

TORCH

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JUNE 15-AUGUST 14, 1981

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Bob Marley: A Voice of the Masses



See page 2

Why Workers Should Oppose Gun Control

See page 8

**SECCION
EN
ESPAÑOL**

Less Rights, More Spies— Gov't Repression on the Rise

By PAUL BENJAMIN

Ronald Reagan, the darling of the U.S. ruling class, came into office declaring that the great evil in U.S. society was "too much government," and he pledged to get the government off the backs of the people.

Indeed, in his first few months as president, Reagan has worked tirelessly to get the government off people's backs—some people's backs, that is. Less government, according to Reagan, means liberating the rich, the very rich and the corporations from high taxes. It means freeing big business from regulations that might protect workers from dangerous conditions on the job, or the environment from pollution, or consumers from shoddy and unsafe products. It means emancipating the capitalists from government agencies and laws that deal with cases of racial and sexual discrimination, or that ban corporate dirty-dealings.

Such glorious freedom is not without its price, however. Ronald Reagan doesn't like to talk about that part of it. But the truth is that less government and more freedom for the capitalists



means... more government and less freedom for us. For if the capitalists are to be "free" to exploit workers and oppressed people here and around the world at will, we in turn cannot be free to fight back. So while Reagan spouts his libertarian rhetoric, he and the U.S. ruling class are moving to vastly increase the military and the repressive

apparatus. And they are beginning to strip away many of the civil liberties and rights that working people and oppressed groups won through years of hard struggle.

For openers, the FBI, CIA and other government agencies are being given a virtually free hand to spy on and harass (Continued on page 8)

Mass Protests Sweep South Africa



Black militants burn South African flag during May 25 rally at the University of Witwatersrand.

Apartheid Celebrations Disrupted

By WILLIAM FALK

Thousands of Black and mixed-race workers and students in South Africa (Azania) marched, boycotted, struck and demonstrated this past May, upsetting the plans of the white ruling class for a week of triumphant celebration of apartheid rule.

The occasion for the planned festivities—and protests—was the 20th anniversary of Republic Day. On May 31, 1961, the whites took South Africa out of the British "Commonwealth," an act widely regarded as the capstone in the construction of the apartheid regime.

In the first three days of Republic Day Week 1981, activists of the African National Congress bombed two railroad lines, a power line, a police station and an army recruiting office.

But even more important were the dozens of mass actions held during the week, involving thousands of people.

Among these were the following:

May 25—Several hundred students at the mostly white University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg hold an anti-Republic Day rally, during which Black students burn the South African flag.

May 26—At Fort Hare University, the largest university in South Africa for Black students, the more than 2,500 students go out on strike.

May 29—At a high school for mixed-race students just outside Johannesburg, students barricade themselves in a building and go on a hunger strike to protest the whites' holiday.

June 1—200 Black students from the (Continued on page 11)

The following article on reggae star Bob Marley, who died May 11, is reprinted from the May 27-June 26 issue of Forward. The Forward is the newspaper of the Revolutionary Marxist League of Jamaica, sister organization of the RSL.

By JON THOMAS

Robert Nesta (Bob) Marley, the undisputed master of reggae music who died last Monday at age 36, has now been laid to rest. His tragic death of cancer called forth an outpouring of heartfelt grief from the broad masses of Jamaican people such as has never before been experienced in this country.

It also witnessed a vile and most sickening display of crocodile tears and pretended grief by those who, not too long ago, scorned Marley, his music and the oppressed masses from whom he sprang. Elements of the privileged classes of Jamaican society like those represented in the Private Sector Organization of Jamaica today. Or like those gathered around the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP). The same JLP which banned Walter Rodney and the writings of Malcolm X, locked up Rastas

for 18 months for smoking herb and otherwise repressed the Black masses and their culture which were the wellsprings of Bob's music.

During the early sixties when Bob's career was in its baby stage, these reactionary elements, who were often also deeply racist, looked down on the music of Bob and the Wallers and other local artistes as "boogoo-yagga" music, "yard bwoy" music, "gardener bwoy" music. In those times, the only place you could hear Wallers' music flow was in the dance halls of Kingston's ghettos.

During that so-called rude boy era masses of mainly unemployed youths would skank the night away to the music of Bob and the Wallers, the Heptones, Delroy Wilson, Alton Ellis and many, many others. Music with lyrics such as:

BOB MARLEY: a voice of the masses

**Jailhouse keep empty
Rudie get stealthy
Baton stick get shorter
Rudie get taller
Can't fight against
the youth now
Dem a wild, wild rudie.**

(Jailhouse Keep Empty, Bob Marley and the Wallers)

Music which echoed the early rebellion of oppressed ghetto youths, their bitter hatred of the capitalist state forces (Babylon), and their determination that their spirit would not be crushed by the grinding poverty and hopelessness to which neo-colonial Jamaican capitalism sought to condemn them.

Robert Nesta Marley was able to accurately, militantly and creatively reflect these sentiments because he was a son of the oppressed masses of the ghettos. He drew his inspiration from these masses and, in turn, his music reflected the suffering of these masses as well as their powerful, long denied strivings for liberation. That Marley was able to do this steadfastly was the mark of his genius.

Over the years Marley and his music matured and developed. From the rude boy music of the sixties through the anti-colonial, anti-slavery musical classics of the Soul Rebel and Soul Revolution, two albums which he did with Lee "Scratch" Perry and the Upsetters band. Up to the latest period of his association with Chris Blackwell of Island Records, the monopoly capitalist in reggae music today.

Throughout, Bob's music was motivated by a consciousness of the fact that oppressed people have to struggle by all means necessary if we are to win freedom. Thus, in one song he urged the masses to "Get up, stand up; Stand up for your rights." In "War" he emphasized that there would be no peace until there is equal rights and justice for all irrespective of race. In "Redemption Song," another classic track, from the Uprising album, he told us correctly that we have to free our consciousness from backward ideology before we can free ourselves from the shackles of wage slavery. In any event, "no hands can free us but our own."

To the end, Bob solidarized fully with the liberation struggles in Southern Africa and recognized that armed struggle, revolutionary struggle was needed to smash apartheid and colonialism and win rights and justice for the oppressed Black masses. More than all other Jamaican singers and players of instruments, Robert Nesta Marley gave voice to certain of the

most advanced elements of worldwide human culture.

Yet, at the same time Bob's music and personal outlook reflected much of the backward, religious elements of mass consciousness. He articulated the struggle element of Rastafarianism but he also gave voice to the backward tendency of Rastafarianism and all other religious outlooks to search outside of human effort for

rather than live as slaves. Struggle by Nanny, Cudjoe, Sam Sharpe and other freedom fighters in Jamaica and elsewhere to crush the inhuman institution of chattel slavery.

Bob supported the African liberation struggles and yet worshipped the feudal dictator Selassie. When Selassie was overthrown and died shortly after—an event which could hardly have saddened the Ethiopian masses—Bob proclaimed: Jah lives!

Such were the sharp contradictions that were manifested in Bob's music, reflecting the contradictions of popular consciousness. On the one hand, very advanced ideas; on the other, the most backward, su-

To Our Readers

As you may have noticed, this issue of the Torch/La Antorcha is smaller than usual—12 pages in English and four in Spanish. We have made this cut for one month only, due to the extensive resources needed for our upcoming national convention and the death of Comrade Lois Aarons (see below). We would also like to remind our readers that we are taking the month of July off—so the next Torch/La Antorcha will be the August 15-September 14 issue. It will be out on August 15, with our usual 24 pages. See you then.

some supernatural force for personal and collective salvation. If only we can free our minds how come we need to relate to Jah or any other idea of God?

Besides, it wasn't the hand of any Almighty that enabled the Black masses, descendants of African slaves to forward triumphantly in this time. It was struggle. Struggle by our ancestors in Africa who fought the white slavers and their Black henchmen to the death rather than be sold into slavery. Struggle by others of our ancestors who jumped overboard the slave ships in the Middle Passage, taking their own lives,

perpetitious tendencies.

It is these contradictions which have to be solved by "that section of the new generation of Jamaica's performing artistes and cultural workers who will bring about the building of a truly revolutionary cultural movement, deeply rooted in the working class and fully committed to the self-emancipation of that class." (RML Tribute to Bob.)

They can only be solved by a break with religious ideas, the adoption of communist ideology and struggle for a revolutionary communist workers' party and a government of workers and small farmers. □

Lois Aarons, 1952-1981



We regret to inform Torch/La Antorcha readers that RSL Comrade Lois Aarons (Zimmerman) committed suicide on May 17. Her death was a shock to her friends and comrades and an important loss to the RSL. Comrade Aarons left no note or any other specific indication of why she took her life. However, we do know that she had been very depressed for a period of months; she acutely felt the growing ugliness and brutality of the capitalist world and increasingly despaired of finding any positive solutions.

Comrade Aarons was a founding member of the RSL. While she had resigned as a member several months ago, she remained a sympathizer and a firm supporter of the organization. Comrade Aarons was one of the mainstays of La Antorcha, putting in many long hours translating and proofreading the Spanish section of the newspaper. Over the years, she carried out a wide variety of political activities, first in Chicago, then in Los Angeles and, most recently, in New York. Comrade Aarons made particular contributions to political discussions in the RSL on the nature of sexism and the struggle for women's and lesbian and gay liberation.

It is difficult to express the sorrow that all of us who knew Lois personally feel. Her death has left us all saddened and looking for explanations, which are difficult to find. With the death in an auto accident last November of Comrade Thorald Taylor of the RSL's sister organization in Jamaica, the Revolutionary Marxist League, the RSL and RML have recently suffered the loss of two true friends and comrades.

Comrade Aarons was buried in Chicago on May 20 by her family and close friends. In tribute to Comrade Aarons, the RSL has set up a "Lois Aarons (Zimmerman) Memorial Fund." Contributions to this fund will be used exclusively to help publish a book on state capitalism and Trotskyism that we have been working on for several years. Anyone interested in making a contribution should contact the RSL National Office.

IN THIS ISSUE

JUNE 15-AUGUST 14, 1981

- 1 Government repression on the rise
Mass protests sweep South Africa
- 2 Bob Marley: a voice of the masses
Lois Aarons, 1952-1981
- 3 Postal workers face tough contract battle
PAM plans fall actions
- 4 Attacks on lesbians and gay men grow
Police crackdown angers New Orleans gay community
'Take Back The Night' events held in Detroit
- 5 Black woman loses four fingers in racist bombing
5,000 rally against Atlanta murders
Native Americans resist land-theft maneuvers
- 6 Uprisings hit three Michigan prisons
- 7 Coal strike ends
- 9 Editorial: Why workers should oppose gun control

FEATURES

- 6 Break the Chains
Pontiac Brothers... Baraka... In brief
- 7 Labor in Struggle
IBT... USWA District 31... Jearl Wood
- 11 World in Revolution
Poland... Israel/ Iraq

New York post

By a POSTAL CORRESPONDENT

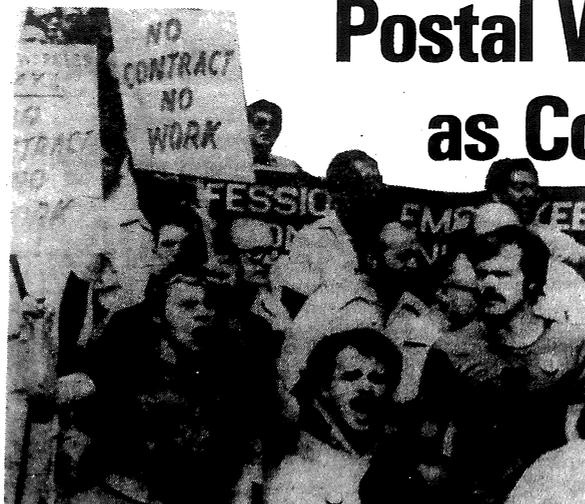
Rank and file face their toughest generation this year. The tracts covering 6 in four unions 21. Postal service is demanding an workers' uncanceled living allowance ended job security list of other g unions are simpl the line. In addition file workers better health and tions, an end to time, and amnes workers still fire contract struggle.

This year's crisis will be no ordinary reason is that economic system is in a serious crisis, a class that runs make the workers of this, Reagan have cut the post-subsidy by over \$600 the next three years.

Terrible safety record

What has this workers in the First, despite the have not kept up in the three years contract. Second, conditions (and health in the post office miserable. In 1979 ers suffered 57,61 injuries. This was worst safety record federal government than twice as bad industry. Also, has increased tremen example, in a Torch/La Antorcha New York postal scribed how many been preventing talking, listening or stepping off the to the bathroom, at has created a camp atmosphere. ruling class want thousands of post-

Postal Workers Face Tough Battle as Contracts Expire for 600,000



New York postal workers protest 1978 contract sellout.

By a POSTAL WORKER
CORRESPONDENT

Rank and file postal workers face their toughest struggle in a generation this year as contracts covering 600,000 workers in four unions expire on July 21. Postal service management is demanding an end to postal workers' uncapped cost-of-living allowance (COLA), weakened job security, and a long list of other givebacks. The unions are simply trying to hold the line. In addition, many rank and file workers are fighting for better health and safety conditions, an end to forced overtime, and amnesty for the 119 workers still fired from the 1978 contract struggle.

This year's contract battle will be no ordinary fight. The reason is that the capitalist economic system is in a serious crisis, and the ruling class that runs it is trying to make the workers pay. As part of this, Reagan and Congress have cut the post office subsidy by over \$600 million over the next three years.

Terrible safety record

What has this meant to workers in the post office? First, despite the COLA, wages have not kept up with inflation in the three years since the last contract. Second, working conditions (and health and safety) in the post office have gotten miserable. In 1979, postal workers suffered 57,672 on-the-job injuries. This was one of the worst safety records in the federal government and more than twice as bad as private industry. Also, harassment has increased tremendously. For example, in a letter to the *Torch/La Antorcha* in April, a New York postal worker described how management has been preventing people from talking, listening to radios, or stepping off the floor to go to the bathroom, and in general has created a concentration camp atmosphere. Finally, the ruling class wants to slash thousands of postal jobs over

the next few years by introducing nine-digit ZIP codes and electronically-transmitted mail. These schemes would eliminate the jobs of thousands of workers who now move and sort letters.

For postal customers, things have been no better. In the past three years the cost of a first-class letter has gone from 13 cents to 18 cents, with a further rise to 20 cents likely. Meanwhile, services have been cut. In New York, there are no more collections from apartment houses on Sundays. In addition, evening collections have been cut. In East Lansing, Michigan, the postmaster closed down the inquiry window where customers come after work to pick up packages.

The government sees the postal contract this year as key. It is the biggest labor contract to be negotiated in 1981. It is also a pacesetter for other federal workers at a time when Reagan is trying to cut jobs and services. As a result, Postmaster General William Bolger has already threatened firings and arrests of postal workers who may be forced to defy the law and go on strike to defend their jobs and living standards. Bolger has also said he would subcontract out mail delivery to low-wage, private firms. Others in the government have threatened to call in the army to move the mail, just as Nixon did in the postal strike of 1970.

In addition, as we go to press, Bolger is refusing to negotiate at all with the unions. In April, seizing on the excuse that the postal unions are divided, he filed a petition with the National Labor Relations Board to appoint a single union to bargain for all postal workers.

Postal unions divided

Against these forces the different union leaderships have no strategy to defend the workers. Two of the unions, the Mailhandlers Division of the Laborers International Union of

North America (LIUNA), and the National Rural Letter Carriers Association (NRLCA), have already given up the struggle altogether. Their presidents, James La Penta and Dean King, have both announced that they will not strike under any circumstances. In addition, Lonnie Johnson, vice-president of the Mailhandlers, has been quoted as saying that he will order his members to cross picket lines.

La Penta and King are doing this supposedly to "save jobs" by "saving" the post office from bankruptcy caused by a falling economy and congressional budget cuts. They claim that the way to "save jobs" is to go along with the bosses' plans to drive workers' living standards back to depression levels.

The leaderships of the Mailhandlers and Rural Carriers are so backward that many militant workers in those unions are signing cards to replace them with the two largest postal unions, the American Postal Workers Union (APWU) and the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC). In April, the two big unions began a drive to organize the memberships of LIUNA and the NRLCA for themselves.

The presidents of the APWU and NALC, Moe Biller and Vincent Sombrotto, began talking tough late last year. They made an agreement to bargain jointly and the APWU reiterated its

official policy of "no contract, no work." However, for years both Biller and Sombrotto have played a game of threatening blood in the streets and then doing nothing when push came to shove. For example, at contract time in 1978 when workers in New Jersey and San Francisco wildcatted against a lousy settlement, Biller denounced them and Sombrotto disappeared.

Lately Biller and Sombrotto have toned down their threats. Certainly they have done nothing to organize the rank and file for a real struggle. For example, last November when Sombrotto was at the New York Branch 36 meeting, he promised a strike if management took away the uncapped COLA. But by April, his long-time ally and president of Branch 36, Joe Giordano, was only talking generalities about "saving" the COLA, period. No mention of any cap, let alone organizing for a strike. Instead, the NALC bureaucrats are trying to steer the membership into a dead-end legislative strategy. "REMEMBER," shouts the May issue of the NALC's Washington newsletter, "YOU HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY IN THE CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS! Your role is to be active in the grass roots lobbying organization and to actively lobby your Congressman and two Senators."

The majority of the APWU leadership is following the

same general approach. In April, when Bolger announced he was refusing to bargain, the APWU National Executive Board voted down a motion for a strike vote in response to it.

Hunkering down no answer

If rank and file postal workers are going to defend themselves this year, they will have to organize independently to plan their fight. They will need to build up their own organizations of those who want to struggle, those who want to strike, and those who connect the struggle in the post office with the capitalist attacks on all other workers and oppressed people.

This won't be easy. Many postal workers are afraid. They look at the falling economy and the workers fired in 1978 and think that if they hunker down and take a few blows, somehow everything will be all right.

But the slumping capitalist economy will drag all workers down with it unless they fight. Postal workers should take the lead in the struggle against the government and big business offensive by shutting down the post office in July. They can set an example for the rest of the union movement and all working class and oppressed people to follow. □

PAM Plans Fall Actions

By ROD MILLER

In an important development, the People's Anti-War Mobilization (PAM) has issued a call for a coordinated series of national protests in the fall against Reagan's budget cuts and war build-up. PAM, the initiator of the May 3 March on the Pentagon, which mobilized tens of thousands of people to protest U.S. intervention in El Salvador, has proposed a "National Day of Resistance" in mid-October to "overturn Reagan's policies."

"The administration, with the support of the Democratic Party, has launched a monumental assault on every progressive social program won out of years of struggle. This parallels a monstrous rise in the military budget," states the PAM call. It goes on to note that "there is growing resistance to this brutal program of rob the poor, give to the rich." It comes from the many millions of victims who, just because they have

been denied any real representation in the government, feel the need to act themselves." Significantly, PAM stresses the importance of mobilizing "the Black, Latin, Asian, and Native communities, women's groups, labor, the gay and lesbian movement, the anti-draft movement, students, people on welfare, progressive religious forces, the anti-nuclear movement, the disabled, the elderly, and so on."

The proposed National Day of Resistance would involve local and regional demonstrations across the country, coupled to a mass protest in Washington, D.C. These protests would be preceded by an "All-People's Congress," to be held in Detroit September 18-20. The purpose of the People's Congress, according to PAM, would be "to concretize a people's platform and plan the fall offensive." PAM also notes that such a Congress "is necessary to ensure that every sector of society targeted by Reagan's policies

be represented and mobilized by this united movement."

The PAM initiative offers a valuable focus for building a militant movement of working and oppressed people against the escalating attacks by the U.S. ruling class. By beginning now to launch PAM chapters in cities across the country, the movement can gain substantial momentum over the summer and ensure that the Reagan administration is met with massive and well-organized opposition in the fall. Further, such chapters will make it possible to avoid the weaknesses of a one-shot national action, providing a basis and structure for ongoing local organizing, both before and after the National Day of Resistance. The proposed September People's Congress, in addition to helping to build momentum for the October demonstrations, will also offer an opportunity for wide sections of the movement to meet and discuss key questions of strategy for the period ahead. □

rather than live as slaves. Struggle by Nanny, Cudjoe, Sam Sharpe and other freedom fighters in Jamaica and elsewhere to crush the inhuman institution of chattel slavery.

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S ISSUE

on the rise
outh Africa
the masses

ugh contract battle

d gay men grow
rs New Orleans gay community
vents held in Detroit
ur fingers in racist bombing
nta murders
st land-thrift maneuvers
higan prisons

s should oppose gun control

Baraka... In brief

ct 31... Jearl Wood

q

Attacks on Lesbians and Gay Men Growing

By FRANK HOPKINS

Gay Pride Day is here once again! In late June, across the country, and in many countries around the world, lesbians and gay men will be taking to the streets, marching, chanting and singing about the need for gay liberation. So at this time it is worth looking at where the struggle for gay rights is at.

Bigots on the loose

Unfortunately, what we've seen for the past year is a continuation and intensification of legal, social and physical attacks on gay people. With Reagan's election, organized rightists and bigoted individuals have felt free to step up their anti-gay activities.

To start with, there is an anti-gay legislative campaign going on. For example, U.S. Representative Larry McDonald, a Georgia Democrat, has put forward a "sense of Congress"

resolution in the House of Representatives, stating that the nation will never grant lesbians and gay men the same civil rights as straight citizens. This resolution is intended to put a halt to current and future civil rights legislation for gays.

At the same time, the "Family Protection Act" has been introduced into the Senate by Roger Jepsen, a Republican from Iowa. This bill would make it illegal for any "entity" that presents homosexuality as an acceptable alternative lifestyle to receive federal funds.

But the legal attacks are only the tip of the iceberg. Beatings and murders of gay people are on the rise. It has gotten so bad that even the bourgeois papers have had to note that there is a general increase in anti-gay violence.

In March, for example, the *Los Angeles Times* printed an article pointing out the rise in physical attacks on gay people in cities from San Francisco and Houston to New York and Chicago. The article went on to describe the situation in Port-

land, Oregon, where even the cops describe the problem as "serious," both in terms of numbers and severity of the attacks. Even straight people who were just walking by gay bars have been beaten up. In the past year, one gay man in Portland, Richard L. Davidson, has been killed in a beating. Another gay man was beaten so badly he ended up with brain damage and had to have speech therapy.

Portland is by no means the only city where the situation has gotten that extreme. In Boston, in early May, three gay men—William Ravenel, John Wharf and Lawrence Norton—were stabbed to death. In New York last year gay people were machine-gunned on the street; two died, six others were wounded. In city after city, violence against gay people is on an upswing.

The police, in just about all of these situations, are no kind of help. In fact, the cops are another threat that lesbians and gay men have to deal with (see story on bar raids in New

Orleans below, for example).

The threat to lesbians and gay men from the far right is also increasing. An example is the electoral campaign of Gerald Carlson of Jonesville, Michigan, a KKK and Nazi affiliate who ran for the House of Representatives last November. He got 30 percent of the popular vote with a campaign that, in part, "explained" that white men become gay because white women are "forced" to put up with sexual advances from Black men.

Even more openly genocidal is the statement from a fascist religious group, the White People's Committee to Restore God's Laws. They say, "... we endorse and seek the execution of all homosexuals... we find that we must endorse and support the law of God which calls for the death penalty to the f--- slime."

Movement not in good shape

While the attacks on the rights and needs of lesbians and gay men have increased, however, the gay movement has been in something of a retreat. Since the March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights in 1979, nothing comparable has happened or been planned. By and large, the militancy, size and frequency of lesbian and gay male political activities is down. In fact, some organizations are stagnating and even falling apart.

In summary, things do not look very good. While the situation is not totally bleak, there is definite movement in the direc-

tion of greater legal, social and physical attacks on gay people. And at the same time, the movement has been set back.

We say fight back

In order to defend the lives, rights and needs of lesbians and gay men, the movement needs to be revitalized. We need to fight back. But how should this be done?

First, we believe the movement needs to go way beyond the fight for legal changes. Experience has shown that gay rights bills alone do not change much of anything. They don't stop the beatings and other anti-gay violence. They don't end the many forms of discrimination lesbians and gay men face. At best, they limit some discrimination, or make the discriminatory practices more subtle. Most important, they don't stop anti-gay bigotry. And many times, the gay rights bills are quickly overturned.

We should learn from this. We should build a movement that doesn't limit its activities to fighting for legislation. We should build a movement that fights all the forms that anti-gay bigotry takes in this society. Organizing for self-defense on the streets, for example, is every bit as important as organizing picket lines for gay rights bills.

Second, we believe the movement needs to address the oppression of all gay people. One of the problems of the movement in the past was that by limiting the struggle to legal measures many, many gay people

(Continued on page 12)

Police Crackdown Angers New Orleans Gay Community

NEW ORLEANS, May 29— Recently the New Orleans Police Department initiated a campaign of anti-gay harassment unlike anything this city has seen since the bar raids of 20 years ago.

Over the April 24-25 weekend, more than 100 lesbians and gay men were arrested and charged with obstructing the sidewalk and held at the city's central lockup for as long as eight hours. The arrested report that police made frequent anti-gay remarks and tried to provoke them while they were held.

ATTORNEYS for those arrested in the raid state that the charge of obstructing the sidewalk is only a pretext to harass gay people. In New Orleans it is legal to drink alcohol on the street. On warm evenings patrons of both gay and straight bars often gather outside the bars to talk with friends.

A Black bar and a women's bar were among those hit in the recent raids. One bar was struck twice and the owner was told by the police that they would "close him down." In a typical raid a half dozen squad cars would descend on a bar and police would order everyone up against the wall to be frisked. The police would then haul off not only people who had been standing on the sidewalk, but anyone unlucky enough to be arriving at or departing from (or even simply walking by) the bar. Once at central lockup, everyone ar-

rested would be packed into a stifling and overcrowded holding tank to wait for the eventual citation and release.

The idea that they could be arrested and held and possibly lose their jobs when the arrest became public simply because they are gay shocked and outraged most members of the New Orleans gay community. Following the arrests 600 lesbians and gay men met to demand an end to police harassment. Despite the overwhelming sentiment for a protest rally and march, those conducting the meeting were able to delay a decision until a later date, arguing that gays must be careful not to do anything that might offend the police.

People within and outside the police and city bureaucracy have offered a number of excuses for the actions of the cops. Some have claimed it was just one or two anti-gay cops. Others have argued that it was all a misunderstanding that can be worked out through a meeting with the mayor. Some within the police department have even denied that this was an anti-gay action because Blacks were arrested also!

BUT the truth is that the raids were not a departure from the norm—rather they are a more extreme example of the oppression lesbians and gay men continually face in New Orleans.

The events following the arrests have indicated a new willingness on the part of the New

Orleans lesbian and gay community to speak out. Their efforts have been hampered, however, by disorganization and the inclination of the established gay leaders to rely on private meetings with city officials rather than to mobilize the community. □

'Take Back The Night' Events Held in Detroit

On June 6, 500 people participated in the second annual Detroit Take Back The Night Rally and March. The large turnout was despite a media blackout by major Detroit newspapers, both before and after the event.

This year's march, while smaller than last year's, had a much broader focus and appeal, as evidenced by the enthusiastic response of the eastside community we marched through.

The most militant, left-wing section of the march, including the Revolutionary Socialist League contingent, led chants like, "You can't rape a .38," "Take back the night, take back the day; socialist revolution is the only way" and "Gay and straight, Black and white; same struggle, same fight." This section also raised chants against the right wing and U.S. imperialism.

The Take Back Our Lives conference the following day was also a success. Over 100 people registered. Workshops included "Community Women Organizing for Change," "Reproductive Rights: Sterilization Abuse and Abortion Rights" and the RSL workshop: "Fighting the Right-wing Attacks."

There were many discussions and debates about how to survive in the growing repres-



RSL contingent gathers for June 6 march.

sive climate. Tactics like mass mobilizations as opposed to lobbying were also debated.

The RSL workshop was well attended. We discussed the need for a socialist revolution to defeat the right wing once and for all. Three people who were active in the 1960s civil rights and labor struggles talked about the failures of these movements to produce long-term changes. This led to much discussion about the tasks of serious revolutionaries in the 1980s.

Organize Con

Black Finger

By ANNE TISANI

On May 15, over 200 people packed the courtroom for preliminary hearings opening in the case of a white man charged with hitting a Black woman's hand on the west side of Detroit.

THE DETROIT NAACP urged the Black community to respond to the bombarding the hearing people who heeded the news were serious and prepared about attending the hearing despite attempts to discourage them. On the first of the hearings, for example, room and time were cut three times and cops on thoroughly searching one entering the courtroom.

The facts revealed in the hearing were as follows: On May 4, 1981, a pipe bomb was thrown into a house where Cynthia Steel lives with her father, brother and two sons. When the bomb failed to explode, Steel tried to run, but it went off in her hand. The blast tore off two fingers on her right hand; two other fingers were so mangled that they had to be amputated. The next day three white men were arrested and charged with the murder. The men, Ronald Col, Daniel O'Donnell and Gerald Haddox, all live within blocks of the Steel home. The makings of the pipe bomb were found in Haddox's garage. Col had offered to burn down the Black family's home in the past. And O'Donnell admitted that he threw the pipe and also that "Ronnie should blow up a n---er!"

OUTSIDE the courtroom Steel's father, Anthony, told reporters that for two half years the Steel family has been the target of racist threats—bricks and bats thrown through their windows. "KKK" and "N---er" were painted on the sidewalk in front of their garage, and the windshield of their van smashed. Even the preliminary hearings were still being made Steel's family and again pathetic white neighborhood threats have been linked to organized racist group the "Blue Eyed Devils."

Organized racist attacks are not unusual in the predominantly white west side where the Steel family lives a few miles away is Bright the community where they set up a bookstore in 1977. In the summer Black people

Growing

tion of greater legal, social and physical attacks on gay people. And at the same time, the movement has been set back.

We say fight back

In order to defend the lives, rights and needs of lesbians and gay men, the movement needs to be revitalized. We need to fight back. But how should this be done?

First, we believe the movement needs to go way beyond the fight for legal changes. Experience has shown that gay rights bills alone do not change much of anything. They don't stop the beatings and other anti-gay violence. They don't end the many forms of discrimination lesbians and gay men face. At best, they limit some discrimination, or make the discriminatory practices more subtle. Most important, they don't stop anti-gay bigotry. And many times, the gay rights bills are quickly overturned.

We should learn from this. We should build a movement that doesn't limit its activities to fighting for legislation. We should build a movement that fights all the forms that anti-gay bigotry takes in this society. Organizing for self-defense on the streets, for example, is every bit as important as organizing picket lines for gay rights bills.

Second, we believe the movement needs to address the oppression of all gay people. One of the problems of the movement in the past was that by limiting the struggle to legal measures many, many gay people

(Continued on page 12)

Organize Community Self-Defense!

Black Woman Loses Four Fingers in Racist Bombing

By ANNE TISANE

On May 15, over 250 concerned and angry Detroiters packed the courtroom where preliminary hearings were opening in the case of three white men charged with bombing a Black woman's home on the west side of Detroit.

THE DETROIT NAACP had urged the Black community to respond to the bombing by monitoring the hearings. The people who heeded this call were serious and persistent about attending the hearings, despite attempts to discourage them. On the first day of the hearings, for example, the room and time were changed three times and cops insisted on thoroughly searching everyone entering the courtroom.

The facts revealed in the hearing were as follows: On May 4, 1981, a pipe bomb was thrown into a house where Cynthia Steel lives with her father, brother and two children. When the bomb failed to explode, Steel tried to defuse it, but it went off in her hand. The blast tore off two fingers of her right hand; two others were so mangled that they later had to be amputated. The next day three white men were arrested and charged with attempted murder. The men, Ronnie Nicol, Daniel O'Donnell and Gerald Haddox, all live within a few blocks of the Steel home. The makings of the pipe bomb were found in Haddox's garage. Nicol had offered to burn down a Black family's home in the past. And O'Donnell has admitted that he threw the bomb and also that "Ronnie said we should blow up a n---- house."

OUTSIDE the courtroom Steel's father, Anthony Jones, told reporters that for two and a half years the Steel family has been the target of racist harassment—bricks and baseballs thrown through their windows, "KKK" and "N---- move out" painted on the sidewalk and garage, and the windshield of their van smashed. Even during the preliminary hearings threats were still being made against Steel's family and against sympathetic white neighbors. The threats have been linked to an organized racist group called the "Blue Eyed Devils."

Organized racist attacks are not unusual in the predominantly white west side area where the Steel family lives. A few miles away is Brightmoor, the community where the Nazis set up a bookstore in 1978. Last summer Black people in the

Brightmoor area were subjected to terrorist attacks, including bombings, cross-burnings, and attempted murder (see the July 15-August 14 and August 15-September 14, 1980 issues of the *Torch/La Antorcha*).

At a time when racist attacks are on the increase an organized fightback is vitally important. It is a good sign that the NAACP started to organize around this case. The actions of the Black community in response to the NAACP call is a sign that they are angry, fed up with being victims, and looking for something to do to defend themselves.

BUT the NAACP's strategy for defense against racist attacks is limited and misdirected. According to the May 16 *Michigan Chronicle*, Joseph Madison, a Detroit NAACP official, "called for reactivation of the Police Department's Neighborhood Racial Harassment unit to flush out troublemakers and prevent further harassment and terrorism against Black people." Madison also supports a bill that would outlaw "paramilitary camps that teach racial violence." And the last part of the NAACP's program is to "seek establishment of a presidential commission... to investigate... systematic terrorism against the nation's Blacks."

Calling on the cops, the

courts and the government to stop racist terror is a deadly mistake. It builds illusions in this capitalist racist system and directs anger into passive non-productive solutions. The cops around Detroit are unresponsive to the needs of Black people at best—and part of the abuse at their worst. For example, Anthony Jones reports that they called the cops after many of the incidents of racial harassment, "but they either didn't come or they came a couple hours later and didn't do much when they did come."

The so-called justice system is no better. Just last week a prosecutor's office ruled that "no crime was committed" when two white cops killed an unarmed Black man who was suspected of shoplifting steaks out of a supermarket. When the courts do prosecute open racists it's with a slap on the wrist. Last winter four known KKK members were found guilty of conspiracy and attempted murder of George Stewart, a Black Detroit man. The courts let them plea-bargain their way to a four-year sentence.

THE ONLY answer to these brutal attacks is to rely on ourselves. Organized community self-defense squads that unite anti-racist whites and Blacks are the serious kind of response that is needed to put a brake on racist terror. □



5,000 Rally in Washington to Protest Atlanta Murders

Nearly 5,000 people rallied at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., May 25, to protest the continuing murders of Black youths in Atlanta. On the same day, Atlanta officials added two names to the list of missing or murdered persons: Nathaniel Carter, 27, whose body was found in the Chattahoochee River May 24, and Ronald Crawford, 22, missing since May 18.

The Washington rally, initiated by the Mothers' Committee to Stop Children's Murders, was smaller than expected. In part this was a result of friction between the Mothers' Committee, which is based in Atlanta's poor Black neighborhoods, and the Atlanta Black establishment, based in the city's large Black middle class. Although Coretta Scott King's Martin Luther King Jr. Foundation endorsed the May 25 rally, she did not speak at it. The Southern Christian Leadership Conference did not endorse the day's actions at all, and the many church and church-related groups that mobilized for the Martin Luther King Day rally in Washington in January did not come on May 25.

Nor was the rally helped by the Mothers' Committee decision to avoid mentioning racism in connection with the Atlanta murders or the need to fight racist attacks in general. Instead the day was called a "Rendezvous for Life's Sake" and the appeal was simply one to "save all children." Several cities have had marches against the Atlanta murders larger than the May 25 rally, and the turnout at those events has been, to a large degree, motivated by people's desire to show resistance to the growing racist atmosphere in the country, an atmosphere that lays the basis for the Atlanta murders. It is no accident that the few speakers on May 25 who did talk about racism were applauded the loudest.

Held in Detroit



Toronto/Lisa Gashen

gathers for June 6 march.

actics like mass mobilizations lobbying were also debated. Workshop was well attended. We need for a socialist revolution right wing once and for all. who were active in the 1960s labor struggles talked about these movements to produce changes. This led to much dis-the tasks of serious revolution 1980s.

NATIVE AMERICANS RESIST LAND-THEFT MANEUVERS



BIA set up barbed wire fence to hold back demonstrators at May 11 march.

By LISA DESHONG

Over 1,500 Native Americans marched to Keams Canyon in Arizona May 11 to protest the seizure and destruction of their livestock by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). Chanting

"BIA, BIA—you should know—the people won't go, the people won't go," Navajo and Hopi farmers and their supporters rallied at the BIA impoundment site at the base of Big Mountain.

The story behind this rally

and the theft of the Native Americans' livestock is, unfortunately, neither new nor unique. Instead, it is another case of Native American people suffering the most extreme oppression at the hands of the U.S. government and corporations hell-bent on stealing the Native peoples' land and destroying their nations and culture.

For our purposes, this story begins in 1862, when the Navajo nation was forced by the U.S. government to live solely on 3.5 million acres of desert land in northern Arizona, Utah and New Mexico. Ten years later, the federal government carved out a rectangular region of the Navajo reservation comprising some 2.5 million acres as a Hopi reserva-

tion. In 1962, a federal court created a "Joint Use Area" (JUA) out of what was considered the "overlap" between the two reservations. More than 8,000 Navajo and Hopi people lived on the 1.8 million acres of desert land in the JUA, most of them small farmers; whose families had lived by farming the mesas and raising herds of sheep, goats and cattle for generations.

Soon after the creation of the JUA, however, uranium, oil and an estimated 22 billion tons of coal were discovered to lie beneath its land. Desert land previously considered of little value was now worth billions of dollars. So in 1974, Congress moved to force the Navajo and Hopi people off the JUA so that its land could be plundered by some of the largest corpora-

(Continued on page 12)



Charges against Pontiac Brothers dropped

As we reported in our last issue, 10 of the 16 Pontiac Brothers facing possible death sentences were acquitted on all 57 counts of murder, attempted murder and conspiracy in a trial that ended in Chicago on May 10. Now, Illinois state prosecutors have announced they are dropping charges against the remaining six. On June 1, the state was forced to admit that, as in the first trial, they didn't have any physical evidence at all against the defendants, while the testimony of their bought witnesses against the second group of six was even weaker than against the first group of 10.

This ends the cases of Pontiac Brothers who were up on capital charges. But prior to the May murder trials, 13 Pontiac prisoners were tried in conservative downstate Illinois on non-capital charges. Eight were convicted. Another trial, that of Pontiac Brother Willie Hardy on a charge of arson, is scheduled for July.

The acquittals and the dropping of the charges are great victories. But 10 of the 16 defendants are still behind bars on their original convictions and are therefore still in danger. The mother of one prisoner wrote us, saying: "The guards used to harass them, like they'd imitate pulling the lever on the electric chair. A head supervisor told the Brothers, if the courts don't get them, he and his KKK buddies will."

Baraka sentenced to 90 days

Black poet, playwright and political activist Imamu Amiri Baraka lost an appeal in New York county court June 9 and was ordered to report June 17 to serve a 90-day sentence from a 1978 conviction for resisting arrest. On June 8, 1978, New York City police arrested the well-known Baraka (formerly LeRoi Jones) while he was arguing with his wife, Amari, in their parked car. Four cops pulled Baraka from the car, beat him, and then charged him with assault and battery against Amari, assault and battery on the police officers, concealing a weapon, obstructing government functions and resisting arrest. There was no evidence to back up any of these charges—Amari Baraka denied from the beginning that her husband had struck her—and in a familiar move the district attorney dropped all charges but resisting arrest. Baraka was convicted on this charge in November 1978. His appeals were attempts to have the sentence reduced or modified, and were backed by a number of community and political groups as well as prominent writers and artists, but to no avail.

In brief...

A group of prisoners at Soledad prison in California has begun wearing green ribbons in solidarity with the Black murder victims in Atlanta. An RSL supporter at Soledad writes: "Our ribbon campaign was the third and last stage of our present Atlanta Solidarity Project. Our first two stages, our solidarity message/sympathy card and letter writing campaign, we were sure would be a success, but we were uncertain about the ribbons. First we couldn't get any and we thought that the keepers would attack us for wearing them (like they've done in the past for wearing armbands). After I wore one ribbon for 11 days alone, we finally got a long piece of green ribbon and began to pass pieces out. Now nearly all of the Blacks are wearing them and some keepers too (a few 'Black' keepers, two white keepers and one high ranking Chicano keeper)..."

The situation of Puerto Rican POW Alfredo Mendez, who disappeared from his cell in May, is still unclear. (See last month's *Break the Chains*.) On May 29, Judge Thomas McMillan denied a petition for habeas corpus. A new suit was then filed, based on Mendez's wife's right to visit him. But chances of winning are slim: To support their claim that Mendez has turned state's evidence and is in the federal witness protection program, officials have filed an un-notarized statement by Mendez saying, basically, that he had all the legal help he wanted and was seeing all the visitors he wanted. Supporters of the POWs are now trying to get someone, anyone, allowed to visit Mendez to find out what is going on.

—WF

Uprisings Hit Three Michigan Prisons

By BRENT DAVIS

Prisoners in Michigan staged a wave of rebellions in May. On May 22, prisoners at the southern Michigan prison in Jackson, the world's largest walled prison, with a population of over 5,000, and at the Ionia Reformatory rose up. Four days later, Jackson prisoners rose up again. The same day Marquette Branch Prison blew up. These rebellions were the largest explosions in Michigan prisons since the 1950s. All told, 41 prisoners were injured (one critically), 68 guards were slightly hurt and an estimated \$5 million in property was destroyed. Prison officials reportedly plan to prosecute prisoners for the rebellions.

The uprisings come as Michigan's prison system falls apart. Overcrowding is so severe that on May 20 Governor Milliken ordered an early release program, cutting 90 days off prisoners' sentences. Meanwhile, the prison system is running out of money, especially since voters turned down a proposal to raise taxes to build new prisons. Yet, reactionary forces, led by Oakland County Prosecutor L. Brooks Patterson, are pushing for longer sentences and the death penalty. Patterson recently led a successful campaign to end good time for prisoners, which became one of the prisoners' central grievances in these uprisings. Patterson, in alliance with the prison guards' union, is attacking Governor Milliken and the prison administration for a "policy of appeasement."

Guards provoked rebellion

The prison guards consciously provoked the first Jackson rebellion, to back up their demands for more guards, more shake-downs, more discipline and stricter punitive segregation. They also wanted to undercut Jackson warden Barry Mintzes, who has a liberal reputation. The guards had a 20-minute strike on May 6. Then, on May 22, the guards put Jackson on lockdown without authorization. Guards told prisoners they would be locked up for the entire Memorial Day weekend, possibly without food.

This touched off the rebellion, with prisoners seizing two cell blocks. One prisoner, Jeff Pleasant, explained that the



Jackson prisoners in the yard during May 22 rebellion.

guards had "a conspiracy to provoke the inmates so they can get more benefits for themselves." Another prisoner, Ivory Thomas, noted: "We didn't run them out of here—they walked out of here themselves. They plotted to strike 'cause they couldn't get more guards. And now it looks like it's all our fault."



Jackson warden Barry Mintzes.

About 1,200 prisoners joined the rebellion. They didn't take hostages, harm the guards or put forward demands. Several fires were set, but overall the atmosphere was so relaxed that prisoners reportedly continued to play basketball. Warden Mintzes and Governor Milliken publicly blamed the illegal lockdown and guard mutiny for the rebellion.

The prisoners asked for amnesty for the rebellion, but Mintzes refused. This kicked off the second rebellion on May 26, which was much more serious. About 1,000 prisoners took control of large areas of the prison and burned much of it to the ground. They trapped 16 guards and tried to smoke them out to get to them, but failed. It took the guards 12 hours to regain control.

The guards and the media claim the second rebellion was the more oppressed prisoners fighting the prisoners in the better housing. But very little prisoner-against-prisoner violence was reported. Prisoner leaders used bullhorns to tell prisoners that: "This is not inmate against inmate. We must maintain unity against the administration." And 1,600 trustees staged a sit-down protest during the rebellion. The May 26 rebellion was aimed at defending prisoners from being the fall guys in the fight between Mintzes and the

guards.

After May 26, the guards continued their offensive. Two days later, six guards refused to release prisoners from their cells to go to lunch. When these guards were suspended, 12 others walked off their jobs. The administration caved in and lifted the suspensions.

Ionia and Marquette also blow up

The first Jackson uprising touched off the rebellion at Ionia. About one-third of Ionia's 1,240 prisoners fought back against overcrowding in a prison structure that is 110 years old and against brutal, racist treatment. They took control of part of the prison, beating several guards and burning down many buildings. Although reports conflict, it appears that the rebellion also involved much violence against other prisoners, especially aimed at snitches and so-called sexual offenders. Thirty rapes and some cases of mutilation were reported by the guards. During the rebellion, prisoners chanted: "Give us good time" and "Give us Brooks Patterson."

The second Jackson rebellion helped ignite the uprising at Marquette. Conditions at Marquette are also terrible. The prison had been on lockdown three times in May. The prisoners threatened a rebellion when their meal portions were cut because of a lack of funds. As in Jackson, the guards threatened a strike in early May. On May 26, 200-250 prisoners seized control of the prison for 90 minutes, destroying a chunk of the prison with fire. Prison officials are claiming that the rebellion was planned, and are clearly preparing to prosecute known prisoner leaders. □

Coa

On June 6, 1960, miners voted by a margin to end the strike and approach between the Workers union (U. Bituminous Coal Association (BCOA) strike by 2,000 miners, who are also the UMW, was se

As reported in the *Torch/LA*, coal miners had earlier contract between the UMW and That proposed included provisions have seriously w union. It would mine owners to construction oper union companies pose a 45-day pro on newly hired m would have elimi payments to the U fund that the cor viously had to buying non-union sale.

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IBT conver

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Coal Strike Ends, UMW Still Threatened

On June 6, 160,000 soft-coal miners voted by a two-to-one margin to end their 71-day strike and approve a new contract between the United Mine Workers union (UMW) and the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA). A separate strike by 2,000 hard-coal miners, who are also represented by the UMW, was settled May 27.

As reported in earlier issues of the *Torch/La Antorcha*, soft-coal miners had rejected an earlier contract agreement between the UMW and the BCOA. That proposed contract included provisions that would have seriously weakened the union. It would have allowed mine owners to subcontract construction operations to non-union companies, and to impose a 45-day probation period on newly hired miners. It also would have eliminated royalty payments to the UMW pension fund that the companies previously had to make when buying non-union coal for resale.

IN THE negotiations that followed the contract rejection, the BCOA agreed to withdraw its demand for a probation period and to continue paying royalties on non-union coal. The mine operators also accepted a 38 percent increase in miners' wages and benefits over 40 months. UMW President Sam Church is calling the settlement a major victory, hailing it as "probably the best that

will be negotiated this year in any industry."

HOWEVER, the new contract includes two loopholes that will significantly strengthen the BCOA's hand against UMW miners. First of all, under the "scope and coverage" provi-



UMW president Sam Church (lower left) outlines second contract proposal at West Virginia miners' meeting.

sions in earlier UMW agreements, mines acquired by non-unionized companies automatically came under the UMW contract. The current settlement weakens these provisions. As a result, BCOA operators will have more leeway to set up scab mines in eastern and midwestern regions that are now UMW strongholds.

Second, previous contracts required mine operators to subcontract construction work to

companies employing UMW members. In 1980 a federal appeals court struck down this clause, saying it violated anti-trust law. Church's refusal to fight for new contract language to defend UMW jurisdiction over construction jobs in this

protection for UMW construction workers, let alone the union as a whole, this pledge will mean.

THE settlement is a mixed bag for the coal miners. On the one hand, the miners beat back the industry's efforts to include major union-busting provisions in the contract. On the other hand, the union appears to be stepping deeper into a trap. We are referring to the fact that UMW-mined coal now accounts for only 44 percent of the coal mined in the country, down from 70 percent in 1974, and this percentage continues to drop. Meanwhile, the union has not been very successful in its organizing efforts. According to *Business Week*, since March the union has lost three elections involving 1,000 workers. Moreover, in fiscal 1978 and 1979, following the tough 111-day strike in early 1978, the union won only 27 out of 64 elections for a net gain of 826 members.

To add to this trend, the coal companies are pursuing a strategy of making it seem as if the union has nothing to offer non-union miners. Payments to cover the unfunded liabilities of the UMW pension fund (that is, to make sure the fund has enough assets, according to federal law, to cover UMW miners who retired before 1976) cost coal employers with UMW contracts about \$1.50 an hour. Since non-union employers do

not participate in the fund, they can pay their miners up to \$1.50 more per hour than the unionized mines pay their workers and still compete.

In addition, the near-certainty of a coal boom plus the lower costs of strip mining are also enabling the coal companies to maintain wages to non-unionized miners at levels higher than those in the union. Finally, among non-union miners the union is suffering from a reputation, actively fomented by the companies, for being strike-happy. As a result of all these factors, many non-union miners, failing to understand the role the union has played in getting them their present wages and benefits, see little reason to join the union.

IN OTHER words, the union, according to one UMW militant, "is surrounded." In fact, it is being set up to be broken at some point in the future unless the UMW leadership takes some drastic action. But as we noted in the April-May issue of the *Torch/La Antorcha*, the traditional trade union methods the UMW tops are used to will no longer work. Only an extremely militant social movement, involving broad layers of workers, union and non-union, can lead to the organization of non-union miners and the rescue of the UMW. With claims of victory in the current contract, the UMW leadership gives little sign of being aware of this. □

LABOR IN STRUGGLE

IBT convention: raises for tops

The International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT) held its national convention June 1-5. The convention elected Roy Williams, formerly a union vice-president, to succeed Frank Fitzsimmons as IBT president. Williams had been serving as interim president since Fitzsimmons' death in May. The convention delegates, mostly national staff members or business agents handpicked by the national leadership, also voted to raise Williams' annual salary as president 40 percent, to \$225,000. The new IBT leader has been accused of close ties with organized crime, and is currently under indictment on bribery charges.

What the convention didn't do was discuss any of the serious problems facing the union's 1.89 million members. For instance, many trucking companies are refusing to pay wage raises due on April 1 to truckers covered by the Master Freight Agreement (MFA). Moreover, the number of truckers covered by the MFA has dropped from 400,000 to 200,000 over the past five years.

The only opposition to the leadership came from the Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU), a reform organization that claims 8,000 members. TDU's 35 delegates (a noticeable increase from the last convention) proposed resolutions demanding enforcement of the MFA, as well as direct election of national officers and convention delegates by the rank and file. The TDU resolutions were defeated and their candidate for IBT president, Pete Camarata, got only 10 votes before conceding.

Throughout the convention TDU members were rebaited by the IBT leadership. To reporters, TDU leaders, several of whom have been associated

with socialist groups, such as the International Socialists, conceded that TDU "probably has some members who are socialists." They insist, however, that "its goals are strictly trade union goals."

Balanoff loses in USWA District 31

In the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) District 31 elections held May 28, incumbent director James Balanoff, an opponent of conservative USWA president Lloyd McBride, was defeated by McBride supporter Jack Parton. The final unofficial tally put Parton ahead 24,241 to 21,662. Parton won by combining a two-to-one edge in the small locals with a near sweep, by close margins, of the big basic steel locals.

Parton's victory marks a setback for workers in District 31. While in office, Balanoff had encouraged a degree of democracy within the union, which in turn created openings for militants to organize against the companies. McBride, on the other hand, has moved further right during the current economic crisis, and has been clamping down on resistance by union members to the steel companies' attacks. With Parton's victory, the McBride machine is in the driver's seat in District 31.

There were several reasons for Parton's victory. First of all, 20,000 District 31 workers have lost their jobs since Balanoff became district director in 1977. Parton was able to attack Balanoff for doing almost nothing to save steelworker jobs, while concealing his own pro-business record as head of Local 1014 (U.S. Steel's Gary Works). Second, Parton ran a "unity" campaign, arguing that Balanoff's opposition to McBride cost District 31 support from the USWA national leadership. He

also built an effective campaign organization with the aid of 40 pro-McBride USWA staff members. In contrast, Balanoff failed to make union democracy a major issue in the election, and had a much smaller campaign organization.

Rally for Jearl Wood held

MARKHAM, ILL.—"Free Jearl Wood! Put Ford on trial!" This chant rang out as 35 supporters of Jearl Wood held a spirited picket line at the Sixth District courthouse June 8.

Wood is a Black union member of UAW Local 551 and a Vietnam veteran. He faces charges of attempted murder, armed violence and two aggravated batteries, stemming from the August 22, 1980, shooting of Cecil Harrell, a general foreman at Ford's Chicago Assembly Plant. After a long period of harassing Wood, Harrell, who is white, racially insulted Wood over a job assignment. Then Harrell railroaded Wood out of the plant on a phony Breathalyzer test and without union representation. This led up to the shooting.

Wood's supporters say Harrell's racist mistreatment of Wood triggered "post-traumatic stress," a condition common among Vietnam vets who were in heavy combat. Co-workers distributed a bilingual leaflet at Chicago Assembly Plant that said, "The responsibility for this incident lies with Ford management for allowing Harrell to go unchecked for these many years."

The Vietnam Veterans Against the War and over a dozen members and friends of the RSL took part in the June 8 picket. As the latest in a series of support activities, the demonstration probably helped Wood win a lengthy delay. Judge Marovich rescheduled jury selection and the first day of the trial to Tuesday, September 8.

—PB

(Continued from page 1)
people and organizations, including those engaged in perfectly legal, non-violent political activities.

In the 1970s mass pressure forced the ruling class to restrict—on paper, at least—FBI and CIA spying. In particular, the botched attempt by Nixon and his top aides to bug the Democratic Party's Watergate campaign offices provoked a national scandal. As the Watergate cover-up unravelled, the press revealed the extent of FBI and CIA spying, assassination plots and assorted dirty tricks. In the wake of these revelations, the ruling class had no choice but to impose some formal restraints on its agents.

Today, however, not only are these restrictions being removed, but government agents are being granted even greater leeway than they previously enjoyed.

In March, Reagan pardoned two former high-ranking FBI agents, Mark Felt and Edward Miller, who were convicted last November of conspiring to violate the constitutional rights of U.S. citizens. In the early 1970s, Felt and Miller had authorized FBI agents to carry out illegal break-ins of homes and offices—so-called black bag jobs. As Miller told reporters, the pardons should erase any "reluctance" FBI agents might have about "doing their job 100 percent."

In case any agents were still "reluctant," however, in April, Reagan was even more explicit, announcing that he would authorize black bag jobs whenever he deemed them necessary for "national security."

But break-ins authorized by the president are only the tip of the iceberg, as a draft executive order called "Standards for the Conduct of U.S. Intelligence Agencies" that was leaked to the press in April revealed. Under the proposed

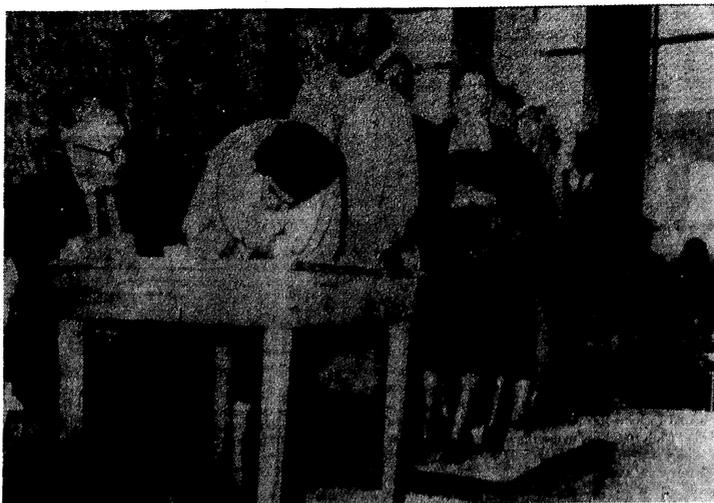


Former FBI officials Felt and Miller, jailed for authorizing "black bag jobs," were pardoned by Reagan.

new standards, the FBI and CIA would not even need authorization to spy on individuals and groups. They could break into homes and offices to get names of supporters of political organizations and information on their activities as they saw fit. These agencies would also be allowed to send undercover agents into political groups in order to "affect their activities."

And who will be the victims of these unleashed government spies? The draft executive order targets individuals and groups who "may be acting on behalf of

Less Rights, More Spies— Gov't Repression on the Rise



Black people in Selma, Alabama, register to vote in 1965 after passage of the Voting Rights Act. The act enabled millions of Black people in the South to vote for the first time since Reconstruction.

a foreign government."

But an "Intelligence Report" issued in December by the Heritage Foundation, a right-wing think-tank that wields considerable influence within the administration, was more specific—and more honest. It called for investigating not only the "several Communist parties" and various liberal and radical organizations, but also "clergymen, students, businessmen, entertainers, labor officials, journalists and government workers [who] may engage in subversive activities without being fully aware of the extent, purposes or control of their activities."

And, as if on command, in January the Senate established a Subcommittee on Subversion and Terrorism to do just that. During its April hearings, for example, right-wing propagandist Arnaud de Borchgrave told the subcommittee that the Mobilization for Survival, a major organization in the anti-nuclear movement, is controlled by Russian agents.

Such a fantastic accusation—and the subcommittee as a whole—is reminiscent of the McCarthy era of the 1950s, when thousands of people were branded "communists" and thrown out of jobs, blacklisted, jailed or, in the case of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, killed.

In short, anyone who objects to anything the government does can be labelled, at a minimum, an unwitting dupe of subversives or foreign agents, and thus a legitimate target for government spying and harassment.

To make sure government snoopers have complete freedom of maneuver, the administration is also preparing to muzzle the U.S. press, particularly the more liberal newspapers, which played a leading role in exposing government spying in the past. In May, for example, Secretary of Energy James Edwards blasted the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*—two of the country's

major and most respected newspapers—for "almost destroying the country" in the 1970s. Presumably Edwards was referring to the *Times*' publication of "confidential" Nixon administration documents concerning Vietnam, and the *Post*'s exposure of the Watergate cover-up.

Meanwhile, the CIA, the Justice Department and conservatives in Congress are taking concrete steps to limit freedom of the press altogether. They are pushing for laws making it a crime for newspapers to print the names of CIA agents abroad, even if the information is correct and already publicly available from other sources. The CIA is also demanding authorization for the FBI to conduct surprise searches of newsrooms—supposedly to prevent publication of agents' names.

In addition, congressional conservatives are trying to gut the Freedom of Information Act, passed in 1966, which limited the ability of the CIA, FBI and other agencies to cover up their activities.

Jim Crow making a comeback

Building up the machinery of repression is only one aspect of what the ruling class is attempting to do. Another part is sacrificing the rights of millions of workers and oppressed people on the altar of capitalist "freedom."

In this connection, the ruling class is waging a particularly vicious campaign against the rights of Black and Latin people. The leading edge of this campaign is the effort to prevent renewal of the Voting Rights Act. This act, passed in 1965, enabled millions of Black people in the South to vote for the first time. Section 5 of the act requires

states with a history of discrimination at the polls to clear any changes in their electoral procedures, such as redistricting, with the Justice Department.

On June 3, Reagan administration officials announced they were considering proposals to substantially weaken Section 5 in the name of protecting "states' rights." Meanwhile, Senate conservatives, such as Strom Thurmond (R.-S. Carolina), who heads the Judiciary Committee, are opposing renewal of Section 5 in any form when it expires in 1982.

Latin people's voting rights are under attack as well. An amendment to the Voting Rights Act passed in 1975 provided for bilingual registration and voting ballots. This section of the act expires in 1985. But there are three bills under discussion in the House of Representatives and one in the Senate that would do away with these provisions even before their formal expiration. This would mean that in areas like the Rio Grande Valley in Texas, where it is estimated that up to 45 percent of the adult population speak only Spanish, thousands of Latinos would be effectively deprived of their elementary rights as U.S. citizens.

A recent Supreme Court ruling gives a

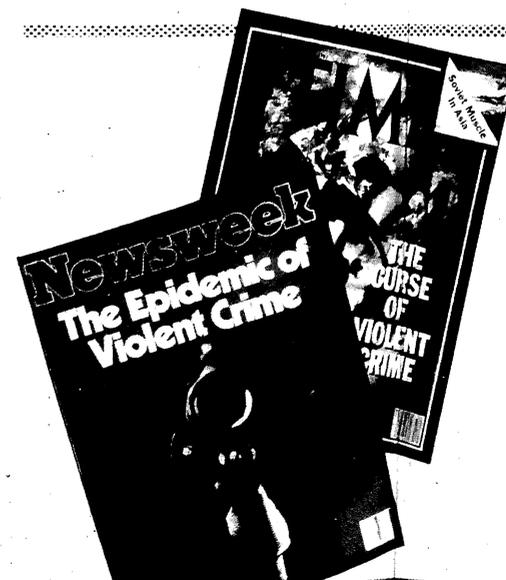
glimpse of the extent to which the ruling class wants to turn back the clock on the gains won by oppressed people.

In 1970, white residents of Memphis, Tennessee, set across the only street leading to Park from a neighboring all-minority. When Black people tried to cross the barrier, Memphis city officials claimed it was needed to reduce pollution."

After Black people took to the streets, a federal judge ruled the barrier was a "badge of slavery" that violated the constitutional rights of Black people. But on appeal, the Supreme Court overturned the ruling. While conceding that the barrier was an "inconvenience" to Black people, the court ruled that the evidence that the street closure was racially motivated!

Women, youth, gays, unionists all targeted

A similar attack on the rights of women, youth and lesbians and



Increase in violent crime setting off campaign for gun control laws. *Time* and *Newsweek* ran cover stories on crime in their March 23 issue while demonstrators are demanding strict handgun laws.

Why Should Oppressed Gun

Spies— ion on the Rise

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Supreme Court ruling gives a

glimpse of the extent to which the ruling class wants to turn back the clock on the gains won by specially oppressed people.

In 1970, white residents of Hein Park in Memphis, Tennessee, set up a barrier across the only street leading into Hein Park from a neighboring all-Black community. When Black people objected to the barrier, Memphis city attorneys claimed it was needed to relieve "traffic pollution."

After Black people took the case to court, a federal judge ruled that the barrier was a "badge of slavery" that violated the constitutional rights of Black people. But on April 21 the Supreme Court overturned that decision. While conceding that the barrier was an "inconvenience" to Black people, the court ruled that there was no evidence that the street closing was racially motivated!

Women, youth, gays, unionists all targeted

A similar attack on the rights of women, youth and lesbians and gay men

is also under way. The effort to deny women the right to have abortions if they so choose is a crucial element in this campaign. In recent years right-wing legislators have steadily restricted the ability of poor and working women to obtain government funds for abortion. This year they are trying to ban abortions altogether through the so-called Human Life Law, which defines human life as existing from the moment of conception. This would lay the basis for states to bring murder charges against any woman who has an abortion or any doctor who performs one, as well as outlawing certain forms of widely used birth control methods.

The right of people to their own lifestyles is also being denied, particularly through manipulation of the federal pursestrings. The main vehicle for this blackmail is the proposed "Family Protection Act." This act would deny government funds to any schools with courses that "deny role differences among the sexes as they have been traditionally understood in the U.S." It also bans funding of organizations that provide abortion or contraceptive counselling to youth without informing their parents, or that "advocate homosexuality." Another clause would permit states to "limit or prohibit the intermingling of the sexes

in any sports or other school-related activity."

It is worth pointing out that the same ruling class which stands foursquare for "protecting the family" is taking away the rights of poor parents to their children. For instance, on June 2, the Supreme Court ruled that the courts can permanently remove a child from its parents without even providing legal representation for parents who want to keep their children but can't afford a lawyer.



Finally, the ruling class is going after the rights and independence of the trade unions. Union-busting politicians and officials are using alleged trade union corruption as an excuse to demand greater government control over the unions.

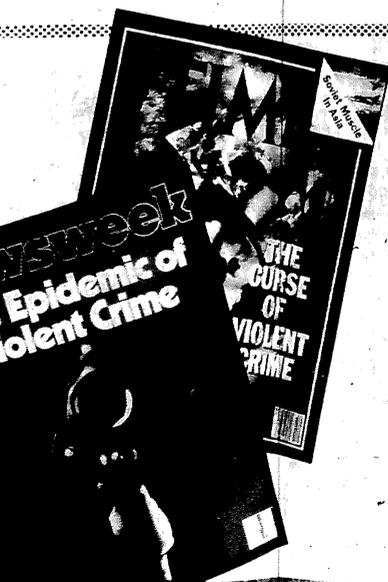
In May, for example, the New Jersey Division of Gaming Enforcement recom-

mended forbidding casinos employing members of the Hotel, Restaurant and Bartenders International Union to check off union dues, claiming that the union was connected to organized crime. Joseph Lordi, chairperson of the state's Casino Control Commission, is investigating the possibility of banning the union from representing casino workers altogether.

Earlier, in March, a federal court of appeals in New York barred the International Longshoremen's Association from collecting dues as long as it retained officials who had been convicted of felonies or "misdemeanors involving moral turpitude." On the national level, senators Sam Nunn (D.-Georgia) and Warren Rudman (R.-N. Hampshire) are demanding laws permitting the federal government to remove any union official convicted of a serious crime.

In order to suppress militant strikes, congressional conservatives are concentrating this year on amending the Hobbs Act, which bans violence and extortion in interstate commerce, to include trade unions. According to Ray Denison, legislative director of the AFL-CIO, if the amendment passes, "almost any incident that occurs on a picket line could subject strikers or union officials to up to 20 years in prison and \$10,000 fines." And in order to weaken union organizing drives and smash already existing unions, Representative Mickey Edwards (R.-Okla.) plans to introduce legislation banning the union shop.

There's a name for what all this adds up to—and it ain't freedom. It's called a police state. And while things aren't there yet, that's where Reagan and his supporters in the ruling class want to take us—unless we organize and fight to prevent them. □



Why Workers Should Oppose Gun Control

control laws would actually slow down or halt the circulation of firearms in the population and cut down the rate of violent crimes.

In the past some of the gun control measures advocated by the liberals have been sharply opposed by conservative and right-wing forces, such as Republican Senator Strom Thurmond of South Carolina and the National Rifle

EDITORIAL

Association, the chief gun lobby in the country. These forces argue that such laws do not deter crime but do limit the right of "upstanding American citizens" (read: conservative, middle class whites) to own and carry guns. As a result of this opposition, the liberals' past attempts to get federal gun control legislation through Congress have never gotten very far.

Now, however, in the wake of the recent assassination attempts, the liberals are more hopeful. As a tactical maneuver designed to win conservative support, they are proposing measures that are more limited than their previous proposals. Whereas in the past certain gun control advocates called for the registration of all guns, including rifles and long guns, the current "milder" proposals focus primarily on limiting handguns. Among gun control measures being discussed in Congress are:

1) stiffening penalties for the use of guns during criminal acts—for example, a minimum of one year in prison for the first offense;

2) tightening the procedures for buying hand guns, such as requiring a 21-day waiting period before a buyer can possess a pistol;

3) mandating tough sentences for people caught carrying unlicensed guns in public places;

4) a total ban on the importation of parts of cheap handguns, the so-called Saturday Night Specials (importation of the assembled guns, but not the parts, was banned in 1968).

It is not clear whether the conservatives, who support the first measure, will agree to any of the other proposals.

But whatever happens in Congress, the issue of gun control is not going away. And it is one that is of vital importance to all working people, members of oppressed groups as well as radicals and leftists.

In our view, gun control laws will neither control the circulation of handguns, lower the crime rate nor lessen the number of people injured or killed in violent crimes.

What they will do is pack the jails with poor and working class people, help beef up the repressive machinery of the state and increase the ruling class's power to attack the working class and radical movements, interfere in our lives and limit our rights. Gun control laws will also lead to a situation where the enemies of the working class and specially oppressed people, such as the Ku Klux Klan, the Nazis and other racists, will have guns, while working class people who will need weapons to protect themselves will have trouble getting them. Therefore, (Continued on next page)

Increase in violent crime is setting off campaign for tighter gun control laws. Time and Newsweek ran cover stories on crime in their March 23 issues, while demonstrators are demanding strict handgun laws.



Gun Control

(Continued from previous page)

while we do not approve of violent crime—and however much we dislike having any level of agreement with the anti-gun control forces among the conservatives—we believe that the various gun control laws being proposed, and in fact all gun control enforced by the capitalist state, should be vigorously opposed. Let's look at the question more closely.

Laws won't control guns

In the first place, gun control laws will not accomplish what they are supposed to do. They will not limit the circulation of handguns in the country. The United States is huge, comprising millions of square miles and 220 million people. It has long and sparsely inhabited borders with two nations and thousands of miles of easily accessible coastline. Guns, especially handguns, are easily concealable. It is virtually impossible to stop guns and/or gun parts from being smuggled into the country and absolutely impossible to prevent them from circulating inside it.

This assertion isn't based on speculation, it's based on experience. The ruling class outlawed alcohol in the 1920s by passing the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution. But this didn't stop people from drinking. Despite the law, if someone wanted alcohol in those years they could get it. Similarly, hard drugs are outlawed today. Are the "drug control" laws effective? Are cocaine and heroin hard to get? As we understand it, the only question is getting the money to pay for them.

The only way gun control laws could have even a minimal impact on the number of guns in the country (today, according to Senator Kennedy, over 52,000,000) is if the entire police apparatus, including the border patrol, the FBI, the Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms Bureau of the Treasury Department and all state and local police forces were greatly enlarged and given the legal right to stop and frisk people in the street, bug their telephones and break into their homes, etc.

In other words, the only way handguns could actually be controlled is if the country were turned into a police state. Reagan and his right-wing buddies are already trying to do this (see article on pages 8-9). Do we want to help them?

In addition to failing to limit the circulation of handguns, gun control laws would also fail to deter people from committing violent crimes. (We are talking about street crime, not white collar crime, which is a much bigger business. We are also not discussing the crimes of the imperialists and their stooges in, say, El Salvador, Argentina, or South Africa, which are certainly violent.)

This too is not a mere assertion. Numerous studies of crime levels in states that already have tough gun control laws have failed to produce any solid evidence that these laws have actually lowered the rate of violent crime. In 1974, for example, Massachusetts passed a gun control law requiring a one-year minimum sentence for people convicted of carrying an

unlicensed pistol; the law also bans plea bargaining. Yet, a study conducted from 1974 to 1976 by the Center for Applied Social Research at Northeastern University in Boston indicates that the best that can be said about the law is, in the words of the *New York Times*, that "it may (emphasis added) have sig-



Klan members armed with machine guns at 1979 Alabama rally. Gun control laws won't disarm the Klan. But they will prevent working people from arming themselves against right-wing attacks.

nificantly reduced the number of murders and assaults with guns committed in Boston." At the same time, the study indicates that "the number of assaults with other weapons has increased" . . . while "the reductions in other crimes committed with guns has been either slight or nonexistent." (*New York Times*, January 19, 1981.) Perhaps the most significant thing the study reveals is that in 1975 and 1976 there were comparable decreases in crimes involving firearms and of other crimes "in most of the major Northeastern cities, even those without gun control laws." (!)

In addition to the lack of hard evidence to support the contentions of gun control advocates, their claims that gun control laws will lower the crime rate are based on faulty notions about why people commit crimes. The increase in street crime (mostly burglaries and robberies and the assaults, shootings and murders that are connected with them) we have been witnessing in recent years is caused by the crisis of the capitalist system. Today millions of people are out of work or work in meaningless, low-paying and dead end jobs. Many of them are getting desperate. Desperate people will do desperate things. When people are desperate enough to start robbing people, stores and other institutions, breaking into people's homes, etc., either to survive or to get some "good things" in life, no law against carrying an unlicensed gun or using a weapon in a robbery is going to prevent that person from committing that crime. The obvious utility of having a gun during, say, a robbery far outweighs the threat of a penalty (even a stiff one) for carrying it.

As long as the system itself means unemployment, poverty and urban de-

caj, while glorifying wealth, material possessions and power, no laws, and no gun control laws, are going to stop, or even limit, crime.

Even if they could be somewhat effective in accomplishing these things, however, we still think they should be opposed. No matter how tough the laws or how powerful the police machinery, some handguns would still be available. Some people, but not all, would be able to pass the police investigation and fulfill the other licensing requirements.

Others could get weapons illegally, if necessary, by paying a very high price.

In either case, what kind of people would be most able to get handguns? Members of the ruling class and the middle class could get handguns fairly easily. They

would easily be judged "respectable" and thus get licenses. Failing that, they could certainly afford the price to get pistols illegally. On the other hand, it would be much harder for working class people, and particularly Latinos and Blacks, known leftists, people who are obviously gay, etc., to get guns.

First, since the screening for licenses will be accomplished through the police departments, which are racist, reactionary and anti-gay, we can be sure that Black and Latin people, Native Americans, radicals and homosexuals will be more likely to be judged as "potential criminals" or "troublemakers" or "radicals" and hence denied licenses to purchase a handgun. Second, being denied the right to purchase a pistol legally, these same people (that is, us) would least be able to afford a pistol on the black market, where the prices will be much higher.

So while many working class and oppressed people would not be able to get handguns, the right-wingers and racists, who have infiltrated and/or have friendly relations with local police departments and governments throughout the country, would have little trouble getting the weapons they want.

This points to the most basic, fundamental reason why working people

should oppose gun control laws. That is that workers and members of oppressed groups must have the right to defend themselves with arms, if necessary. This is especially the case today, when the cops and the Klan, the Nazis and other right-wing forces are growing and getting more and more aggressive.

Just recently, a Black woman in Detroit had four fingers blown off trying to defuse a bomb thrown into her home by Klan-types. Since the bomb didn't kill her, it is possible the Klan will try again. Does she or doesn't she have the right to have a gun, both in her home and on her person when she goes outside? Should she really leave her protection up to the police? Where were they when she had her fingers destroyed? In any case, we haven't heard too many stories about the police protecting Black people these days.

Working people must defend themselves

In other words, we are certainly not against people being protected against crime. But we think that this should be done by the people themselves—not by relying on the capitalist state. Working people, who are the main victims of street crime, should arm themselves and form self-defense organizations, through their unions, block and neighborhood committees and other organizations.

The majority of people at any given work place or in any given community are not criminals and have a direct interest in preventing crime. They should be organized to protect themselves and their neighborhoods. The self-defense squads formed by residents in the Techwood projects in Atlanta point in the right direction. Similar groups, based in working class organizations and communities and under the democratic control of the people immediately involved, are the best means of actually protecting people from street criminals—as well as racist thugs (and racist cops).

It is certainly possible that such self-defense organizations may be abused. It is possible, for example, that some elements in a given neighborhood may take over a self-defense group and use it for criminal purposes. But the answer is not to ban such groups or to call on the police, who have been on a virtual rampage, shooting and killing people, in the past few months. The answer is to involve more working class people in the defense groups and to make sure these organizations are well-organized and truly democratic, that is, run by the majority of the people in any given union, workplace or neighborhood.

—By RON TABER

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South

(Continued from page 10) University of the No. police station near I and attempt to seize South African flag. Fire with shotguns.

June 3—Thousands of students from high schools and colleges marched for people on a protest near John. The march was led by Aziz Jarden. May 29 hunger strike attack the marchers with tear gas, clubs and an invading one school students from the town have taken refuge slash the school wife with a whip tries to prevent entering the school wards, police drive neighborhood with machine," gassing fails to stay indoors.

In addition, as the week of Republications approached a parade in Durban the largest South play of weapons mixed-race and demonstrated in East Cape Town and cities.

Black workers take the lead

However, the unions against Re were just the latest a year that has Azanian freedom strength. Of particular in the past year the organizing of Black into their own trade.

Black workers represent 10 percent of South African force, while mixed Indian workers make other 14 percent. recently, the only le organizations were that represented white Black (including unions have been over the past years they led 107 walkouts total of 67,000 taken from the cap.

Under the impact of successful organizing, government decided Black unions—if they to register with the and abstain from strikes. But this largely backfired. unions have preferred their independence refused to register with this semi-concessions from simply because of organized power. In were 207 walkouts Black unions, for 175,000 worker-days

In a significant power and unity unions, workers at General Motors plant Elizabeth, support unregistered Motor

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-By RON TABER

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South Africa

(Continued from page 1)
 University of the North storm a
 police station near Pietersburg
 and attempt to seize and burn a
 South African flag. Police open
 fire with shotguns.

June 3—Thousands of stu-
 dents from high schools desig-
 nated for people of mixed race
 march near Johannesburg to
 protest the arrest of student
 leader Aziz Jarden during the
 May 29 hunger strike. Police
 attack the marchers with dogs,
 tear gas, clubs and whips,
 invading one school where
 students from the demonstra-
 tion have taken refuge. Police
 slash the school principal's
 wife with a whip when she
 tries to prevent them from
 entering the school. After-
 wards, police drive through the
 neighborhood with a "sneeze
 machine," gassing anyone who
 fails to stay indoors.

In addition, as the climax of
 the week of Republic Day cele-
 brations approached—a mili-
 tary parade in Durban that was
 the largest South African dis-
 play of weapons ever—Black,
 mixed-race and Indian people
 demonstrated in East London,
 Cape Town and several other
 cities.

Black workers take the lead

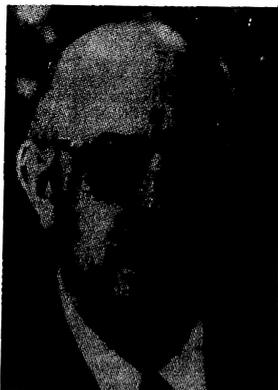
However, the demonstra-
 tions against Republic Day
 were just the latest protests in
 a year that has seen the
 Azanian freedom struggle gain
 strength. Of particular signifi-
 cance in the past year has been
 the organizing of Black workers
 into their own trade unions.

Black workers make up 70
 percent of South Africa's work-
 force, while mixed-race and
 Indian workers make up an-
 other 14 percent. But until
 recently, the only legal workers'
 organizations were the unions
 that represented whites. Illegal
 Black (including mixed-race)
 unions have been organized
 over the past years and in 1979
 they led 107 walkouts with a
 total of 67,000 worker-days
 taken from the capitalists.

Under the impact of this suc-
 cessful organizing, last fall the
 government decided to legalize
 Black unions—if they promised
 to register with the government
 and abstain from political
 strikes. But this ruse has
 largely backfired. Most Black
 unions have preferred to keep
 their independence and have
 refused to register. And even
 with this semi-legal status,
 many have been able to win
 concessions from employers
 simply because of their solidly
 organized power. In 1980 there
 were 207 walkouts led by the
 Black unions, for a total of
 175,000 worker-days on strike.

In a significant show of the
 power and unity of the new
 unions, workers at Ford and
 General Motors plants in Port
 Elizabeth, supporters of the
 unregistered Motor Assemblies

and Components Workers Un-
 ion, walked out this May in
 support of workers at a nearby
 Firestone tire plant. Overall,
 the strike involved 3,000 people.
 The dispute began last Feb-



Prime Minister Pieter Botha.

ruary when Firestone workers
 struck over control and access
 to money in the pension fund.
 Although the strike was suc-
 cessful, 160 workers lost their
 jobs.

Despite the fact that the
 Firestone workers were not
 members of their union, the
 Black and mixed-race workers
 at Ford and GM demanded that
 the 160 people either be rehired
 by Firestone or hired at GM or
 Ford. When to enforce this
 demand, two Ford workers re-
 fused to install Firestone tires
 and were fired on May 19, the
 Ford and GM workers walked.
 At a mass meeting of 2,500 on
 June 3, the strikers voted to go
 back to work after accepting
 Firestone's latest offer: to im-
 mediately rehire 21 of the
 workers, to rehire others as
 vacancies occur, and to nego-
 tiate with the union over the
 future of those Firestone con-
 siderers to have "bad work re-
 cords."

White rulers in a quandary

The Black workers of South
 Africa hold the key to the liber-
 ation of the Azanian people.
 For the strength of South
 African capitalism lies in the
 ability of the whites to extract
 super-profits from the largely
 Black workforce. Black and
 mixed-race workers produce
 most of the vast wealth that
 enables the country's five mil-
 lion whites to live in luxury and
 maintain a strong state to re-
 press the other 23 million
 people. Without these workers,
 the South African economy
 would come to a halt.

As the Azanian workers have
 come to realize—and begun to
 exercise—their enormous power,
 the white ruling class has
 found itself in a quandary
 because straight-out repres-
 sion of these workers would

destroy the labor force.

Dealing with this contradic-
 tion has become harder and
 harder for the ruling class in
 recent years. This spring,
 South African Prime Minister
 Pieter W. Botha pointed out in
 a speech that even the South
 African arms industry work-
 force is 50 percent Black. Ac-
 cording to the *Wall Street
 Journal*, he also told his au-
 dience that "to keep the factories
 working and to prevent dis-
 grunted Blacks and 'coloureds'
 from sabotaging equipment,
 this government must look
 after them."

In line with this Botha has
 advocated slight reforms of the
 apartheid system, including
 dropping the word apartheid.
 But the result of this has been
 to please no one in the white
 community. Botha has actually
 done more talking than action,
 so whites who believe reforms
 are necessary to head off an in-
 tensification of the Black strug-
 gle (most of them of English
 descent and based in owner-
 ship of industry) are impatient.

Meanwhile, many of the rual-
 based whites of Dutch/German
 descent, the Afrikaners who
 make up 60 percent of the white
 population, believe that any
 concessions whatsoever to the
 Blacks will lead to the destruc-
 tion of white rule.

At the same time, as the
 current wave of struggle shows,
 Botha's maneuvers have failed
 to fool the Black people of
 South Africa.

As we go to press, a most
 important day for the Azanian
 people is approaching—June
 16, the fifth anniversary of the
 Soweto uprising by Black stu-
 dents. It is likely that by the time
 you read this, demonstrations
 and protests in commemora-
 tion of the Soweto heroes and
 the Soweto dead will have over-
 shadowed the events of Repub-
 lic Day Week. What is sure,
 however, is that the battle
 against the South African white
 ruling class will go on, and that
 the gains in strength and unity
 made by the Black, mixed-race
 and Indian people over the past
 year make the prospects for
 their struggle better than they
 have been for several years. □

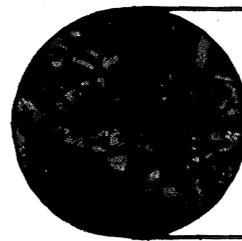
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WORLD IN REVOLUTION

Russian invasion of Poland near?

On June 5, the Russian ruling class delivered an ultimatum to
 the Polish government that may be the prelude to a Russian
 invasion of Poland. In a letter to the Central Committee of the
 Polish United Workers Party (PUWP), Russian President Leonid
 Brezhnev warned that the fate of Poland "as a free and indepen-
 dent country" was in danger. He criticized PUWP leader Stanislaw
 Kania and Polish Prime Minister Wojciech Jaruzelski for losing
 control of the country. The letter amounts to an ultimatum that
 unless Kania cracks down on Polish workers—or is replaced by a
 more hardline leadership—Russian troops will move in.

Kania took over leadership of Poland's state-capitalist society
 after a massive workers' rebellion last August. To appease the
 workers, he has granted concessions that include legal recogni-
 tion of the workers' independent union (Solidarnosc), consider-
 able freedom of the press and a degree of democracy within the
 PUWP. Despite these concessions, the workers are continuing
 their revolt and the country remains in turmoil.

The Russian ruling class fears that unless the workers can be
 suppressed, state-capitalist rule in Poland will collapse alto-
 gether. In November the Russian government massed 250,000
 troops on the Polish border, and an invasion seemed imminent.
 However, the Russians agreed to give Kania more time to
 establish some control over Poland. Now they may no longer be
 willing to wait. In particular, the Russian ruling class fears that
 the PUWP Congress, scheduled to begin on July 14, will not only
 approve the reforms, but may further undermine the party's
 bureaucratic apparatus, which is the real basis of state-capitalist
 rule.

With Russian backing, a hardline faction within the PUWP has
 begun to openly attack Kania's compromise policies. In May
 PUWP leaders in Katowice condemned Kania for knuckling under
 to the workers' movement. At a June 9-10 Central Committee
 meeting the hardliners, who include 20 percent of the committee,
 demanded Kania's resignation and the restoration of order "at all
 costs." Kania kept his post only by admitting that the charges
 against him were "fully justified," and promising to crack down on
 the press and enforce discipline within the party. While he added
 that there was "no sensible alternative" to accepting reforms in
 Polish society, it is clear that the hardliners are on the offensive
 against Kania and the other moderates.

An escalation of the Polish crisis seems inevitable. If Kania
 tries to suppress the workers' movement he risks provoking a
 confrontation that will force the Russian army to move in. If he
 continues to compromise, the hardliners will provoke a govern-
 ment crisis that is likely to bring about the same result.

Israel bombs Iraqi reactor

In a blatant act of aggression, Israeli warplanes destroyed an
 Iraqi nuclear reactor complex on June 8. Israeli Prime Minister
 Menachem Begin claimed the attack was a case of "self-defense,"
 that the Iraqi government was planning to use the plant to build
 nuclear weapons for use against Israel. Citing the murder of six
 million Jews during World War II, he declared that Israel would
 never allow another Holocaust against the Jewish people to occur.

In reality there were two motives for the raid on Iraq. First, the
 Israeli ruling class wants to maintain its military superiority not
 only over Iraq, but also over the entire Arab world. The Israeli
 military has had atomic bombs for years, as well as enjoying
 superiority in conventional weapons against the Arab nations. If
 any Arab country developed a nuclear arsenal of its own, this
 advantage would be nullified. Consequently, Begin is claiming the
 "right" to destroy any nuclear installations constructed by Arab
 governments in the Middle East.

Second, the raid was a warning that Israel is displeased with
 alliances between Western imperialism and Arab countries that
 threaten Israel's own imperialist interests in the Middle East. The
 Reagan administration recently agreed to ship sophisticated
 military equipment to Saudi Arabia and is seeking better relations
 with conservative Arab rulers. The French government, which
 helped build the Iraqi nuclear plant, has sold arms to several Arab
 nations. By attacking Iraq the Israeli government wanted to show
 that it was ready to risk a new Middle East war rather than allow
 the U.S. and Western European ruling classes a free hand to
 strengthen their ties with Arab rulers.

—PB

Native Americans

(Continued from page 5)
tions in the country—such as Kerr-McGee, Gulf & Western and Peabody Coal Co.

The specific form this attack took was the passage of Public Law 93-531, which called for a livestock reduction program and for the partition of JUA lands into an official Navajo region and a separate Hopi region, of equal size. (There are some 8,000 Navajos currently living in the JUA and approximately 100 Hopi people.)

Under the livestock reduction program, which the government justified as necessary because of "overgrazing," farmers have been fined or have had

their livestock destroyed for exceeding the limits placed on the number of livestock grazed per acre. Navajo and Hopi people have had to post armed 24-hour guards over their herds to protect them from the patrols of the BIA police.

But the livestock reduction program has taken its toll, and many farmers in the JUA have found it harder and harder to earn enough to survive. Meanwhile, the Navajo and Hopi Relocation Commission in Flagstaff, Arizona, is offering a \$5,000 cash bonus to any Navajo or Hopi family that voluntarily leaves the land—on top of \$44,800 in relocation and



Navajo elder Ashlike Bitsie believes both Navajos and Hopi may lose their lands.

housing costs to any family of three or less, and \$60,000 to any family of four or more. Faced with a choice of living at bare subsistence levels or relocating to the cities, some families have been forced to relocate; the Flagstaff relocation commission claims that more than 2,000 applications have already been filed.

Those living on Big Mountain, however, say they think the majority of Navajos and Hopi plan to stay in the JUA and continue their resistance efforts.

An important focus of these resistance efforts has been the fight against the second part of Public Law 93-531: the partition of the JUA lands. After two years of construction, the federal crews reached Big Mountain in 1979 and met the first resistance there. Katherine Smith, a Navajo elder, fired a warning shot over the heads of the fencing crew and after they left tore out the posts they had put in. Although Navajos on Big Mountain have not succeeded in blocking the construction, resistance groups have formed on Big Mountain and in the towns of Teesto and Jeddito out of the organizing against livestock impoundment and fencing in the JUA.

One of the tactics of the Department of the Interior and the federal government as a whole in weakening the resistance of the Native Americans in the JUA to these attacks on their

livestock and land has been to publicize the conflict as a tribal dispute between the Navajo and Hopi people.

On one level, they have the support of the tribal councils in the JUA in doing this. Abbott Sekaquaptewa, chairman of the Hopi tribal council, has implied that the partitioning of the JUA is a fair settlement of an historical conflict between the two tribes, in which Navajos were responsible for marauding and pillaging Hopi villages. Hopi and Navajo traditionalists, on the other hand, have rejected these views, claiming that Hopi and Navajo people have lived together peacefully since 1500. The traditionalists also believe that the only possible tribal dispute is between the Navajo and Hopi tribal councils over the mineral rights and money from leasing the lands of the JUA.

Many of the Hopi who have joined the resistance initiated by Navajo women and traditionalists see the partitioning as a "no-win" situation for both tribes. Along with the Navajo people remaining in the JUA, they anticipate the Department of the Interior will force everyone in the JUA to move off their land and to the cities so that strip-mining in the JUA can begin. As a Navajo elder, Ashlike Bitsie, said of the federal government: "I don't need to see what is written in black and white. Their intention is to get

rid of us all at one time . . . In the end, I think both Navajo and Hopi will lose."

Protests such as the Keams Canyon rally have succeeded in temporarily stopping the five-year livestock reduction program. Meanwhile, Navajo chapters and other resistance groups are meeting regularly to discuss organizing against future livestock impoundment, the fencing of the JUA and the possibility of forced relocation by the federal government. The American Indian Movement (AIM) has helped in organizing resistance and raising the funds and supplies needed by the Native Americans in the JUA. Support has also come from individuals and service and environmental organizations across the country.

Native Americans in the JUA need all the support and unity in organizing resistance that it is possible to build. They are facing an intense, uphill struggle against the interests of the powerful energy industry. As Hopi traditionalist Thomas Banyacya put it: "It is a Hopi prophecy that when you throw all honor and justice out the window, and you have no regard for human rights, that there is going to be terrible punishment for those who start messing around with human life. We are getting close to that time." □

Gay Pride Day

(Continued from page 4)
ple with special needs were left on their own." Eventually, the movement was really comfortable only for the more "respectable" elements of the gay community, often middle class, white gay males. These people certainly need their rights defended. But so does everyone. The movement should be uniting all gay people. This means that the movement needs to fight for the rights of lesbian mothers to their children, the rights of gay prisoners to their

publications and to form their own organizations, the rights of gay youth to their own sexuality. As well, the movement needs to address the special needs of Black and Latin lesbians and gay men, and transvestites and transsexuals.

Third, the gay movement needs to see itself as part of the general movement of all working class and oppressed people. All working class and oppressed people face more and more attacks as this system goes further into crisis. The Re-

publicans and Democrats, for example, are legislating attacks not only against gay people, but also against Black people, women, Latins, poor people, workers. We need to build unity among all people who are fighting for a decent life. We need to defend and stick up for one another. In this way, we stand a real chance of being able to win some gains.

By doing these things we believe the movement can be revitalized. We can begin to seriously defend the rights of lesbians and gay males. And we can ensure that more and more people can have pride in being gay. □

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