five members of the FDR's executive committee, were found. All had been tortured before being shot to death. The left arm of one victim had been chopped off. The remaining kidnap victims have not yet been found.

The extent of this blow to the liberation forces is indicated by the



Remains of car in front of cathedral in San Salvador after right-wing bombing, November 28.

known dead: Enrique Alvarez Cordova, secretary general of the FDR; Juan Chacon, head of the Bloque Popular Revolucionario. (BPR—Popular Revolutionary Bloc), largest of the opposition factions; Manuel Franco, head of the Union Democratica Nacional (UDN—National Democratic Union), affiliated with the Salvadorean Communist Party; Enrique Barrera, a

leading social democrat; Humberto Mendoza, head of the Movimiento de Liberacion Popular (MLP—Popular Liberation Movement); and Doroteo Hernandez, a union leader.

Officials of the Salvadorean military/Christian Democratic junta, which has been ruling the country under a state of siege for nearly a year, (Continued on page 14)

**our  
readers  
write...**

Send letters to:  
TORCH, PO Box 1288  
New York, NY 10116

## Rastafarians harassed in New York prison

Dear Sir,  
... I wish to inform you that I am a Rastafarian, and that all Rastafarians throughout the New York state prison system have a class-action lawsuit, which has been pending at a federal court in Manhattan for the past two years. There has been a restraining order permitting all Rastafarians to have and grow their hair in dreadlocks, which is part of our religious culture. However the Rastafarian community here at Clinton Correctional Facility is faced with a series of continuous problems that are imposed by the administration of this facility directly to us as Rastafarians.  
As a result, we are now forced to have our hair tied back in a rubberband, been denied the opportunity to wear our religious crowns, and also been deprived of a vegetarian diet. We see all this as harassment, and religious persecution.

I also want you to take note that this facility is the only facility that I am aware of that takes these kinds of actions towards us as Rastafarians. On December 21, 1979, I was transferred from Attica Correctional Facility and on my arrival here at Clinton I was placed on keeplock status after I refused to comb out my hair, which was in dreadlocks at the time and is impossible to be combed. I was placed in a Special Housing Unit, and given a Superintendent's Proceedings, in which I received a disposition of 30 days' confinement to Special Housing Unit, and 30 days' loss of goodtime. Anyway, that Superintendent's Proceedings was reversed by the departmental review board on August 1, 1980. I was also subjected to the same kind of harassment on August 4, 1980. When I was transferred back here from Great Meadow Correctional Facility and given a Superintendent's Proceedings for my dreadlocks again,

however, that Proceedings was dismissed at an August 14, 1980, hearing.

Moreover, I am still subjected to this kind of harassment, and am continuously being placed on keeplock status, which all pertains to my hair, as recent as October 1, 1980. I was given a report of misbehavior for not having my hair tied back as I was out of my cell. I was again given a Superintendent's Proceedings in which I was given a disposition of 30 days' confinement to my cell.

On behalf of the Rastafarian Committee and Community here at Clinton Correctional Facility, we are now asking your assistance and the assistance of anyone who may be concerned in having this instant matter resolved.

Respectfully,  
AS

## 'We must take control of our destinies'

Comrades,  
I have been receiving your paper, **Torch/La Antorcha**, for the past six to eight months of my incarceration.

As a prisoner in Amerika's concentration kamp in Vacaville, California, I must say your paper has been one of the most informative when dealing with the liberation of gay men/lesbians, the working class, and all oppressed peoples of color (this includes those whites progressive enough to realize their destiny is bound up with the destiny of all oppressed peoples).

Your coverage of the KKK,

Nazis and other right-wing anti-humanists (and this includes any religious group that gains and sustains power at the price of the human race) have made me see in no uncertain terms the necessity of a national united front against these backward elements.

We must bring ALL oppressed people together as one progressive unit in order to achieve total human liberation. Without this type of unity, we will never win.

If we look around us today, we will see that the human species "is on the verge of destroying itself."

As an Afrikan and a gay

man, I realize that, with respect to our mother earth and all living things on her body, we can come together and destroy the war machines of all ruling classes that threaten to destroy all living things (the grass, skies, rain, people, etc.).

We must take control of our destinies in accordance with our individual and collective nature.

The earth is begging us to free her from all the MADNESS ... Can we afford to ignore her?

Sincerely,  
JW  
Vacaville, CA

### RSL Film Series

#### CHICAGO

7 p.m., Sunday evenings  
Crossroads Cafe  
3206 N. Wilson

#### January 11:

**The Glass House**  
With Alan Alda and  
Billy Dee Williams.

A film about life behind prison walls, and the struggle against prison rape. With a talk by Russell Smith, of People Organized to Stop Rape of Imprisoned Persons (POS RIP)

#### February 8:

**Last Grave at Dimbaza**

#### March 8:

**Salt of the Earth**

For information, call:  
(312) 226-5915

## 'Materially support the TORCH'

Dear RSL Comrades:

It is indeed a rare occasion for me to entreat that a letter of mine be printed. But my view of the concrete circumstances besetting a financially constrained Left publication, **Torch/La Antorcha**, compels me to make an exception.

I would desire to briefly address those denizens who make up the incarcerated populace of this nation's prisons and jails. As a fellow slave of the state, though revolutionarily permeated, I am well aware that the greatest majority of you can make monetary contributions towards the continuing propaganda and educative efforts of **Torch**. Quite a few of you proclaim to be a part of, or sympathize with, the U.S. Left, but when you are called upon to financially aid in furthering the work of the Left, your practice shifts to selfish individualism. It appears that it is considered as "too much" of a "sacrifice" to deny yourselves a pack or two of cigarettes, candy bars, or foodstuff in order to materially contribute to Left publications, thereby guaranteeing that the causes of the proletariat and oppressed will be advanced!

Daily we are witnessing the rising rightists, that is, ultra-conservatism, making deeper forays into the ranks of the unpoliticized proletarians. Of course the right is only sectionally organized, but it is on the offensive, and the Left is its primary target. We of the Left have got to understand that this is no tactical offensive, but one that is strategic in nature, whose consequences, if belatedly challenged from a position of weakness, will set the proletarian struggle back by many years,

maybe decades. We cannot take anything for granted, nor can we remain passive, basking under a ray of fantasy of wishful-type thinking, sterilely assuming that "others" will donate financially to sustain **Torch** and other Left publications.

I beseech all incarcerated slaves to materially support the **Torch** for both its continuity and power as an effective tool of the proletariat and oppressed minorities. The viable effectiveness of **Torch** hinges on our ability to ensure its publication. I would hope that my imprisoned comrades would take up this call and campaign in their respective placements. We cannot afford to sacrifice **Torch**. We are optimistic that you will heed these few words by materially supporting **Torch** with whatever contributions you are capable of surrendering. Your donations of today will guarantee all of our struggling tomorrows.

Comrade Awali

#### Editor's Note:

We appreciate Comrade Awali's efforts to appeal to prisoner readers of the **Torch/La Antorcha** to contribute to our fund drive. However, we are aware that many of our readers in prison do not in fact have money beyond that needed for bare subsistence. Even a pack of cigarettes or a candy bar can be a much needed "essential" in conditions which do not allow for any luxuries. We have always been very thankful for those monetary contributions we do receive from our prisoner readers. However, we wish to make clear that it is the ongoing political dialogue which matters to us above all else.

## IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 Ultra-rightists plan coup in El Salvador
- 3 National Black Independent Party formed
- 4 New Orleans police kill four 'Armed gang' terrorizes LA
- 5 Racists acquitted in Greensboro Anti-Klan activists meet
- 6 Wilmington 10 convictions overturned
- 6 Gay group nixed at Okla. prison
- 7 Prisoners report on struggles
- 8 Detroit community fights GM's plans
- 9 Two gay men murdered in Greenwich Village 1,300 women protest at Pentagon
- 10 'Progressive Student Network' formed
- 11 Toxic waste law triggers dumping spree
- 12 'Gang of Four' trial caps victory for Deng faction
- 15 Poland and the crisis of the left

#### FEATURES

- 2 our readers write
- 6 Break the Chains  
Tommy Lee Hines... Starke prison... In brief
- 8 Labor in Struggle  
Amityville nurses... Norwood strike...  
Scab coal at TVA
- 14 World in Revolution  
Haiti... Uruguay
- 16 Editorial  
Congress moves against civil rights gains

# 1,400 People Meet in Philadelphia; Form National Black Independent Party

By WILLIAM FALK

When Jimmy Carter was elected president in 1976, his margin of victory was largely attributed to the Black vote. This put to the test a theory long-held by many middle class Black leaders: that Black people in the U.S. could win meaningful gains, through holding a "balance of power" in elections, if three conditions were met. These were:

1) The white vote would have to be split between the Republican and Democratic party candidates;

2) Black people would have to vote in large numbers for one of the candidates, leading to that candidate's election; and

3) The crucial role of the Black vote would have to be publicly acknowledged.

This is exactly what happened in the 1976 presidential elections.

But far from conditions getting better for Black people in the four years of Carter's presidency, they got worse. The economic position of Black people declined both absolutely and in comparison to whites. Racist attacks became more open and more frequent. And needed government programs were cut back or axed altogether.

The Carter presidency led to widespread disillusionment among Blacks with the Democratic Party, which has been considered the party of Black people since the days of Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal. That feeling increased further after the failure of Ted Kennedy to win his party's nomination.

It was in this context that on November 21-23 some 1,400 people attended a convention in Philadelphia called by the National Black Political Assembly (NBPA) to found an independent Black political party—a turnout over twice as

large as the organizers had expected.

Delegates came from 26 states and the District of Columbia, with the largest delegations from Pennsylvania (488), New York (243), Washington, D.C. (159), Maryland (92) and Ohio (92). Most were a new generation of activists; half were attending their first Black political conference in at least three years and over half were 30 years old or younger.

Looking around at the size of the convention during the first session at the Benjamin Franklin High School in Philadelphia, delegates seemed to have good reason for optimism about its success. "It's Black party time, it's Black party time," they chanted.

And by the time they left on Sunday, a Black party had indeed been proclaimed—named the National Black Independent Political Party—two leadership bodies had been set up to hold it together, and a convention was scheduled for next summer.

But there were many things about the convention that dampened the initial enthusiasm and raised questions about whether the new party will be able to get off the ground.

In particular, no real agreement was reached about what the party should stand for or do. The organizers of the meeting from the NBPA had come into the convention with a proposed party charter that they expected to pass without serious opposition. Instead, a grouping based in the New York and Illinois delegations waged a fight to substitute two alternate documents—one a statement of purpose, the other on rules and structure—to the goals, structure and purpose sections of the party charter written by the NBPA group.

Although the issues were

never discussed or debated openly on the convention floor, it is possible to identify the broad political differences between the two groupings.

## NBPA leads moderate wing

The more moderate faction was led by the NBPA people, including a large number of established Black academic figures: NBPA head Ron Daniels, a professor of Afro-American studies at Kent State University; Barbara Sizemore, former superintendent of schools for Washington, D.C., and currently a professor at the University of Pittsburgh; and Manning Marable,

platform. The NBPA-proposed charter states:

**"Black politics involves the struggle to achieve just laws and policies which establish principles or distribute resources, the process of election or appointment to positions of public or private leadership, the development of social resources through confrontation and cooperation at community levels, and the relations among black peoples and black institutions in the process of internal development."**

To this end, the charter states that the Independent Black Party's role is to:

**"Impact upon those instruments of political power through which so much of the resources of this society are**

dualist policy of self-help, that is, the notion that Black people improving themselves within the confines of the capitalist system, is the way to achieve liberation.

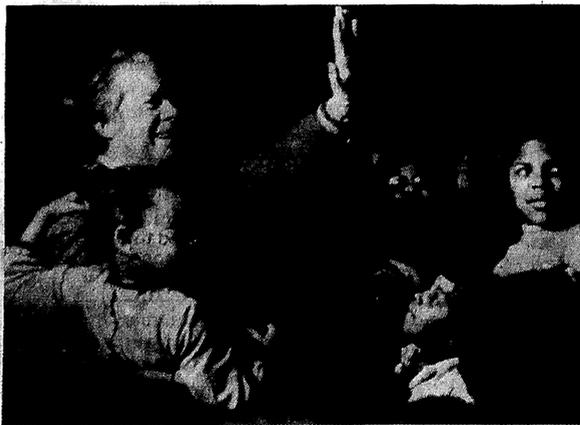
Consistent with this approach, many speakers at Philadelphia called on Blacks to work harder, study more in school and build strong family units. Others scolded and attacked Black people for allegedly spending too much money and time on nice clothes, fancy cars and being hip instead of devoting themselves to "nation building."

## NY center of radical group

The grouping centered in the NY and Illinois delegations constituted the more radical wing of the convention. This grouping wanted the party to prominently identify the capitalist system as the enemy, to consider the Black struggle a struggle for national liberation (including a fight for land) and to see itself as a vehicle for more militant organizing.

For example, point one of the New York statement says: **"African people in the United States, in effect, constitute an oppressed nation: therefore our struggle must be manifested through a national liberation struggle."** Points two, three and four say the party must be anti-racist, anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist. Point 11 says: **"The party must acknowledge the fact that Pan Africanism and scientific socialism are not necessarily contradictory."**

The difference between the two groups can be clearly seen on the issue of stopping racist terrorist attacks. NBPA charter supporter Barbara Arnwine, a lawyer and leader of (Continued on page 17)



The fact that Carter only remembered Black people existed when he needed votes increased support for Black independent party. Above, kissing babies in Milwaukee.

a widely published writer and Senior Research Associate at the African Studies and Research Center at Cornell University.

This grouping put forward a conception of a party that stands on a basically reform-oriented and electoral

distributed, while more importantly and yet at the same time, we turn our attention to the fundamental task of self development as the only route to self-determination."

In other words, they propose a reform and electoral strategy combined with a gra-

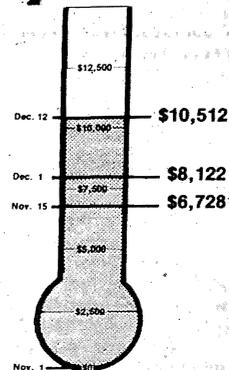
## Help Put Us Over the Top!

The RSL drive to raise \$12,500 is now past the half-way point. With just one month left before our January 15 deadline, we have raised \$10,512—over 84 percent of our fund drive goal. \$3,784 has come in since our report in last month's **Torch/La Antorcha**.

While the drive is ahead of schedule at this point, we very much need contributions from those **Torch/La Antorcha** readers who have not yet responded to reach our \$12,500 goal.

Among other things, your contribution will help us to maintain the **Torch/La Antorcha** as a high-quality analytical newspaper which provides coverage of major international and national events along with regular news of the labor movement, anti-racist and anti-sexist struggles, the prisoner movement and more—from a revolutionary socialist point of view. With the rate of inflation remaining at double-digit levels, our printing, mailing and other costs have increased enormously. Reaching our fund drive goal is essential if we are to avoid cutbacks in the quality of the **Torch/La Antorcha**.

We appeal to all our readers and friends to make the greatest possible effort to help make our fund drive a success. Send your check or money order for \$5, \$10, or whatever you can afford to: **Torch/La Antorcha** or Rod Miller, Box 1288, New York, NY 10116.



# Cops Wage War on Black Community

**NEW ORLEANS**—On November 8, a police officer was found dead in the Algiers section of this city. In the days that followed, the police launched a virtual reign of terror on the Black community of Algiers. By November 13, four people from this community were dead; many others had been beaten or threatened by police.

The circumstances of Patrolman Gregory Neupert's death have remained a mystery. Police claim not to know what Neupert was doing when he was killed. His car was found parked on a levee, his body beside it. The police department did not know of his whereabouts at the time of his death. He had been travelling alone and had not called in to report that he was stopping anyone or that he was in trouble. Later, police reported that drugs were found nearby.

Following the discovery of Neupert's body, police immediately descended on the nearby Fisher Housing Project and roughly rounded up some 20 young Black men for "questioning."

One man describes what happened to him after being handcuffed and isolated from the others. "They jumped on me, they kicked me, beat me in my back. That's when they put a bag over my head so I couldn't see all of them." Although he repeatedly stated he knew nothing about the killing, he relates, the police continued to beat him in the face and chest, slapped the back of his neck with a black-jack, hit his head with thick law books and stood him on his head for five or 10 minutes.

## Police murder four

On November 11, police investigating the Neupert murder stopped Raymond Ferdinand and Shelia Pierce at the Fisher Housing Project. The cops claim that Ferdinand pulled a knife on them and they were forced to shoot and kill him. But Pierce states that while Ferdinand did have a small knife, the police had taken it and placed at least one handcuff on Ferdinand before they shot him.

Early on the morning of November 13, cops kicked in the doors at the homes of James Billy, Jr., and Reginald Miles. The police version of what happened sharply con-

trasts with the accounts given by civilian witnesses. In the words of many in the Black community here, police then proceeded to execute Billy, Miles and Sherry Singleton, who lived with Miles. Singleton's four-year-old son watched in horror as police shot and killed his mother.

Police alleged that Miles



James Billy Jr., Reginald Miles and Sherry Singleton, executed by New Orleans police Nov. 13.

and Billy were the killers of Neupert based on the accounts of two supposed eyewitnesses. Police admitted that they paid the informants \$3,000 for the information, but refused to produce or identify them. But that became unnecessary as the informants voluntarily contacted the lawyers for the victims' families to recount that they had been forced to implicate Miles and Billy. Both told how they had been blindfolded and separately taken to a wooded area where police intimidated and beat them.

One informant states: "One of them had a shotgun. One had a little pearl-handled Derringer, one of the police said that was a n---- gun. They let me know that someone was going to die." He went on to say, "I kept saying that I hadn't seen that dude [Billy] that night, but they were beating me and I was crying."

The other informant also told of being beaten and threatened before he was taken to police headquarters and shown Billy's mug shot. "I looked through all of the pictures and said, 'this isn't any of them.' Then they hit me across the chest and said, 'you know this n----.'" He said he was very scared and felt he "couldn't say no."

In addition, attorneys have produced witnesses that place Miles five blocks away from where Neupert was killed at the time of death.

Police claim that they knocked and identified themselves before entering Billy's residence. Neighbors across the street, however, report that the cops jumped onto Billy's front porch, pulled open the screen door and immediately kicked in the main door without either knocking or identifying themselves. The neighbors had

been awakened when the cops had earlier entered another house thinking it was Billy's. An autopsy showed that Billy was hit with seven bullets and two loads of buckshot. Police say Billy shot first but have refused to say whether they have tested the gun they claim was Billy's to determine if it had been fired.

Police then raided the home of Miles and Singleton. The cops claim the Miles "committed suicide" when, after several officers were already in his bedroom, he reached for a gun in a pile of clothing. Miles was hit with nine bullets and two loads of buckshot.

After killing Miles, police moved to the bathroom where Singleton was getting ready to go to work. Police state Singleton shot at them from the bathtub, although her gun only misfired, before they killed her. But an elderly couple living next door report they heard Singleton cry out: "Please don't shoot. Please don't shoot." Autopsy reports indicate she was in a fetal position when shot.

The chief of police, in effect, described the killings as good for police morale. He stated he had thought of

calling in a special tactical squad to surround the house and ask for surrender but rejected that idea as damaging to the morale of the officers who had investigated the case.

## Marches demand change

In response to the killings and related events, a number of groups have mobilized to defend the Black community and demand changes in the New Orleans Police Department. Demands have included immediate dismissal and indictment of the police involved, dismissal of the chief of police, establishment of a civilian police review board and full disclosure of the facts involved in the case. A meeting of 75 members of the Concerned Citizens of Algiers also demanded that all police patrols be halted in the Algiers area.

But while residents have been quick to resist the police, other Blacks in the city's establishment are feverishly trying to head off a mass mobilization. The head of the Housing Authority issued an open letter to the community praising the "self-control and objectivity" of the residents of the Fisher Housing Project.

Others have echoed his call for calm and "reason." The NAACP launched its own investigation into the killings to try and dissipate what it calls the "present climate of suspicion and hysteria." Despite the call by the city's established Black leaders for the masses of Black people to stay out of the streets and leave things to them, there have been a number of successful demonstrations and protests of the killings.

On November 24, the police chief resigned in an effort to head off the growing furor. The newspapers are predicting that Mayor Earnest Morial will appoint a Black to become the new police chief in an attempt to placate the Black community. As the city's Liberation League and Community Action Now Coalition have noted, this struggle will not end with a new police chief. A new chief, whether Black or white, will not stop the killings of poor and working people, especially Blacks and Latins. The current chief was originally brought in as a "reformer"—but that did not help Raymond Ferdinand, Sherry Singleton, James Billy, Jr., or Reginald Miles. The demand for an end to police patrols plus the creation of neighborhood self-defense patrols would reduce police harassment and save lives. □

## 'Armed Gang' Terrorizes LA

Kenneth Ramirez, 19, unarmed—shot down without warning as he walked out the door of his Los Angeles home.

Raymond Nicholson, 20, unarmed—shot down without warning on the street of a Los Angeles suburb.

Larry Morris, 28, unarmed—beaten and strangled in his bathroom after being chased into his Watts home by two armed strangers.

\*\*\*\*\*

Is senseless gang violence on the increase in Los Angeles? You bet it is! And the gangs doing it are well-armed and wear uniforms. In each of the cases cited above, the murderers are known members of the Los Angeles Police or Sheriff's Department. Far from being punished for their crimes, all the killers are still on the public payroll.

Of course there's always a good excuse. Larry Morris is dead because two cops thought they heard gunshots coming from his house. Later they admitted the "gunshots" were really firecrackers.

Raymond Nicholson is dead because an officer's shotgun "accidentally discharged."

And Kenneth Ramirez died when an officer "drew his gun and the damned thing went off," according to a police

department spokesperson.

While City Council hearings are swamped by police officials crying for more personnel, more weapons, and more money to combat rival street gangs, their own state-sponsored gang is doing all right. In parts of LA, especially where poor Blacks and Latins live, neighborhoods are becoming more and more like war zones after dark. There is danger on the street—and much of it is the danger of attack by police.

Hector Quintana was a friend of Kenneth Ramirez and a witness to his death. His statement, as reported in the LA Times, catches better than anything the cold and bloody reality of an oppressed community living under the gun.

"Me and Victor and Chris were talking out in the street when this cop car comes by real slow. They didn't shine their spotlight or say anything. They just went up the street, made a U-turn and started coming back. Kenny started walking out of the house. When he got in front of the car, the police car stopped. The cop opened the door. He didn't say anything. He took a shot. Kenny fell. He didn't make a sound. The man who shot him got out of the car and walked over to the body, flashed a light on him and looked down. He said, 'Oh, shit.'"

# Greensboro Verdict: Klan and Nazis Get Green Light for Racist Murder

By FRANK HOPKINS

On November 17, an all-white jury in Greensboro, North Carolina, found six Ku Klux Klan and Nazi murderers "not guilty." The right-wing thugs who had gunned down five supporters of the Communist Workers Party (CWP) were acquitted on all charges. These people got off with less than if they had been caught speeding.

**THE TRIAL** was a result of the Klan/Nazi attack on a CWP rally on November 3, 1979. The CWP planned a "Death to the Klan" rally in a Black neighborhood in Greensboro. The right-wingers came and killed five people—Cesar Cauce, Sandra Smith, William Sampson, Michael Nathan and James Waller—seriously wounding several others. It was a cold-blooded premeditated attack.

At the trial, the right-wing-

ers contended that they had acted only in self-defense. This lie can be seen through just by looking at the results of the attack that day. But that doesn't matter much where U.S. "justice" is concerned.

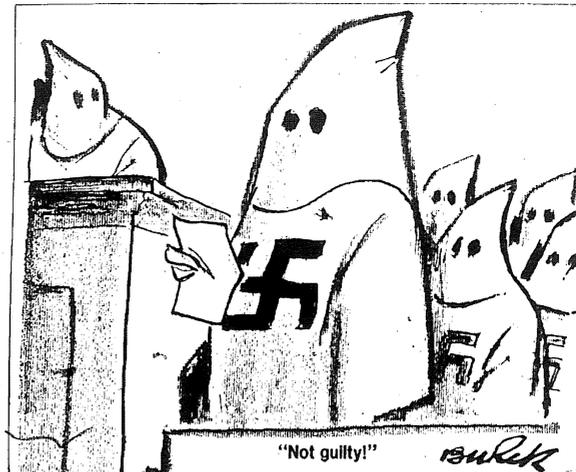
In the aftermath of the acquittals, the state announced that six Communist Workers Party members and five more Klansmen who were slated for trial would not be prosecuted. The state's "reason" for this decision was that none of these people, unlike the first batch of Klansmen who were tried, even had firearms. And since those with firearms were found "innocent" the state doesn't want to press further charges. Actually, this is just another part of the state's attempt to make the events of November 3 look like a "shoot-out" between "extremists," to make the CWP look like the ones who provoked everything, and to make the state

look "fair, impartial and just."

Harold Covington, head of the National Socialist Party of America (the Nazi group involved in the attack on the CWP rally) claimed the verdict was "a great victory for white America." Covington went on to say "the verdicts are fantastic. It shows we can beat the system on their own ground."

**IN FACT**, Covington didn't have to worry too much about "beating the system." The state—as well as the right-wingers—is up to its neck in these murders. For example, Bernard Butkovich, an agent of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, infiltrated the Klan group previous to the murders and is known to have incited it to commit violence. Another former federal agent, Edward Dawson, helped to arrange the Klan/Nazi attack on the CWP.

But that wasn't all "the



system" did for the right-wingers. After doing its damndest to provoke the shootings, the state has also done its best to cover up what happened. The trial was a white-wash from start to finish. For one thing it was an all-white jury—this in a case where Latin, Black and white people had been gunned down by an all-white attack force. Throughout the trial Judge James M. Long kept trying to silence spectators, threatening to charge people with "contempt of court."

**IS THIS GUY kidding?** Working people should have contempt—for the verdict, the judge, the court, and the whole state. There are no two ways about it. What has gone on in Greensboro is a clear signal to the right wing. The state has said: "It's okay to attack Black people's lives and rights, it's okay to gun down Latin people and it's just great to kill communists." The state has made it clear

that it wouldn't mind if more of this kind of thing went on. And the state has made it clear that right-wing thugs are going to get some amount of protection from the state.

In fact, we expected something like this as the outcome of the trial. We didn't know how blatant it was going to be, but you could see it coming. The six Klan/Nazi murderers should be paying for their crime. But you can't rely on the state to grant justice to Blacks, Latins, women or leftists. The only way working class and oppressed people get any respect or justice in this society is to fight for it. The courts, the cops and the right wing will try to get away with as much as they can. Only a united and militant working class movement will be able to cut through the courtroom charade and shove some real justice down these murderers' throats. □

## Anti-Klan Activists Meet

**GREENSBORO, North Carolina**—Despite harassment, and in the face of the acquittals of the six Klan/Nazi murderers, a successful educational and organizing conference against government repression and the rise of the Klan and Nazis met here on November 6 and 7. An ongoing anti-fascist coalition came out of the conference, which set as its first project a mass demonstration in Washington, D.C., on January 20—Inauguration Day. The coalition will work for a strong anti-fascist thrust to the action, while cooperating with other forces planning a response to

Reagan's inauguration.

Over 300 people from the South, East Coast and the Midwest came to the Greensboro conference, which was initiated by the Communist Workers Party (CWP) and other forces. A broad range of political groups attended the conference, including the National Anti-Racist Organizing Committee (NAROC), Socialist Workers Party (SWP), Progressive Labor Party (PLP), Chutzpah, Movement Against Racism and the Klan (MARK), Those United to Fight Fascism (TUFF), CWP and the RSL. Student groups, women's groups, anti-Klan coal-

tions from New York and the Twin Cities, and Black liberation groups were also present.

The conference combined a healthy left-wing educational thrust with a strong desire for unity in the struggle. Many speakers targeted the ruling class as our enemy, pointing to the bloody record of government protection of, and collusion with, the Klan and Nazis. Several speakers raised the need for armed self-defense. At the same time, almost every speaker underlined the need for unity across political, racial and sexual lines to meet the growing fascist threat. □

## WILMINGTON 10 CONVICTIONS OVERTURNED



On December 4, a federal court in Richmond, Virginia, overturned the conviction of the Wilmington 10, nine Black men and one white woman who were charged with burning down a white-owned grocery store in Wilmington, North Carolina, in February 1971 during a Klan-provoked confrontation. The 10 were originally convicted in North Carolina eight years ago and sentenced to a total of 282 years in prison on charges of arson and conspiracy.

The Wilmington 10 included civil rights organizer Reverend Ben Chavis, eight Black high school student leaders and a white female civil rights activist. The 10 had been fighting for school desegregation in Wilmington, which the Klan was active in trying to prevent.

**THE FIRST** trial of the Wilmington 10 began in June 1972, but ended in a mistrial when prosecutor James T. Stroud suffered a "mysterious illness" the night before the swearing in of a jury—10 of whose members were Black. In the second trial, which began in September 1972 before a special judge requested by prosecutor Stroud, Stroud was allowed to eliminate most Black jurors, while seating whites who admitted being Klan members. This jury—10

whites and two elderly Blacks—convicted the 10 on the testimony of three "eyewitnesses."

**IN 1977**, all three prosecution witnesses testified, first to a federal grand jury and then at a state hearing, that they had been promised release from prison and jobs in exchange for their testimony. They also admitted that the prosecution had carefully coached them for their court appearances. Meanwhile, a massive international campaign to free the Wilmington 10 had forced the State Department to call the case an "embarrassment."

The December 4 federal court ruling which overturned the convictions stated that the defendants had been deprived of their Sixth Amendment right to a fair trial because defense lawyers had been prevented from attacking the credibility of the key prosecution witnesses. Nine of the Wilmington 10 had been released on parole in 1978 and the tenth, Ben Chavis, in 1979. It is legally possible for the state of North Carolina to initiate a new trial—but it is doubtful that it will choose to do so, given the mass protests any new trial of the Wilmington 10 would produce. □



## Free Tommy Lee Hines!

On November 21, an Alabama jury—11 whites and one Black—found Tommy Lee Hines incompetent to stand trial. This was the second attempt to try Hines; his 1978 rape conviction was overturned last March by an appeals court on the grounds that Hines, who is mentally retarded, could not have understood the legal proceedings against him.

Hines has now been ordered sent to a mental hospital "until he is found competent to stand trial." This could mean indefinite confinement for Hines, the victim of a blatant racist frame-up. Hines was originally convicted under the unwritten code: "When a white woman is raped, pin it on a Black man."

At his trial, Hines was accused of kidnapping a woman and driving her car to the scene of the alleged rape. Even though his teachers at a center for the disabled swore that Hines' limited mental ability and poor physical coordination meant he couldn't drive, let alone plan and carry out an assault, the all-white jury at his first trial found him guilty.

The railroad of Tommy Lee Hines sparked numerous protests, as well as Ku Klux Klan attacks on Hines' supporters. In May 1979, a march in Decatur, Alabama, demanding freedom for Hines was attacked by armed Ku Klux Klan members. In the resulting shootout two Black marchers and two Klansmen were wounded. Curtis Robinson, at one time the bass singer for the musical group, the Coasters, has been charged with the attempted murder of a Klansman.

Hines' supporters and family plan to continue their efforts to have Hines released and cleared of all charges.

## Prisoners tear-gassed at Starke

Following the October 12 stabbing of a guard at Florida State Prison at Starke, the state's maximum security prison, prisoners have faced harassment and attacks. On October 13, the authorities issued an order that prisoners in confinement areas be handcuffed whenever they left their cells. When some prisoners protested this by flooding one tier of a wing of the prison, the administration responded by tear-gassing the entire wing. Two days later, after the stabbing of another guard, prison authorities sprayed several housing areas with a tear-gas fogger. Of the prison's 13 housing wings, eight are confinement areas. All but one of the areas gassed were confinement areas. A prisoner wrote the *Torch/La Antorcha*: "In reality, this means gassing prisoners who are confined in a locked cell and screaming." He described how prisoners were forced to break their cell windows in order to breathe.

On October 16, the entire prison was locked down. Authorities conducted a "shakedown," taking everything, from prisoners' legal papers to their clothing and false teeth. A prisoners' lawsuit has asked \$100,000 damages for the gasings and physical abuse suffered in the shakedown. The suit also asks that the prison be put into federal receivership. An earlier suit, filed in June of this year, charged that violence at Starke violated prisoners' constitutional rights. This suit led to a court order in August to transfer several hundred prisoners. Last month, a congressional committee—after an eight month investigation of the horrors and brutality of Florida's prison system—recommended hiring more guards, increasing their pay and providing them with more training.

## In brief . . .

Prisoner rights organizations have filed suit in court charging conditions at Louisiana's Angola Penitentiary's punishment camp constitute "torture and excessive cruel and unusual punishment." Included in the charges in the complaint are: guard-on-prisoner brutality—prisoners have been beaten or maced, often while they are handcuffed or shackled; lack of basic medical and psychiatric care; unsanitary conditions; lack of access to rehabilitative work; lack of educational or sufficient recreational programs; denial of books, toiletries, clothing, and communication through the mail; arbitrary and indefinite confinement in Camp J.

# Gay Awareness Group Nixed by El Reno Keepers

By NATASHA BELL

A group of gay prisoners in the Federal Correctional Institution, El Reno, Oklahoma, has been refused permission by the prison administration to form a gay awareness group.

On November 1, 1980, Chico Rodriguez, a gay prisoner at El Reno, was fired by the hospital administrator from his job at the prison hospital. At the time, the administrator stated that no homosexuals would work in his hospital. Rodriguez protested this action to the warden and at the same time requested permission to form a gay awareness chapter in the prison. On November 5, he was denied relief on his charge of discrimination and denied permission to form an organization.

On November 15, he again requested permission to form a prisoner organization to be called the Gay Awareness Society. His request was again denied, this time on the excuse that there were no staff members available to provide supervision. The prison has a staff of over 300.

There are already four prisoner organizations. Three of them are cultural groups of racial minorities; that is, Blacks, Latinos and Native Americans each have authorized organizations. In seeking permission for an authorized gay awareness group the gay prisoners are demanding to be recognized as an oppressed minority.



Teddy "Tina" Escamille in a Life magazine photo of August 1979. Life reported that Escamille, pictured here in his cell at Walla Walla prison in Washington, got his black eye for having sex with a prisoner other than the one who "owned" him.

Having exhausted all possible recourses inside, and having met with nothing but prejudice and discrimination, these gay prisoners are seeking help from the outside. Members of the group have contacted organizations such as POSRIP (People Organized to Stop Rape of Imprisoned Persons), the National Prison Project of the ACLU, and the *Gaycon Press* for support. They are requesting that letters be written to the Bureau of Prisons protesting the discrimination against gays in El Reno. The address is: **Office of the General Counsel, Bureau of Prisons, Washington, D.C. 20048.**

We urge support of these gay prisoners in their struggle against their oppression. Gays in prison are not only victims of the usual harassment and brutality of prison guards and officials, but are

also frequently victimized by other stronger prisoners. They're subject to rape, gang rapes, forced prostitution and other forms of sexual abuse including enslavement.

When gay prisoners start to organize themselves in self-defense, their organizations are often broken up by the officials. The prison administration would rather see them raped and brutalized than to tolerate their organizing. Gay prisoners are, however, despite all obstacles, forming self-defense groups in various prisons. One organization that gives them assistance is POSRIP. Recently formed by a gay ex-prisoner, POSRIP is now forming chapters both inside and outside of prison. For more information, they can be contacted at: **POSRIP, PO Box 4413, Chicago, IL 60680.**

**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."

—AL

# Prisoners Report on Struggles...

## Indiana State Prison Michigan City, Indiana

On April 27, 1980, prisoners at the Indiana State Prison in Michigan City, Indiana, rebelled after years of oppressive and racist conditions. A cell block and a lock-up unit were seized along with several guards as hostages.

Both Black and white prisoners participated and some of the grievances aired were:

A. lack of proper and adequate medical treatment;

B. unsanitary and non-nutritious food;

C. racist disciplinary procedures and beating of prisoners by prison guards;

D. harassment and intimidation of prisoners and their visitors.

In the aftermath of the April 27 prison rebellion, the prison officials indicted nine Black men (referred to as the Michigan City Nine) out of the multi-racial participants. The MC 9 were charged with eight counts of kidnapping and one count of attempted kidnapping and battery. Statements by prisoners working on the lock-up unit during the rebellion and other statements by prisoners were falsified and tampered with by the prison officials and the prosecutor's office, in order to single out the nine Black men who were charged.

In late October 1980, charges against one of the MC 9 (Larry E. Massey) were dropped but he was subsequently given numerous prison disciplinary conduct reports.

It is clear to us and others that the charges should be dropped against the other eight men because the prison officials are using these Black men as scapegoats to hide the inhumane and criminal conditions that exist here, and which also clearly point out the racist administration of Warden Jack Duckworth.

We need your help in exposing these conditions and freeing the other eight men. Please write to Cloyd Shuler (Director of the Department of Corrections), 804 State Office Bldg., Indianapolis, Indiana 46204, demanding that the criminal charges against the remaining eight be dropped. Their names are: John Cole; Miles Good-

ner; Frederick Greene; Tony Williams; Eddie Lee Hill; Lincoln Love; Boyd McChristian; Clarence Taylor.

\*\*\*\*\*  
This is a brief update to inform those concerned about the whereabouts of Achebe Lateef, who for the past four months, for no apparent reason other than his activism, the Indiana Department of Corrections has shifted from one institution to another.

On June 27, 1980, the administrative board presiding at the Michigan City prison ordered Achebe Lateef seized from amongst his loved comrades, and transferred to the Pendleton Reformatory, against his will, and without charges being brought against him.... Since the date he was seized from Michigan City, he has been transferred

back and forth between Pendleton Reformatory and the Reception Diagnostic Center. (RDC is a tightly secured center, where diagnosis is performed on those who have been given sentence terms, and a decision made regarding which correctional institution they will be sent to.)

On October 29 Lateef was transferred back to the Michigan City prison, where he is presently being held in one of the segregation units.

Achebe Lateef is loved and respected by all of us here at the Michigan City prison who are concerned about him. He has a history of active participation in progressive programs, such as the Black Studies Class, which is geared toward raising the consciousness of the Black youth and Blacks in general that fill these prisons, and to help them develop a positive political outlook on the reality of why the prisons throughout the U.S. are being overly populated with Blacks and working class people....  
**Committee to Defend the MC 9  
Indiana State Prison**

## United States Penitentiary Marion, Illinois

Here at Marion federal prison, there has been a strike going on for the last past 10 weeks for better conditions. What I would like to know is why hasn't this been brought to the attention of the public, also, why have we been denied the same rights as all other federal prisoners. We have asked only for the same rights which other federal prisoners have been granted for years, but yet this administration considers these demands to be outrageous. Why has this administration put a halt to those lawyers which are helping the inmates here at Marion federal prison to ob-

tain their rights by stopping them from all interviews of inmates, but yet they are willing to give statements....

There will be no work here among inmates at Marion federal prison for the remainder of 1980. I have a question which you can ask yourself concerning this administration, which is a known fact only to our lawyers and the men within these walls, why has the federal bureau of prisons put a nationwide blackout on this strike against the news media?...

Very truly yours,  
WAH



## Wisconsin State Prison Waupun, Wisconsin

For years now there have been countless civil and criminal suits filed against the prison administration here at the Waupun State Prison. The actions were leveled at ordinary guards on up to officials making policies in Madison, Wisconsin. And for years they've turned a deaf ear to us, to our desperate pleas.

Now the conditions have become unbearable. There is no such thing as due process here. There is no medical treatment. There is no equal protection of the law as guaranteed by the Constitution. We are, all of us in this dungeon, living in "hell"! Men are dying, hanging themselves and perishing from diseases that could have been detected and prevented or checked had the administration been concerned. Beatings and macings take place "daily"...and I mean this literally.

Right now we're trying one last effort: to win some of the suits that will bring some semblance of humanity back to the way this place is run and the way we're treated. Visitors are badgered and harassed, they're turned down for little or no reason; a man's legal papers are flagrantly torn up and deliberately mis-

placed. More than frequently we're denied the right to have food here in segregation!! The despair and depression here is pervasive and spreading like a raging wildfire out of control. It is only with the help of various media publications like yourself that we're going to be able to win our battles in court. You know how important exposure like this is to winning cases in court. People need to know what is really happening!

All of the above violations of our rights are being contested in actions already in court. In addition to this we have writs in, asking the court to release all of the men from segregation because we are being illegally held. Where we're supposed to see what's called Program Review (which is by law supposed to see men regularly and to consider releases from segregation, recommend transfers to medium and minimum security camps, etc.) every 30 days we don't anymore! This is done, the denial, arbitrarily! We're going to win! The people who are oppressed in this and other countries are going to win! We have to stick together. Divided we fall! United we stand!

Peace and Power,  
RAG

## 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.

# Detroit Community Fights Destruction by GM

**DETROIT**—More than 40 people held a spirited picket line in front of this city's Community and Economic Development Department (CEDD) office downtown on November 25 to protest the proposed building of a General Motors plant on Detroit's east side.

**THE GM PROJECT**, as it is known, represents an attack on working class and oppressed people in Detroit. It involves driving more than 3,500 people from their homes, closing two GM plants to be replaced by the new plant (a net loss of nearly 9,000 jobs), spending over \$200 million of taxpayers' money to clear the land, and giving GM an additional \$10 million tax abatement annually for 12 years.

The November 25 demonstration was called by the Poletown Neighborhood Council. Two workers from GM's Fleetwood plant, which is slated for closing under the project, also attended. A delegation of demonstrators tried to go inside the building to talk to CEDD head Emmett Moten, Jr. However, police denied them entrance to the public building; a demonstrator who argued with them was arrested for disorderly conduct. The arrest only in-

creased the anger and spirit of the demonstration.

The demonstration was planned by a committee chaired by a supporter of the Revolutionary Socialist League and consisted mostly of Poletown residents. All decisions about the tactics and organization of the demonstration were made democratically by the committee. Committee members worked hard—writing a leaflet, distributing it door-to-door, arranging transportation and so on. One of the main accomplishments of the demonstration is that a nucleus of organizers in the community was built.

## FOR THE Poletown Neigh-

### DEMONSTRATE AGAINST THE GM PROJECT

\*\*\*\*\*  
SATURDAY  
DECEMBER 20

Meet at the  
Immaculate Conception  
Parish Hall  
12:00 NOON

A march through the  
community will be held,  
followed by a rally back at  
the parish hall.

borhood Council, the demonstration was a step away from relying solely on court suits to fight the project. The importance of this step was underlined when, on December 8, a judge ruled against the council in its suit seeking to bar the city from destroying homes, churches, community centers and businesses to make way for the new GM plant. The council plans to appeal the ruling, but prospects for help from the courts are dim, given GM's political muscle in Detroit. Mayor Coleman Young supports the project enthusiastically. The City Council voted 8-1 to approve it. The city water department has removed water meters from houses in the neighborhood to intimidate people into moving. And the police made a totally unprovoked arrest at the November 25 demonstration. GM has the same clout with the courts that it has with the rest of the government.

To counter that clout, the power of the working class and oppressed people of Detroit must be mobilized. As a first step, the Poletown Neighborhood Council must reach out to some natural allies in the struggle, including Black and Arab residents of Poletown (the Poletown Neighborhood Council is



November 25 demonstration in front of the Community and Economic Development Department in Detroit.

largely white) and workers at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital and other workplaces in the project area.

**A MAJOR focus of the struggle** must be fighting for jobs. Young and GM have constantly pointed to the 6,000 jobs at the new plant, ignoring the nearly 9,000 other GM workers who will be laid off. The press has repeated these claims uncritically. We must make it clear that opposing the project is a way to save jobs. We should also demand that the city spend money to create more jobs, instead of giving gifts to General Motors. The fight for jobs is key to mobilizing support in Detroit, which has been hard hit by layoffs.

There is a lot of potential support for the struggle against the project. This was shown by a **Detroit Free Press** "Sound Off" telephone poll a few days after the demonstra-

tion. Readers were asked to call in their votes and make comments on whether the plant should be built. Seventy-two percent of the 700 callers opposed the project. Their comments included: "People should come first, not companies" and "Why should taxpayers help that huge corporation?" This sentiment must be tapped and organized into a force that will actively fight the project—by writing letters, demonstrating, blocking the bulldozers with hundreds of people—by doing whatever is necessary.

Poletown residents face an uphill struggle. The powerful GM corporation is, in effect, holding a gun to the heads of Detroit's working people. "Give us what we want or we'll take our factories elsewhere," says GM. All Detroit's workers should unite behind the Poletown community in its efforts to stop the GM monster. □

## LABOR IN STRUGGLE

### IBT dumps Amityville nurses

On December 2, nurses on strike against the Brunswick General Hospital in Amityville, New York, demonstrated outside the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT) Joint Council headquarters in Manhattan. They were protesting the union bureaucracy's sellout of their struggle. In April 1980, registered nurses at the hospital affiliated with IBT Local 803. On July 11, 83 nurses walked out in a strike for union recognition. When they received little help from Local 803 leadership, they requested assistance from members of Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU), an opposition group within the IBT.

Local 803 leaders wanted nothing to do with the nurses after they sought help from TDU. On November 17, Local 803 President William Hagner, Sr., sent them a letter saying the local was dropping all support of the strike because the nurses "had taken actions without our knowledge or consent." In talking with reporters, Local 803's secretary-treasurer, William Hagner, Jr., linked the local's action to the nurses' ties with TDU. He claimed that "the dissidents were reverting to violent tactics and were jeopardizing the reputation of the local and the IBT." When pressed for details, he explained, "One TDU member was arrested on the picket line. They were spray-painting businesses with the word 'scab.' All this is not professional." (Newsday, November 18, 1980.) Shop steward Jane Agola denied that the nurses or TDU members were responsible for the alleged "violent tactics," which in any event are hardly rare occurrences during a strike.

The nurses have formed an independent union,

the Brunswick Nurses Association, to carry on their struggle. They are trying to reach out to other nurses in the area by forming a Long Island Coalition of Nurses. In commenting on the IBT's sellout, Agola declared: "We backed them and they didn't back us. We are still on strike."

### Speedup an issue in GM strike

Autoworkers at the General Motors Norwood, Ohio, assembly plant returned to work on November 24 after a strike lasting nearly two weeks. The workers shut down the plant on November 12 to protest high production quotas and line speed. The quotas and line speed were set before the 1978-79 recession when the plant employed over 5,000 workers. In the past year, 3,600 workers were laid off. But management demanded that the 2,000 remaining workers maintain the same work pace and quotas. It also suspended workers without pay if they failed to keep up. In addition to production issues, the workers were fighting management's policy of violating older workers' seniority rights by giving preferred jobs to new hires and younger workers. Both management and officials of United Auto Workers Local 674, which represents the workers, are refusing to comment on the settlement which ended the strike.

Norwood city officials allied with GM against the Norwood workers from the beginning of the strike. The city government is in debt to the city of Cincinnati and the First National Bank of Cincinnati for \$1.2 million. Since Norwood gets 40 percent of its revenue from the Norwood GM plant, Norwood city officials wanted to force

strikers back to work in order to pay off the banks. To do this, they tried to mobilize public opinion to put pressure on the workers to end their strike.

### TVA use of scab coal hit

Over 500 coal miners mobilized on December 2 to prevent trucks carrying scab coal from entering the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) Paradise steam plant in Drakesboro, Kentucky. Thirty-four miners were jailed after state police charged their picket line. Until this year, the TVA always bought its coal from the AMAX and Peabody mines, whose workers are members of the United Mine Workers (UMW) union. But in July, TVA officials announced plans to cancel their contracts with AMAX and Peabody and buy coal from non-union mines. After UMW leaders denounced the decision, the TVA said in November that it would not cancel the AMAX and Peabody contracts. Nevertheless, it is continuing to buy scab coal and is refusing to commit itself to renewing the AMAX and Peabody contracts when they expire in 1982.

TVA officials claim they are trying to strengthen "small, independent coal producers." In fact, their proposed policy is a union-busting operation which would cause the layoffs of hundreds of UMW members. It would also cost workers whose tax money supports the TVA millions of dollars. Although Peabody's Sinclair mine is just a half-mile from the Paradise plant, the TVA is bringing in scab coal from mines 30 to 50 miles away. A study released earlier this year concluded that the TVA's proposal would increase its costs by \$3 million to \$6 million a year.

—PB

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# Murders in Greenwich Village Send Shock Waves Through NY Gay Community

**TWO GAY MEN** were killed in a fusillade of semiautomatic gunfire as they stood outside two West Street bars in New York's Greenwich Village, November 19.

Their murderer, Ronald Crumpley, age 38, was arrested a short time later after driving to the corner of Greenwich Avenue and 10th Street and attempting to kill a group of men standing there. Just minutes before, Crumpley had opened fire and wounded two men at still another corner, 10th and Washington.

"I want to kill them all," he told police, "I'll kill them all, the gays. They're no good. They ruin everything."

The two dead men were Jig Wenz, doorman at one of the bars, the Ramrod, and Vernon Kroenig, organist at Saint Joseph's church. In addition to the two men wounded on 10th Street, four others were injured at the same time Wenz and Kroenig were killed.

Crumpley, who is Black, is a former New York City Transit Authority cop and the son of a prominent preacher of a Harlem church. There have been reports and some indications that Crumpley is gay.

**THESE random, brazen murders** were a chilling reminder that even in the heart of the nation's second largest gay community, gay people are not safe from the violence spawned by society's homophobia.

The day after the shootings, just over 1,000 people gathered for two marches to protest the killings and honor the dead. Their tone was somber. Many people carried white candles. Flowers were placed at the door of the Ramrod. Someone from Dignity (a gay Catholic organization) led a prayer.

**HOWEVER, some anger** felt by the marchers came out and

there was chanting: "Gay life's not cheap! Gay life's not cheap!"; "Where's Koch?" (expressing the feeling that New York Mayor Ed Koch should have attended the march); and "Organize for self-defense," a chant started by the RSL contingent. But the basic feeling of the demonstration never changed—the crowd was there to mourn the deaths.

Several RSLers got a sharp reaction from people when they spoke, both publicly and in private conversations, about the connection between the Ramrod murders and the racist killings in Buffalo and Atlanta, the acquittal of the KKK in Greensboro and the growth of the right wing. "It was just an isolated nut—just an isolated incident," we were told. But the intensity with which this was said made you wonder. It was the intensity of people trying to convince themselves of what they were saying.

**THE FACT is there is a tremor** of fear running through the gay community in New York. The election of Ronald Reagan and the encouragement that gave to groups like Moral Majority is part of what's causing it. The increase in attacks on the streets of Greenwich Village (several of which have been reported on in past issues of the Torch/La Antorcha) is another cause. And the killings on November 19 brought the fears to the surface.

More than one gay man or lesbian has reported finding themselves looking around on the street or in a theater and thinking: "Is that one over there going to pull out a gun and fire—or is this one over here?" Discussions of going into the closet are becoming as common as discussions of coming out.

There has been a corresponding political retreat. The

most radical sections of the gay movement are inactive, and in New York, the moderate wing has even dropped its long-time program of working for a gay rights bill as unrealistic and therefore a mistake to organize for.

**IT IS easy, in the absence of** a movement to defend our rights, to overestimate the enemy. But the success of the right-wing offensive is not pre-ordained. It can be

stopped if all the groups under attack—gays, Blacks, women, Latins, undocumented and other workers—begin to unite and organize in our own defense. In the context of such a response, things that seem impossible today, like armed self-defense by gays, women, Blacks and other victims of sexist and racist attacks, become realistic possibilities.

A movement to defend our

rights cannot, of course, guarantee any specific individual safety from the actions of a Crumpley. As long as this rotten society we live in exists there can be no guarantees of that. But it can prevent isolation, demoralization and political retreat from taking over in the gay community, and it can end the atmosphere in which right-wingers and maniacs feel that gays are easy targets on the streets. □

## 1,300 Women Protest Rising Militarism and Sexist Violence



By PAT NELSON

**ON NOVEMBER 17, 1,300** women massed in front of the Pentagon near Washington, D.C., to protest the growing militarism of the government and the increasing violence against women. About 140 demonstrators were arrested and charged with blocking Pentagon entrances, a misdemeanor.

At trials the next morning, 34 women pleaded "no contest" and were given mandatory jail sentences. Five of these women had been arrested at the Pentagon last year and were sentenced to 30 days; the others got 10 days. All were sent to the federal prison at Alderson, West Virginia, bound in chains around their hands, feet and waists.

Sixty other women were held for trial after refusing to produce identification and about 40 more were released on \$25 bond. They will face trials by the end of the year.

The action at the Pentagon followed an all-day conference on Sunday, November 16. The two-day event was sponsored by the Women's Pentagon Action Coalition, made up of about 30 women's groups organized around issues such

as opposition to nuclear energy and weapons, anti-pornography and lesbian rights.

Over 1,600 women attended conference workshops on women and militarism, ecology, racism, work, violence, sexual orientation, poverty, health and the arts. In reports from the workshops to the general conference, women noted with regret that the participants were overwhelmingly white and middle class, but also pointed to the fact that many of the women were under 25, signaling an increasing political awareness among young people.

**THERE was widespread** understanding among conference participants that issues like increased military spending, rising unemployment, cutbacks in social services and the mounting violence against women and other oppressed groups are all connected to each other and are all important issues to organize around. This represents a significant broadening of perspectives by a major section of the women's movement. At the same time, most of those attending the conference do not yet understand that these attacks all stem from one main source—a capitalist

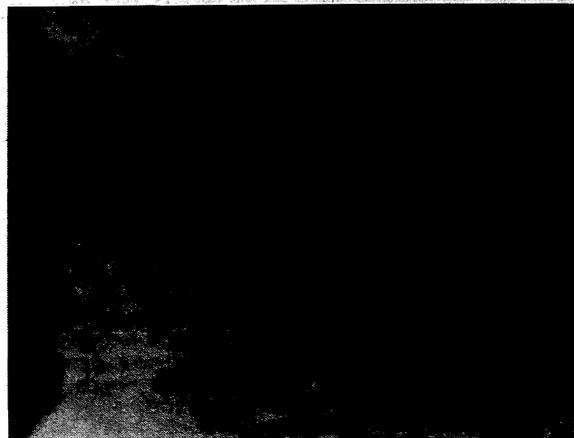
system which is in a deepening crisis. Most of the women believe in pacifist tactics and civil disobedience as the main ways to get the message across. The mood was one of enthusiasm and anger but not yet of real militancy—which was seen as "using 'their' (men's) tactics" or "stooping to 'their' level." While there was some broader discussion of how to solve the problems women face, no concrete resolutions were adopted and no future plans have yet been announced. □



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Jig Wenz after being shot by anti-gay terrorist. Wenz died in the hospital the next day.

# Nat'l Conference Forms 'Progressive

By IAN DANIELS  
and JOE GALANTI

Over the weekend of November 14-16, nearly 400 people gathered at Kent State University in Ohio to organize a "Progressive Student Network" (PSN). The Kent State conference was endorsed by over 35 student and radical groups, including many Midwest and East Coast "Progressive Student Alliances," the National Third World Student Coalition, the March 28th Movement (Madison, Wisconsin), the New Wave Party (Iowa City, Iowa) and others. Conference participants included activists from anti-draft, anti-nuke, women's and lesbian and gay organizations.

Several left organizations also attended. The Revolutionary Student Brigade (RSB), which is in the process of merging with the pro-China Communist Party Marxist-Leninist (CPML), was largely responsible for organizing the conference. While there were perhaps as many as 50 RSB/CPML supporters present, neither group had an open presence, intervening instead as members of various Radical Student Unions and Progressive Student Alliances. Supporters of the Revolutionary Socialist League also participated in the conference and distributed a nine-page position paper on the student movement.

The conference was significant because of the large number of newly radicalized students who attended. In the context of the sharp shift to the right by the U.S. ruling class and the general deepening of the worldwide capitalist crisis, these people came looking for new answers and avenues to organize a militant movement. One of the ways this militancy was reflected was the fact that conference participants rejected the "single-issue" approach which has dominated many organizing efforts over the past decade. There was much recognition of the need to build a movement that fights on the many fronts on which the U.S. ruling class is pressing its attacks.

## Conference maps out plans

The first day of the conference was devoted to speeches, workshops and caucus meetings. The workshops focused on energy, education, the economy, international politics and war, electoral politics and minority survival. In addition, caucuses were held for Blacks and minorities, women, and lesbians and gays. (One of the more disappointing aspects of the conference was the limited

attendance by Blacks, Latins and other oppressed national minorities, who made up no more than five percent of the conference as a whole.)

The main plenary session was held on the second day of the conference. At the plenary, the conference discussed and voted on a "Main Draft Statement," resolutions from the workshops and caucuses and a preliminary organizational structure. The conference also voted to help build a national protest in Washington, supplemented by regional demonstrations, against the incoming Reagan administration on January 20, Inauguration Day.

## Key issues debated

Many of the most important discussions at the conference took place in workshops and caucuses. In particular, at the workshops scheduled on the issues of oppressed groups—Blacks, women, lesbians and gays—many amendments were introduced to the conference organizers' "Main Draft Statement," aimed at deepening the support for the struggles of oppressed people. The women's caucus, for example, was dissatisfied with the program section of the "Main Draft Statement," which was limited to one sentence of "support for women's struggles against sexual oppression." The caucus adopted a more substantive statement spelling out the ways in which women are oppressed and how that oppression should be fought.

At the Black and minority workshop, participants agreed on the importance of involving more specially oppressed people in the PSN. The need for community organizing, rather than an exclusive campus orientation, was emphasized. The workshop also discussed the role of the PSN in carrying out educational work on the nature of racial/national oppression and stressed the importance of supporting Third World liberation struggles.

While there was general agreement in the workshop on these points, some important differences were debated, in particular the question of whether to seek the unity of all oppressed people in a common struggle against capitalism. An amendment introduced by RSL supporters to a five-point resolution put forward by members of Study and Struggle, a Chicago-based Black student group, stated:

**"We recognize that all minority liberation struggles are interconnected in that we all seek freedom from the same oppressor, the capitalist sys-**

**tem. We recognize the importance of the struggles of Black people, Latino people, Native Americans; of women and gay people. We believe that we should work for the victory of all these people's struggles, which should include struggles against the Klan and Nazis, support for prisoners, fights against institutionalized sexism and racism, and the fight against racist, sexist and anti-gay bigotry. Part of the task of the PSN should be to educate on the nature of oppression. We should become involved in struggles both on campus and in the community to involve and reach the most possible number of people."**

A lively discussion took place around this amendment. Most people agreed that the source of oppression was the capitalist system and that the PSN should explicitly state this. (This point was to become a major controversy at the conference plenary the next day.) Some people, however, mainly supporters of Study and Struggle, felt that the Black liberation struggle should be viewed as the "most important" struggle and that Black people should struggle "independently" for liberation. After a good discussion, the RSL amendment was adopted by a vote of 17 to 6. The resolution as a whole was then adopted unanimously by the workshop, to be presented to the conference plenary the following day.

## Lesbian and gay liberation

During the workshop on "The Crisis of Gay Survival" and later during the lesbian and gay caucus meeting, a lot of anger and dissatisfaction was expressed by gay people over the organizers' stand toward gay liberation. There were reports of anti-gay comments and attitudes at the conference, and in general it was felt that the gay struggle was being dealt with in a tokenistic manner. During the keynote speeches, the existence of gay people was virtually ignored.

The gay question is a crucial one for the PSN. The past history of left movements has been poor on gay liberation; the attitude of many groups that came out of the student movement of the 1960s (including the CPML) has been, at best, that gay people have the "right" to be "sick" and should not be persecuted by the state. Often, the view on the left has simply been that gay people are perverted products of "bourgeois decadence," deserving of no support whatsoever.

The caucus drafted a reso-

lution affirming the PSN's support for lesbian and gay liberation, stating:

**"To build a united movement we must fight against all oppression. The main resolution affirms this. However, for many years the left and radical movements have either ignored lesbian and gay oppression or actively promoted anti-gay bigotry. In light of this past history, the Kent State Student Conference affirms its commitment to fighting lesbian and gay oppression and also anti-gay bigotry within the movement."**

"There have been many examples that this conference has given only token support to the fight for lesbian and gay liberation."

The lesbian and gay caucus voted to introduce this motion at the start of the next day's plenary.

## Oppose U.S. imperialism

Another key issue which was debated in the workshops was the attitude of the PSN toward international events. The draft statement of unity submitted by the conference organizers contained a weak formulation that the PSN should "support world peace and the independence of all nations." Many people felt that this was too vague a statement.

The United States, the USSR and other imperialist powers are seeking to divide up and exploit the world for profits and power at the expense of the working people of all countries. The RSL position paper emphasized:

**"In Poland, workers are rising up against Soviet imperialist domination and a repressive regime which calls itself 'socialist.' In South Africa, Black workers kept in chains of apartheid-style slavery are fighting against Western imperialism. . . . In Iran, Nicaragua, El Salvador and elsewhere, working and oppressed people are battling imperialist domination and exploitation. We must see ourselves as part of this worldwide movement."**

It went on to say:

**"Our task is not merely to support, in a narrow sense, 'other people's struggles,' though we should do this. We can make our most important contribution to these struggles by opposing our own government—its imperialist policies, increased military spending, the draft and war plans."**

The workshop on "Current International Trends" concluded with the passing of an amendment to the "Main Draft Statement," stating that the PSN should: **"Oppose all forms of imperialism and for-**

**eign domination, in particular U.S. imperialism, in order to support world peace and the independence of all nations."**

## Plenary meets

The first major issue to come up at the Sunday plenary session was the report from the lesbian and gay caucus. In motivating why the conference should pass the resolution adopted by the caucus the previous evening, speakers noted that the failure of the left to support lesbian and gay liberation has hurt both the lesbian and gay movement and other social movements. They explained that the lesbian and gay movement is weaker because straight activists and radicals have often not been involved in the lesbian and gay struggle, while at the same time, other progressive movements and the left in general are weaker because lesbians and gays do not feel welcome.

The conference adopted the caucus motion by an overwhelming vote and followed it with a standing ovation. This action indicated that many newly radicalized people do not share the hostility to lesbian and gay liberation so dominant in the movements of the 1960s and '70s, particularly those where Stalinist/Maoist influence was strong.

The conference next adopted, by an overwhelming vote, the resolution from the women's caucus which strengthened the PSN's commitment to fight against women's oppression and for women's liberation. The adopted statement also took specific note of the special oppression of lesbians and Third World women and emphasized the linking of the struggles of all oppressed people.

## Students and the working class

A major issue of debate at the plenary occurred around a section of the "Main Draft Statement" which stated:

**"As students, we are in a unique position to facilitate social change. Because our role in society has not yet been solidified, we have more time and freedom to study and act upon the problems confronting us. As the ones who will inherit America's future, we have high stakes in the decisions that are made today. The time to begin effecting the necessary progressive social change is now and we, as the heirs of tomorrow, must take on that responsibility." Later in the section, the statement said: "Students have historically played a fun-**

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# Student Network'

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The RSL position paper, "Toward a Fighting Student Movement," took a markedly different view. It explained:

"The working class has an enormous potential power—the power to stop all of society in its tracks. As we have seen, workers do the work, make the society run. By the same token then, workers have the ability to shut society down, to halt production on a mass scale. In fact, workers have the ability to take over all the factories and other means of production and run them in the interests of all oppressed people, the immense majority."

At the plenary session, an RSL supporter introduced a motion on the centrality of the working class. There was much support for this view and a number of speakers took the floor to explain its importance. While most of those attending the conference did not believe that students have "historically played a fundamental role in moving society forward" (this sentence from the draft statement was subsequently deleted by conference vote), the majority did not yet understand why the working class is the central force for social change. The motion to introduce a substitute paragraph on this question was defeated by a close vote.

The final major discussion during the plenary took place when the resolution from the Black and minority workshop

reached the floor. A number of people at the conference, in particular supporters of the CPML, objected to a sentence in the resolution which explicitly identified the capitalist system as the enemy of all oppressed people. While a few people said that they themselves were not anti-capitalist, a clear majority at the conference, including most of the organizers, considered themselves opposed to capitalism. However, these people felt that they would not be able to attract other students to the PSN if it had an explicitly anti-capitalist point of view. Those people wishing to retain the sentence argued that it was important to be clear about who the enemy is; that almost everyone attending the Kent State Conference was anti-capitalist; and that the purpose of the PSN should be to explain the truth to people.

The motion to delete the reference to capitalism as the enemy failed 45-46. (By this time, late Sunday afternoon, many people had left.) At this point, the CPML hurriedly brought in some of their supporters who had been out in the hallways. When the vote on the resolution as a whole was taken, it failed, 45-49. Those opposed to mentioning capitalism preferred to have the entire resolution about Blacks and minorities defeated rather than have even one sentence mentioning the capitalist system! Someone then reintroduced the resolution without the sentence about the capitalist system and it passed, since there was

a desire by most people to adopt a resolution, even if it meant compromise on an important question.

## An assessment

The Kent State Conference and the Progressive Student Network formed out of it potentially provide an important beginning for the rebuilding of a mass radical student movement in the U.S. Plans have been made to hold future regional conferences that can draw wider numbers of students to the PSN. A PSN newsletter will be published and other activities are planned.

There is a real basis for the development of a mass, radical student movement. As the capitalist crisis intensifies, students will face education budget cuts, tuition hikes, the elimination of programs such as Black and women's studies, the draft, and a return to a more repressive climate—sexually segregated dorms, "curfew hours," drug crackdowns, etc. Meanwhile, the universities will increasingly turn to the highly profitable practice of complicity with the U.S. military machine, shifting priorities to "researching" chemical and biological warfare, computerized missile systems, "destabilization" techniques and all the rest.

The debates at the Kent State Conference, however, showed that there will be important struggles inside a growing student movement



1970 student anti-war demonstration.

over perspectives. In the context of the rightward drift of U.S. society as a whole, there will be some (including self-proclaimed "socialists") who will fight against the adoption of a truly radical, anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist program that can make students an ally of a broader movement of all working and oppressed people. These people will use the age-old and well-worn arguments that "people aren't ready to hear the truth" or that "a big movement can't be too left-wing."

The RSL has a different view, which we will continue to fight for as a mass student movement takes shape. Our Kent State position paper explained it this way:

"... a strong movement is a movement which recognizes who its enemies are, who its allies are, what it is fighting and how it must fight it. A movement is weak, no matter the numbers it attracts, if it does not understand these questions. Such movements offer only the illusion of

strength, not the substance. Those who argue that we should not raise the issues of capitalism, imperialism, economic crisis, the role of the working class, racism, sexism, anti-gay bigotry, etc., to our fellow students are making a serious mistake. We will build a strong movement only if we tell the truth about the nature of the society we live in and the tasks we face to change it. It is true that some people may not yet be ready to hear these ideas today. And, because we raise them, these people may not join us right away. But, through the combination of patient explanations, organizing and the unfolding of concrete events as the crisis deepens, the truth of what we are saying will become clearer and our movement will grow in numbers. In the meantime, we will be creating a movement which is not based on false perspectives or illusions, but on an understanding of the real problems and tasks which face us." □

# Toxic Waste Law Triggers Dumping Spree

By ADELE LOHMAN

Thousands of tons of toxic and hazardous substances have been dumped, spilled or abandoned in the past several months in a frantic rush to get rid of them before November 19. Beginning on that date, companies have been liable for fines of up to \$50,000 a day for improper disposal of their industrial waste under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976. Manufacturers must now keep documents to show where their wastes are shipped and are equally responsible with haulers and dumpsite owners for their safe disposal.

As the November 19 deadline approached, tanker trucks went roaring through the night along country roads, with their headlights off and their license plates obscured, to dump their deadly loads in sewers, in rivers and ponds, on fields and landfills, or to just drive with their drain

plugs pulled until the loads were spilled. Nobody knows how much of the poison seeped into ground water supplies. In Massachusetts alone, 26 public water sources have been shut down in the past 18 months because of chemical contaminations.

Toxic wastes were abandoned in railroad cars shipped to fictitious addresses, in warehouses rented under phony names and in tank trucks left in parking lots. On November 26, for example, nearly 300 drums of flammable and highly volatile chemicals were found in a rusting warehouse near Newark International Airport, less than 100 yards from the New Jersey Turnpike.

Perhaps the most callous form of disposal occurred late last July, when the Samson Tank Cleaning Company of Bayonne, New Jersey, got rid of 15,000 gallons of oil by donating it to the town of New Milford to use to hold down

the dust on unpaved roads. After it was used on several roads, the residents of one of them, Burnt Meadow Road, complained of a bad odor and said they suffered headaches and nausea. State tests done in August showed the reason: The "oil" contained PCBs (a chemical so dangerous that its manufacture was outlawed in 1977), as well as seven harmful metals, including arsenic, lead and mercury. But the residents along the sprayed roads were not told. Finally, in October, the top six inches of dirt were scraped from three and a half miles of roads in an effort to make them safe.

The orgy of dumping in the months before November 19 was a concentrated version of what has been going on for years. Proper waste disposal costs at least \$10,000 per tanker car for common commercial solvents. As the volume of waste grew, so did the number of fly-by-night opera-

tors offering cut-rate disposal service. The "respectable" capitalists who hired these outfits made sure they remained uninformed about how the wastes were dumped. But of course they knew—they just didn't give a damn.

## Gov't laws don't solve problem

It was the horror of Love Canal and the growing protests against pollution that finally forced the federal government to pass the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act. In addition, on December 3 of this year, Congress approved a \$1.6 billion fund to finance cleanups of toxic chemical seepages and spills.

These laws are a step forward, but they in no way solve the problem. First, small producers and "accidental" dumpers are exempt from penalties. Second, the Envi-

ronmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that it will take up to 10 years to inspect 26,400 existing disposal sites, less than 200 of which are licensed. While 90 percent of the facilities are not expected to pass EPA standards, most of them will be allowed to stay in business with interim licenses. Third, toxic waste is growing at the rate of 40 million tons a year. And the EPA expects a shortage of any kind of site, approved or not, in just a few years. Finally, even if no toxic waste were improperly disposed of ever again (!), cleaning up the thousands of dangerous dumps that have already been created would take years. And the sad truth is "cleanup and legal disposal" usually means nothing more than burying toxic and hazardous material a little deeper and lining the graveyards with plastic in the hopes that this will prevent it from leaking into the environment. □

By LEE RAMIE  
and SUSAN EDMUNDS

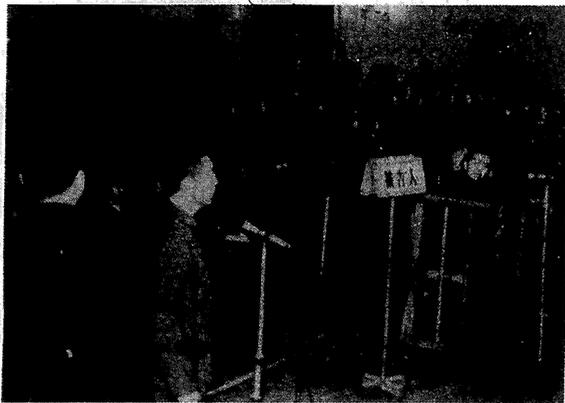
In October of 1976, just one month after the death of Mao Zedong, the "Great Helmsman" of the Chinese Revolution and chairman of the Communist Party of China (CPC), four of Mao's closest associates were arrested in Beijing. Labelled the "Gang of Four," the group included Jiang Qing (Mao's widow), Zhang Chunqiao, Yao Wenyuan and Wang Hongwen. All were members of the CPC Politburo or Central Committee, who had reached the peak of their power during the Cultural Revolution (1965-70), when they led the "Cultural Revolution Group" under Mao's direction.

The arrests marked a turning point in the factional struggles that had dominated the life of the CPC virtually since its seizure of power in 1949. In particular, the arrests marked the virtual demise of the "Maoist" faction. Waiting in the wings was Deng Xiaoping, who had been purged from his posts in the CPC and the government during the Cultural Revolution for being a "capital-

major crimes during the Cultural Revolution and afterwards. These include persecuting 729,511 people and causing the deaths of 34,800; plotting an armed rebellion in Shanghai in 1976; and attempting to assassinate Mao himself in 1971.

Under China's legal system, the 10 had already been found guilty before the trials by a Special Procuratorate, which drew up the charges and has presented evidence to the court. The purpose of the trials is simply to get the defendants to confess their alleged crimes; to expose those "crimes" publicly, and to decide on punishment. It is believed that the punishment will depend on the degree of cooperation the defendants show in the trials.

To date, the five former generals and Chen Boda have obligingly confessed to all the charges. The "Gang of Four" have been somewhat less forthcoming, however. Zhang Chunqiao has so far refused to say anything. Wang Hongwen has confessed having slandered Deng and Zhou Enlai (premier of China until his death in 1975) as plotting to overthrow Mao, but said he was only



Jiang Qing in defendants' box with Wang Hongwen testifying against her at "Gang of Four" trial.

ist roader," reinstated as vice-premier in 1973, and purged again in April 1976 at the instigation of the "Gang of Four." Shortly after the arrests, Deng re-emerged to begin what was to be a meteoric rise to power, including the consolidation of his faction's control of the huge party/state apparatus that rules China.

Last month, on November 20, in an act of triumph for Deng's faction, the so-called Gang of Four went on trial along with Chen Boda, former member of the CPC Politburo and Mao's secretary and speech writer, and five former generals of the People's Liberation Army (PLA). Together, the 10 are accused of committing a wide range of



Mao Zedong.

relaying Jiang Qing's words. Jiang, who is painted as the evil genius behind the majority of the "crimes," has mostly claimed to have forgotten whether or not she did and said what she is accused of.

Despite months of pre-trial buildup, the trials themselves have been relatively uneventful. One of their more notable aspects has been the lack of a political defense on the part of Jiang Qing and the rest of the "Gang of Four." Far more important has been the absence of any show of support for them from any section of Chinese society. In this context, the trials represent the ultimate disgrace of the defendants, particularly the "Gang of Four," who had claimed to be the best defenders of the "masses" against the "capitalist roader" Deng.

### 'DeMaoification' campaign

But for Deng, the purpose of the trials went far beyond any desire for mere personal revenge against his adversaries. In fact, the trials are the culmination of a "DeMaoification" campaign waged by Deng and his allies in the past several years. More than the individuals in the dock, it is the cult of Mao and the Cultural Revolution he led that were put on trial and condemned, a point not lost on the Chinese people, even though this has not been explicitly proclaimed by Deng. "Everyone knows it was Mao who gave the orders in the Cultural

Revolution, and it is he who should be on trial," one party member told a New York Times reporter (December 6, 1980).

"DeMaoification" has been a crucial element in Deng's drive to consolidate his faction's power in the CPC/state apparatus. When Mao was alive, the official line was—and millions of people believed—that he could virtually do no wrong, that all problems could be solved by studying and applying "Mao Zedong Thought." Given that it was Mao who first labelled Deng a "capitalist roader" and, more importantly as we shall see, opposed Deng's approach to economic development, Deng has had to demystify Mao, cut him down to human proportions, in order to legitimize the consolidation of Deng's power and the implementation of his anti-Maoist policies. To this end Deng has worked to destroy the cult of Mao—almost all public statues and portraits of the "Great Helmsman" have been removed, for example—and has floated various criticisms of his policies.

In waging this campaign, however, Deng has avoided appearing to throw Mao on "the scrap heap of history" altogether. Since Mao is still seen as the leader of the Chinese Revolution and the "father of Chinese socialism," Deng is afraid that if he totally discredits Mao, this will call into question the legitimacy of the entire system and hence Deng's own rule.

Thus in an interview with Oriana Fallaci, an Italian journalist, Deng carefully distinguished between Mao's revolutionary contributions and what he called Mao's "feudal mistakes" ("the patriarchal way of running things, the life-long tenure for the official"), as well as what Deng called Mao's "ultra-leftist ideas" in his later years which led to the "Cultural Revolution mistake." He also distinguished between "wrong ideas and mistakes," which he attributes to Mao and actual "crimes," which he charges to the "Gang of Four." (*Manchester Guardian*, September 21 and 28, 1980.)

What the current trials of the 10 show, above all, is the success with which Deng has carried out this difficult "DeMaoification" campaign without throwing the country into turmoil. In this sense, the trials are the final, almost symbolic act in the consolidation of power by Deng's faction over the Chinese party/state apparatus. The magnitude of this victory, and what it means for China, can best be understood by looking at some of the history

and political underpinnings of the factional warfare that raged in the CPC for nearly 30 years.

### Roots of the faction fight

When the Communist Party of China drove out Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang (KMT) in 1949, the problems it faced were as great as the triumph it had scored.

The economy the CPC inherited was extremely backward. With some one-quarter of the world's population, China had only a tiny industrial base, concentrated along the southern and eastern coasts and in Manchuria in the north. The transportation system held back the development of industry: There were only about 12,000 miles of railroad, for example, and these ran mostly between already existing industrial centers. Meanwhile, about four-fifths of the population—hundreds of millions of people—lived in the countryside, tilling the soil with primitive implements, barely able to eke out a subsistence living.

Moreover, China had suffered under decades of imperialist domination during which China had been carved up and bled dry; what the imperialists didn't take the warlords—provincial army leaders who ruled "their" territories like petty dictators—and the KMT grabbed for themselves.

The differences among the CPC leaders, which were to assume increasingly bloody forms in the years to come, stemmed from the problem of how to organize this primitive economy and get it moving.

It was not, as Mao later would claim, a fight between "socialism" (Mao) and the "capitalist road" (Deng). In fact, China never underwent the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism by the working class in alliance with the peasants. Instead, the CPC—led largely by intel-

lectuals with a revolutionist, anti-imperialist perspective—based itself on huge peasant support. It successfully waged a program against the hated KMT dictatorship of the period. The goal of the revolution was to bring the CPC to power and to be in the era of "New Socialism."

It was only in the mid-'50s that the CPC government nationalized industry and agriculture, that it became a "socialist." But the workers and peasants had already acquired power for them-



Poster in Peking showing "Gang of Four" on bayonets.

retained the same basic relations of production: The means of production were state-owned nor controlled them. The difference was that in the past, the boss was the state or factory owner, while after '50s, the boss was the state which the Chinese workers and peasants had no control. Instead, the state was controlled by the CPC, which controlled over the state apparatus. The state-owned property, increased and consolidated itself into a new ruling class. In other words, the 1949-57 period China was transformed into a highly stratified variety of socialism, that is, into a form of capitalism.

The fights within the CPC during this period were therefore not within a single, state-capitalist class. The entire party

# CHINA

## 'Gang of Four' Trials Cap Victory For Deng Faction

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lectuals with a revolutionary-nationalist, anti-imperialist perspective, and basing itself on huge peasant armies—successfully waged a guerrilla war against the hated KMT regime. Its program at the time explicitly rejected "the dictatorship of the proletariat" as the goal of the revolution and, indeed, once in power the CPC declared China to be in the era of "New Democracy," not socialism.

It was only in the mid-'50s, when the CPC government nationalized industry and agriculture, that it began to call China "socialist." But the Chinese workers and peasants had never conquered power for themselves and



Poster in Peking showing "Gang of Four" on bayonet.

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retained the same basic relationship to the means of production: They neither owned nor controlled them. The chief difference was that in the past the boss might have been an individual landlord or factory owner, while after the mid-'50s, the boss was the state itself, over which the Chinese workers and peasants had no control. Instead, the state was controlled by the CPC, which, by this control over the state apparatus and state-owned property, increasingly consolidated itself into a new "collective" ruling class. In other words, in the 1949-57 period China was transformed into a highly stratified variety of capitalism, that is, into a form of state capitalism.

The fights within the CPC that began in this period were therefore differences within a single, state-capitalist ruling class. The entire party leadership

agreed that the main task was a rapid expansion of the productive forces of the country. What they couldn't agree on, however, was how to do this. This led to the formation of different groupings, or factions, within the CPC, each with its own strategy for economic development. The lines between these groupings were not always hard-and-fast, but for the sake of discussion we can safely divide the

CPC into two broad groupings: one led by Mao and the other led by Liu Shaoqi, Deng's political leader and mentor.

Among other things, Mao's program included two interrelated points.

First, he was adamant that China could be developed "mainly by our own efforts," i.e., by "self-reliance." This meant that China should remain independent of imperialism. Mao argued that China's vast human resources could make up for its technological primitiveness so that China would not be forced to rely on the industrially advanced countries. This was why, until the early '70s, Mao emphasized an international political line of extremely militant anti-imperialism and opposition to Russian attempts to make a deal with the U.S., what the Russians called "peaceful coexistence."

Second, Mao believed that the key to boosting production in industry and agriculture was the mass mobilization of the peasants and workers through ideological and political means, what the Maoists called "moral incentives." Mao directly counterposed this to using "material incentives," such as higher wages, wage differentials, more consumer goods, etc., to get the workers and peasants to work harder.

The strategy of the Liu/Deng faction differed from Mao's on both points.

First, Liu and Deng thought the key to the economic development of the country was an emphasis on advanced technology and technique rather than raw human resources. As part of this, Liu and Deng sought to create a layer of bureaucrats, managers and technicians, educated in the latest techniques and technology, to manage the economy and rule the country. For these reasons, their faction favored a close relationship with a major industrialized country, first Russia and later the United States, as a way of having access to the most modern technological resources.

Second, the Liu/Deng faction believed that the best way to boost production was not through ideological exhortations to the masses but through "material incentives" (more local initiative to the separate enterprises, wage differentials for skilled and unskilled labor, incentive pay and production bonuses, etc.). This faction argued that the workers and peasants would produce more if they knew that their consumption would increase accordingly.

### The Cultural Revolution

These two groupings or factions in the CPC fought each other and jockeyed



Deng Xiaoping, left; Liu Shaoqi, deceased, Deng's mentor and Mao's foe.

for power for 25 years, each one having the opportunity to apply its program for limited periods of time. The most dramatic of these periods was the Cultural Revolution, 1965 to around 1970.

Prior to the Cultural Revolution, the Liuists had consolidated considerable power in the party and government, and were more or less running the country. In a rather desperate maneuver, Mao seized upon discontent among a section of students and launched a mass campaign—political and ideological—that became known as the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. Under the guise of fighting capitalist ideology (culture) and "capitalist roaders," Mao tried to mobilize the Chinese people for a political, ideological and often physical assault on the Liuist faction.

While this campaign did manage to weaken the Liu faction, it also plunged the country into political and economic turmoil. Even worse, from Mao's point of view, it 1) gave rise to a wing of the student movement that didn't want to stop at a struggle against one sector of the state-capitalist class (the Liuists), but called for the overthrow of what it called the "red capitalist class"; and 2) led to near-insurrectionary strikes by sections of the working class.

Faced with a mass movement he could no longer control, Mao turned to the army to restore order, began to junk the Cultural Revolution, and moved toward a truce with what was left of the Liuist faction. (Liu himself died in 1969, as did many officials as a result of the Cultural Revolution.) Mao also began to turn the country away from militant anti-imperialism and toward an alliance with the United States.

### Deng returns to power

This deal and turn marked the beginning of the end for the Maoist faction. By the early '70s, many supporters of the Liu faction, now led by Deng, had been "rehabilitated," while the Maoists found themselves increasingly squeezed out of positions of real power. By the time Mao died in September 1976, Deng's faction had gained considerable control over the party/state apparatus. In the period since then, Deng has maneuvered skillfully to consolidate his power and complete the destruction of the Maoists. In June 1977, he had himself named vice-premier of the government and vice-chairman of the CPC. Today, he is completing his mopping-up operation in the show trials of the "Gang of Four" and other leading members of the old Maoist faction.

The return of Deng Xiaoping to power has brought with it the return of the old Liu/Deng strategy. This time, however, with Mao dead and his supporters dispersed and in disgrace, Deng has a clear field to introduce the traditional capitalist methods he advocates, within a bureaucratic state-capitalist framework. First and foremost, this entails depoliticizing China's institutions and people, and focussing everything on modernization and production.

Already, a wide range of small, collectively-owned neighborhood enterprises have been freed from state control and are competing with state-owned enterprises. They are solely responsible for their own success or failure and the workers' wages depend on the success of the business. Enterprises applying for loans must prove that they can pay the loan back, with interest, in 15 years. And state-owned enterprises which do not show increased profits will have their funds cut off.

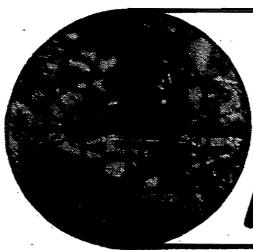
Deng has also introduced wage differentials for more or less skilled work, as well as production bonuses (up to one and a half months' salary for the best workers) and piecework. It should be noted that workers in both state-owned and privately owned businesses now face pay cuts if their work is not up to "standard" either in quality or quantity.

In order to make this "industry for profit" program viable, Deng is working to rebuild and create a technological, scientific and managerial elite to run things, which will be paid substantially more than industrial workers. Developing such a layer is a priority, especially since one of the "legacies" of the Cultural Revolution was the virtual elimination of this layer.

In the agricultural sector, the purchase price of grain has been raised 20 percent and quotas lowered, which has allowed the peasants to sell more of their produce on the free market for their own profit. This resulted in a three percent increase in grain production in 1979 and a greater overall flow of produce to the cities.

Finally, Deng is piloting China into an increasingly tight alliance with U.S. and Western imperialism. China has already signed trade agreements totaling \$80 billion with Japan. Negotiations are proceeding with U.S. oil companies for rights to China's offshore oil.

So far, Deng appears to have scored a remarkable success in implementing his program. Yet Deng's strategy is as potentially dangerous to him and his successors as was Mao's to him. The return of a more traditional capitalist approach to development will bring with it all the problems of traditional capitalism. Higher wages in the absence of a strong light industry/consumer goods sector is leading to inflation, as increasingly more money chases not enough goods. A return to the profit motive in enterprises is leading to worsening working conditions and unemployment, as each enterprise seeks to get the most work out of as few workers as possible. Similarly, hundreds of thousands of Chinese are leaving the countryside for the cities in the hope of finding better-paying jobs. Many are finding no jobs and are forced to turn to prostitution and crime. And, most of all, the gap between the different social strata and classes is more visibly widening, potentially leading to increased struggle among them. Eventually, the Deng strategy will come up against the central antagonism of capitalism in all its forms: the class struggle between capitalist and worker. □



## WORLD IN REVOLUTION

### Baby Doc cracks down on opposition

President Jean-Claude Duvalier's repressive regime in Haiti began rounding up hundreds of reporters and political dissidents on November 28. Among those arrested were the entire staffs of two radio stations, reporters on the weekly newspaper, *Le Petit Samedi Soir*, and Gregoire Eugene, head of the oppositionist Social Christian Party. Sylvio Claude, leader of the dissident Christian Democratic Party, was jailed earlier in October. It was the most sweeping crackdown in Haiti since Duvalier (Baby Doc) took over the government after the death of his father, the notorious dictator Francois (Papa Doc) Duvalier, in 1971.

Duvalier is reacting to the increasing popular opposition he has faced in recent months. In August, a three-day revolt against the local Tontons Macoutes (government thugs organized in the so-called Volunteers for National Security) broke out in Gonaives. A few days later, hundreds of protesters went into the streets of Les Cayes to demonstrate against the government's decision to end its support for the town's vetiver (a plant used to make screens and perfumes) industry. Earlier, in June, thousands of people demonstrated against the brutality of a police chief in Cap-Haitien, while in July public workers in the national capital, Port-au-Prince, went on strike for the first time in 20 years.

The government especially wants to silence domestic critics of its economic policies. It is hardly a coincidence that the recent crackdown took place only a week before Haitian officials were scheduled to meet with representatives of the International Monetary Fund and the Joint Commission of International Donors, a committee of international bankers who provide loans to the government. These agencies have poured millions into Haiti in an effort to stabilize capitalist rule in the country. But they are increasingly critical of the wholesale government corruption and mismanagement which have reduced foreign exchange reserves from \$42 million to \$4 million in the past year.

### Uruguay: Referendum vote stings junta

On November 30, the people of Uruguay dealt a stunning defeat to the country's right-wing military regime. By a 58-42 percent margin, they voted to reject a constitution that would have guaranteed the military permanent control over the government. In 1973, Uruguayan army, air force and navy commanders forced President Juan Maria Bordaberry to dissolve Congress and set up a Council of State composed mainly of top-ranking officers to run the country. The council ousted Bordaberry himself in 1976 and replaced him with a puppet president, Aparicio Mendez. But in 1976 the council promised to allow elections for a new Congress in 1981.

The proposed constitution was designed to deny the Congress any real power. It proposed to give supreme authority to a Consejo de Seguridad Nacional (Council of National Security) made up of the commanders of the three military services and an elected president who would have had to have military approval to run for office. The proposed constitution would also have set up a Tribunal Constitucional (Constitutional Tribunal) appointed by the military with the power to remove any civilian official, including the president, from office. The constitution would have banned strikes by government workers, who make up over half the Uruguayan working class, as well as given the government authority to jail political dissidents and hold them indefinitely without trial.

The military regime spent over \$30 million in a campaign to convince Uruguayans to vote for the constitution. Political groups opposing the regime were allowed to hold small public meetings for the first time since 1973. But they were forbidden to hold mass rallies and denied access to government-controlled radio and television stations.

Military leaders have refused to comment on the vote. However, before the referendum, navy commander Admiral Hugo Marquez declared that the government would "reconsider" its promises of political liberalization if voters rejected the constitution. It has already reimposed its ban on political activity.

—PB

# Ultra-Rightists Plan Coup in El Salvador

(Continued from page 1)

quickly denied any connection to the killings. Almost no one believes them, however. Credit for the attacks was claimed by a right-wing death squad called the Maximilian Hernandez Brigade. Their name is taken from a Salvadorean general who crushed a peasant rebellion in the 1930s by killing 30,000 people. Although such rightist paramilitary groups maintain an organizational identity distinct from the junta and receive their pay from large Salvadorean landowners and capitalists, there is a high degree of cooperation, and some joint membership, between the armed forces and themselves.

To further terrorize the left and the Salvadorean workers and peasants, the same Maximilian Hernandez death squad bombed the San Salvador cathedral where the bodies of the dead FDR leaders were on public display November 28. Nine people were injured in the blast and some of the corpses were further mutilated. The next day five youths were killed in Soyapango, their bodies covered with a poster signed "Anti-Communist Brigade—National Resistance."

### Public funeral held

In an immediate response to the killings, the Salvadorean left launched its own bomb attacks on rightist-owned businesses and burned 25 buses in the capital. At a secret news conference, new leaders of the FDR were announced and a call was issued for a massive funeral march through the capital on December 3. Plans for the march were abandoned, however, when it became clear that relatively few Salvadoreans were willing to face the risks involved in such a demonstration. Instead, a public funeral, attended by 1,500 people, was held.

One day earlier, right-wing vigilantes, probably aided by government security forces, kidnapped and killed three Roman Catholic nuns and one lay worker, all from the U.S. In response, the U.S. government suspended new military and economic aid to El Salvador pending clarification of the role of the security forces in the slayings.

In the aftermath of these atrocities, the Salvadorean liberation forces have been forced onto the defensive,



Body of FDR leader being removed after bombing of cathedral where it was on display.

while the right continues to grow more bold. Although the junta's military campaign in Morazan province has stalled in the face of fierce resistance, the left forces themselves have not been able to advance. In addition to their top political leadership, wiped out in the November 27 massacre, the popular forces have recently lost two military field commanders—one in the fight in Morazan, another in an accidental plane crash.

Numerous independent ob-

the battered Salvadorean masses. But now, following the recent rightist attacks and at a time when the junta has been boosted by the prospect of more aid from a Reagan administration, the tide may have already turned decisively against the left.

### U.S. liberals want 'Zimbabwe solution'

Meanwhile, U.S. imperialists continue to debate their options. The weakened liberals continue to appeal for a "Zimbabwe solution," which would involve U.S. recognition of the FDR and a negotiated settlement. This appears to have no chance of success. A growing right wing, closely associated with President-elect Reagan, favors a direct military solution, including more U.S. combat equipment for the junta and the dispatch of more U.S. counter-insurgency specialists to train the Salvadorean armed forces inside the country.

Rumors of an ultra-right coup are everywhere. Two



FMLN guerrillas training at secret camp in El Salvador this November.

servers have commented on what seems to be a shift in the mood of the Salvadorean masses. Various descriptions as an uneasiness, fatigue, or increasing doubt in the ability of the liberation forces to win, what it points to is a serious crisis for the left. The newly-united guerrilla army, the Frente Farabundo Marti de Liberacion Nacional (FMLN—Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front), is under tremendous pressure to launch its "final offensive" or at least gain some major victory or risk losing the confidence of

earlier coup attempts were stopped by diplomatic pressure from the Carter government, but with Carter on his way out another attempt is expected very soon, probably before Reagan's inauguration in January. Some observers have described the November 27 massacre as the first blow in an "extended right-wing coup" which may continue for weeks. Its purpose would be to discredit the junta, terrorize the left forces and present Reagan with a consolidated rightist regime when he takes office. □

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# Poland and the Crisis of the Left

DECEMBER 12—As we go to press, several hundred thousand Russian troops, and those of other Warsaw Pact nations, are reported massed near Poland's border, threatening that country with an invasion to suppress the Polish people's struggles for democratic rights and organizations and, in particular, the independent trade union movement, Solidarnosc (Solidarity). It is rumored that Russians have assumed control of the high command of the Polish army in Warsaw.

In recent weeks, the Russian state capitalists, along with their counterparts in Eastern Europe, have stepped up their denunciations of Solidarnosc. As if to justify armed intervention, they are increasingly pointing to alleged counter-revolutionaries who are supposedly trying to exploit the situation in order to destabilize "Polish socialism."

Although it is difficult to predict, it appears likely that the Russians will invade Poland within the next few weeks in order to prevent the popular struggles in that country from spreading to other countries of Eastern Europe and thus threatening the existence of state-capitalist rule and Russian control over the area.

A Russian invasion might be forestalled if the Polish workers repudiated Solidarnosc and gave up their struggles for trade unions, political rights and a better life entirely—but this is hardly likely.

It is also possible that the Polish army and police might succeed in "restoring order" in Poland, thereby relieving the Russians of having to do this. While the Russians would prefer such a "Polish" solution to their problems, it is unlikely that the Polish soldiers (and even some officers) can be counted on to shoot their Polish brothers and sisters, especially when such a task will be so obviously at the behest of the hated Russian government. As a result, it is highly likely that Russian troops will be marching into Poland in the relatively near future.

## Deepening international tensions

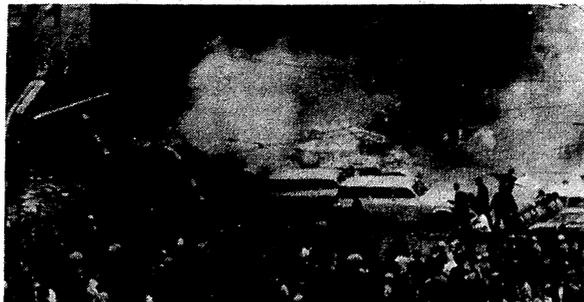
A Russian invasion of Poland would have a profound impact on the present international political scene. The already apparent movement toward a new Cold War would be greatly accelerated. Deterrence, halfway into the grave in any event, would be completely buried by such an invasion. The U.S. and its Western European allies would impose a trade embargo on Russia and other Eastern Eu-

ropean countries, junk all efforts to renegotiate a Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty and attempt to shore up or recreate the old military alliances. The Russians would take comparable measures.

Within each country of the two big imperialist blocs, hard-line, right-wing, nationalist elements would increase

nature of these societies, the contradiction in the politics of these organizations is revealed, and one or more of them undergo some sort of crisis.

This crisis tends to have two aspects. On the one hand, these organizations become increasingly isolated from broad sectors of U.S.



Russian tanks destroying buildings during August 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia.

their influence in their respective governments. These forces would demand increased military spending, sacrifices in the interests of national security and a further crack-down on the rights and needs of the majority of the people. The result would be a significant heightening of international tensions and a new arms race along with increased domestic repression.

## Impact on the left

A Russian invasion of Poland would, in addition to the global repercussions, have a particularly strong impact on the left, which is already undergoing a significant crisis.

Many, if not most, left organizations in the United States today consider Russia, the countries of Eastern Europe, China or Cuba, etc., to be workers' states or socialist societies and defend them as progressive vis-a-vis capitalism. They take this position despite the fact that these are state-capitalist societies, in which the majority of the people—workers and peasants—are brutally oppressed and exploited by ruling classes and are denied virtually all political rights.

At the same time, however, these organizations also claim to be fighting against injustice, all forms of racial and sexual oppression, and economic exploitation, and to be for the creation of a society that will bring about human freedom.

As a result, these left groups are standing on political quicksand. Every time one of the state-capitalist regimes perpetrates some obviously brutal and reactionary act, an act that suggests the true

society. Most people who are not members or supporters of left groups do not believe that the state-capitalist societies are progressive vis-a-vis capitalism. Quite the contrary, they are prone to accept what the U.S. ruling class says about them. When the Russians invade some country, such as Afghanistan or Poland, what most people believe about these societies appears confirmed and they become even more hostile to the left than they were before. This does not help the left recruit and build its political base.

On the other hand, the left's own members and sympathizers become disillusioned and demoralized. Most members of the left who consider the state-capitalist societies to be progressive do not believe they are defending and/or fighting for totalitarian societies. To a considerable degree, their pro-Stalinist views are based on ignorance about the actual conditions prevailing in the state-capitalist countries and a rather simplistic notion that any country that opposes U.S. imperialism cannot but be a decent place.

In part, these pro-Stalinist politics are also based on an elitist, and what can only be called a religious, idea that societies in which the means of production have been nationalized and production carried out according to a state plan—whether or not the workers and peasants have any say in determining this plan—are, by definition, workers' states, socialist societies or progressive in some nameless way.

Whatever the precise mix, much of the support for the state-capitalist countries is built on illusion. As a result, when the true nature of a given state-capitalist country, say Russia, is revealed, in a

rather abrupt way, as through an invasion of another country, particularly a "fraternal socialist" one, large numbers of the members and supporters of left organizations tend to get demoralized.

Unfortunately, one result of this dynamic may also be that a Russian invasion of Poland would make many people cynical about the chance of changing the world altogether. Most people, on the left and outside of it, tend to lump Stalinism, state capitalism, Marxism, Leninism and socialist revolution together and then take them or leave them as a whole. Thus, when leftists are forced to realize that countries they thought were really decent and progressive societies are not actually so, they may tend to reject Marxism, Leninism and the idea of socialist revolution altogether.

This happened in 1956 after the Russians crushed the Hungarian Revolution. It occurred again in 1968, when the Russians invaded Czechoslovakia to smash Alexander Dubcek's experiments with state-capitalist liberalization. And, unfortunately, we can expect the same to happen following a Russian invasion of Poland.

The result of such an invasion then is likely to be increased confusion on the left combined, at least in the short run, with an even greater isolation from much of U.S. society, exacerbating the general crisis facing the left today.

## Left contributes to its own crisis

Thus while the left's crisis is to a degree the result of objective factors (such as the ebbing of the mass social movements of the '60s and early '70s), it is also of the left's own making. When working people (or others) in this country turn away from the left in the wake of some atrocity committed by the Russian (or Chinese, Kampuchean or whatever) state-capitalists, it is hardly a reflection of these people's ignorance, stupidity or gullibility—as many leftists think.

When people react with disgust against the brutality of these regimes—and turn against Marxism and socialism in the process—this isn't the result of people being fooled by "imperialist propaganda." This propaganda is only as effective as it is because the state-capitalist regimes conform to what the imperialists say about them. They are as rotten as *Time* magazine or whatever says they are. Insofar as a Russian invasion of Poland will tend to isolate and discredit the left among large sectors of U.S.

society, therefore, this is to a great degree because the left has discredited itself. That is, it has squandered its political capital by being apologists for (and even worse, the imitators of) thoroughly anti-working class, anti-socialist and anti-communist societies.

Looked at in this context, the present crisis of the left is most fundamentally an ideological one or—if we can use a non-materialist expression—a spiritual one. It is a crisis of the very definition of the left—what it really stands for and what it really wants. Does it stand primarily for the nationalization of the means of production and planning, even if these nationalized means of production are controlled and the planning carried out by horrid police regimes? Or does it stand for human freedom, that is, building a truly free and human society, a society actually run by working class and oppressed people, a society that is better in every way than the society it wishes to replace?

## Reject state capitalism

We do not know, of course, what precise effects a Russian invasion of Poland would have on the left. We do know that it would give those revolutionaries who understand the state-capitalist nature of the Stalinist regimes a crucial opportunity to argue for our point of view within the left as well as among non-leftist working class people.

We also realize that the present conjuncture involves tremendous responsibilities. If we are going to build a truly revolutionary working class movement in this country, we must make it absolutely clear that we want nothing to do with corrupt cynical regimes that perpetrate horrendous crimes in the name of socialism and communism.

The times are past when large numbers of people are going to believe that police states are really people's paradises. And it will not be possible to convince them to commit their time, energy, money and lives for a struggle to replace one form of tyranny for another. The left will find that if it fails to repudiate both state capitalism and traditional capitalism and fight for a truly free society, it might as well cede the fight to the bourgeois liberals and social democrats who will channel the workers' energy into reforming an unreformable system, disorient and demoralize them, and leave them incapable of fighting the capitalist offensive and the growing fascist threat. That is the challenge presented by the events in Poland today. □

# EDITORIAL

## Congress moves against civil rights gains

On December 4, Congress passed legislation which, if enacted, would strike a blow against the use of busing to ensure integration of public schools. This legislation, actually an amendment to the 1981 appropriations bill, would forbid the Justice Department to initiate or participate in court actions to enforce public school integration through busing programs. The amendment represents an attempt by anti-busing forces in Congress to get around Supreme Court decisions upholding the legality of busing. Although the right wing would like to pass a law outlawing busing altogether, it does not want to do so now because the Supreme Court, with its present composition, is likely to declare such legislation unconstitutional.

**THE PASSAGE** of the anti-busing amendment involves a lot more than the issue of busing itself. While busing, in our view, has not proven effective in either eliminating segregation or providing quality education for the majority of Black people, it is often the only available means of fighting segregation in local school systems. Moreover, busing has been used by the right-wing movement to whip up racism among whites and build up its political base. As the ruling class as a whole has shifted to the right, the campaign against busing has become one of the driving wedges of a much broader campaign against the rights and needs of Blacks and other oppressed people in the U.S. today.

The anti-busing amendment will not become law this year. On December 5, President Carter threatened to veto the appropriations bill if the anti-busing amendment was not removed or modified. This threat compelled anti-busing forces in Congress to give up their attempt to push through the amendment on December 9. Congress must pass some kind of appropriations bill before it adjourns in order to provide the federal government with the funds it needs to operate. It would have taken a two-thirds vote in each house of Congress to override a presidential veto and pass the appropriations bill with the amendment attached. Supporters of the amendment in the Senate apparently did not have enough votes to do this.

**AT MOST, however, a Carter veto threat was a symbolic gesture which will not stop the anti-busing campaign. The**

Republican Party, which took control of the Senate and gained seats in the House of Representatives, included an anti-busing plank as one of the main features in its election platform. As substantial numbers of Democrats also oppose busing, the anti-busing forces should have little difficulty in passing anti-busing legislation in 1981. President-elect Ronald Reagan has already promised to sign such legislation once in office.

Moreover, it appears that



Anti-busing demonstrators assaulting Boston Black community leader with flagpoles.

the Republicans in the Senate dropped their fight for the amendment only in return for a deal with Senate Democrats over fair housing legislation. Congress passed a fair housing law in 1968, but did not include effective enforcement provisions in the bill. For 12 years, Congress made no effort to repair this lack. But right after the passage of the anti-busing amendment, Senate Democrats brought up a bill that would give the Department of Housing and Urban Development the power to file discrimination complaints before a judge appointed by the Justice Department. This judge would be able to impose fines of up to \$10,000 against violators of the fair housing law. On December 5, in a straight party-line vote, Democrats forced Republicans to end a filibuster aimed at preventing the bill from coming to the Senate floor. The next day, Democratic and Republican leaders worked out an agreement in which the Democrats promised to let the bill die if they lost either a second vote to bring the bill to the floor or a vote on a motion to end debate on the bill. Then on December 9, 12 Democrats voted with Republicans against ending debate. This effectively killed the bill.

These maneuvers reflect the strategies of the various sec-

tions of the ruling class. The right wing is pressing for a full-scale attack on Blacks and other oppressed nationalities. Strom Thurmond, the Republican Senator from South Carolina, who will chair the Senate Judiciary Committee in the incoming Congress, is a major proponent of this approach. Thurmond is an old-time Southern segregationist who ran a third-party campaign for president on a racist "states' rights" platform in 1948. He was also a die-hard

proach. It wants to move more slowly and in a "fairer" way. It is primarily concerned that the right-wing strategy will alienate oppressed people entirely from the system and encourage them to turn to radical actions to defend their rights. Liberal and moderate Democrats in particular want to maintain Blacks and Latins as their political base, especially in the aftermath of the Republican sweep in the elections. This is why they are now making some moves to try to show that they, and the Democratic Party as a whole, are the "friends" of Black people.

The hypocrisy of these maneuvers is demonstrated by the record of Congress over the past year. It was this old Democratic-controlled Congress, not the new one, that passed the anti-busing amendment. This same Congress also slashed CETA (Comprehensive Education and Training Act) job programs by 40 percent and cut the federal food-stamp program for 1981. The House of Representatives, where Democrats had a 276-159 majority in the past year, passed legislation which would prevent federal spending on programs that use numerical goals for hiring women and Blacks; restrict spending for bilingual education; and prevent the Internal Revenue Service from revoking the tax-exempt status of private schools that discriminate against Black people.

Black people should take these facts into account in developing a strategy for defending themselves against the right-wing offensive. In the 1950s, '60s and '70s, pro-capitalist Black leaders sought an alliance with liber-

als, particularly Democratic Party liberals, as a means of winning some reforms that benefited Black people. In return for partial concessions, these leaders organized Black people as a political base for the liberals and the Democratic Party as a whole.

But the Democrats' record in Congress demonstrates the futility of such an alliance for Black people. Today the ruling class as a whole, not simply its right wing, supports an attack on Black rights. The Democrats can make an attempt to build their credibility in the Black community precisely because they lost the elections and do not have the same responsibility for carrying out the ruling class offensive that they had during the Carter administration.

**THE REAL lesson** of the busing vote is that Black people should not look to any section of the ruling class in their struggle for equality. The capitalists can and will try to take away the gains Black people have won whenever it suits their interests to do so.

To defend themselves, the masses of Black people must begin building their own organizations totally independent of the capitalists and capitalist politicians. For allies, Black people should look to militant white workers, Latins, women, lesbians and gays, and other oppressed people who are also facing attacks from the right wing and ruling class as a whole. An alliance among these groups can be the first step in organizing the militant mass workers' movement that will be necessary to defend the rights and needs of all working and oppressed people.

—By PAUL BENJAMIN

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Address all correspondence to:

Torch/La Antorcha

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# Black Independent Party

(Continued from page 3) the North Carolina delegation, thought it was better for anti-Klan work to be carried out by "other networks." Ron Daniels said the party should be the center of a national mobilization "to bring massive and unrelenting pressure on the government at all levels to bring to heel the murderers at Greensboro, and the KKK, Nazis and Klan-like, Nazi-like groups all across this land." But point 15 of the New York document calls for the party to "create institutions for both our individual and collective self-defense" against the Nazis and Klan because "African people through bitter experience, have learned we cannot rely on the forces of repression (i.e., police, FBI, CIA) for our personal safety."

## Political discussion squashed

Apparently afraid of the impact of the radical forces at the convention, the NBPA leadership made every effort to prevent the radical point of view from being directly intro-

duced onto the convention floor.

The first session of the convention occurred on Friday night. This session was devoted exclusively to welcoming remarks and speeches and little of substance was accomplished. However, one of the members of the convention organizing committee, Zoharah Simmons, took the opportunity to warn of "some who have come with the intention of disrupting," without specifying who those "some" might be.

Saturday was largely taken up by state caucus meetings. Saturday evening was the first session of the convention to actually take up the question of founding a party.

At the beginning of the business section of this session, the Illinois delegation attempted to introduce the New York document as an alternative to the proposed charter. Chairperson Daniels repeatedly ruled them out of order, however, citing a rule adopted on Saturday morning that made the charter commission's document the "basis for amendment" and disallowed amendments that de-

leted whole sections of the charter and replaced them with something else.

For nearly 30 minutes there was a shouting match between the chair and the New York/Illinois delegates. One New Yorker claimed that they had not fought over the rules that morning because they thought they had an agreement with the NBPA people that New York's statement of principles would be adopted along with the charter commission's structure and that now they were being double-crossed.

However, the NBPA forces prevailed and prevented the New York document from reaching the floor. The session then turned to a discussion of amendments, particularly on the party's name and membership requirements. Throughout this process, there was shouting, chaos and sporadic attempts by New York/Illinois delegates to speak their minds despite the rules. Marable and Rev. Ben Chavis (the most well-known of the Wilmington 10 and someone who works closely with the Communist Party) both left the stage and attempted to "calm down" the New York delegation. Chavis, who is respected for his militancy by many New York delegates, included in his speech to the convention a condemnation of "some who have come to prevent us from ratifying this charter," and urged New York on Saturday night to back off and accept the proposed charter. Finally at 11 p.m., Daniels adjourned the meeting, citing "the general confusion" as the reason.

All previously scheduled activities were cancelled Sunday morning as a closed meeting of the members of the convention organizing committee and the heads of the state delegations attempted to work out a compromise. Also included in the meeting, although he did not fall into either category, was Chavis. Several reports have him play-

ing a key role in working out an agreement.

"To save this party and to build it we have to have some input in it from the bottom up," a supporter of the New York document told the Torch/La Antorcha as we sat around Sunday morning waiting for the closed meeting to break up and announce its results. "I see the two documents as fundamentally opposed. One is talking about the interests of the masses, the other about the particular interests of the few. It's hard to resolve and that's what's tying up this convention."

By noon an agreement was nailed down, announced to the press, and then taken into a plenary session. It had five points:

1) There would be another convention in July or August.

2) The NBPA-proposed charter, along with the few amendments passed on Saturday, would be in effect until the summer convention, except for the sections on goals and the preamble, which local groups (i.e., New York and Illinois) would be free to ignore.

3) Instead of the officers described in the charter, a National Party Organizing Committee would be elected that would be broadly representative.

4) A new charter review committee would be set up to work out a proposal for the next convention.

5) State and local branches would be mandated to have mini-conventions between now and the national convention next summer.

After discussion of some minor amendments to the compromise agreement, it was passed by the convention. The remainder of Sunday was devoted to electing people to fill the newly created committees.

## Black party would be major step

Despite its meager results, the convention was not a total failure. Just having 1,400 activists from 26 states come together to discuss forming

an independent Black party was significant. Certainly, the formation of a political party actually committed to fighting for the needs of Black people in the U.S. and truly independent of the capitalist class would be a big step forward.

Unfortunately, it is not at all clear just how independent of the capitalist parties, particularly the Democratic Party, the National Black Independent Party is going to be.

On the one hand, there was plenty of anti-Democratic Party rhetoric to be heard at the convention. For example, Barbara Sizemore said: "There is only one party, that is the capitalist party of America. It has two branches, the Republicans and the Democrats."

On the other hand, such talk is belied by more concrete indications. The fact that David Richardson, a Democratic representative in the Pennsylvania state legislature, was a member of the convention organizing committee and addressed the first session of the convention is not an encouraging sign. Nor is the fact that Barbara Arwine told reporters that she had several elected local officials (most likely Democrats) lined up to run on the Black party line. Electing Democrats under a new label is a rather limited kind of independence. Finally, some important figures at the convention, including Daniels, explicitly call for a policy of endorsing "progressive Democrats" in local and statewide elections.

These and other issues will be discussed and wrangled over in the coming months. At its close, the National Black Independent Political Party Convention was united by little but an agreement to postpone the fight until the party convention next summer. The discussion between now and then, and at the convention itself, will determine whether the organization lives or dies, and whether it becomes an organization of the Black masses or one devoted, in the words of the supporter of the New York document, to "the particular interests of the few." □

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