

Drugs, Guns and the White House

Contragate Murder Plots

There's enough illegal skulduggery over Iran/Contragate to impeach Reagan several times over and send his entire team of advisers to the federal pen. But it's not about to happen. Congress won't dare do him in. At most they want to make some political hay so they can elect a Democrat in 1988. Removing a second chief of U.S. imperialism in two decades would be too damaging to the American empire. So the bourgeois parliamentary "opposition" is willing to go along with a limited cover-up. And the White House, determined to "stay the course," will try to wait it out in order to carry out their "mandate." But there are factors that are beyond their control.

So far the administration has managed to keep attention largely focused on "Iranscam," the secret delivery of American military hardware to the ayatollahs while Reagan was denouncing Teheran terrorism and the government was arresting arms dealers for doing the same thing as Oliver North & Co. Now they are finally digging into the second level of this affair, the huge drugs-for-guns operation used to finance Reagan's "freedom fighters." But there's a third level they don't want to touch: an assassination program to get rid of political enemies, squealers and anyone else who got in the way. A civil

1984 La Penca bombing: dissident contra Pastora accused CIA of assassination attempt.



court suit in Miami brings all three levels of the scandal together, including dramatic evidence that North's boys tried to murder dissident contra leader Edén Pastora and planned to assassinate the U.S. ambassador to Costa Rica.

The *New York Times* (20 January) reports that the Drug Enforcement Administration has compiled "convincing evidence" that the contra arms military supply operation was smuggling narcotics: "After dropping arms in El Salvador, rather than returning to the United

States in empty cargo planes, the pilots stopped on occasion in Panama, a major drug transshipment center, to pick up cocaine or marijuana." This is hardly news: we wrote about it last year in "The Contra Connection" (*WV* No. 411, 12 September 1986). Currently they're trying to pass this off as a little extracurricular activity by pilots picking up some bucks on the side. But once they get started on this trail, they'll eventually have to admit that the gunrunning and drug trafficking were one operation, run out of the White House basement.

A court suit against 29 Contragaters has been brought in Miami federal court by two journalists, Tony Avirgan, who was injured during a May 1984 bomb attack on a Pastora press conference in La Penca, Nicaragua, and his wife Martha Honey. There have been scattered press reports of the Avirgan/Honey suit, but it has been spiked by top national media. In mid-December a 44-page affidavit was submitted by Daniel Sheehan, general counsel of the Christic Institute, an ecumenical public interest law firm which filed the suit, detailing their accusations and evidence. In the interests of further exposing imperialist crimes, we are detailing some of their findings. It will quickly be apparent why

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Howard Beach: Black Victims On Trial

Reagan's America, Koch's New York: It wasn't enough that 23-year-old black NYC construction worker Michael Griffith was murdered by a lynch mob in Howard Beach, Queens last December 20. Now the black survivors and the murdered man himself are being lynched again in the racist courts and capitalist press. The cops are out to get Timothy Grimes and Cedric Sandiford, the two men who survived, while the media obscenely portray the victims as criminals. As for the killers, only three of the bat-wielding punks were ever arrested—and they have been *set free*, charged merely with "reckless endangerment." Then, three weeks after the cops got a *signed confession* from Jon Lester, Queens D.A. John Santucci leaks that it

may be inadmissible! As black New York seethed with outrage, Governor Mario Cuomo, his eyes on the '88 elections, bowed to the demands of the victims' lawyers and appointed a special prosecutor to take over the case.

The racist murderers are walking the streets while the cops stalk the black victims. The day Michael Griffith was buried, December 27, Timothy Grimes was arrested for assault following a domestic quarrel, even though his girlfriend refused to press charges. On January 11 they booked Grimes again, on absurd "loitering" charges; the charges were dropped the next day for total lack of evidence, but not before the TV and tabloids had a field day with character assassination. Lawyers for the

Labor Must Fight Racist Terror!



Labor Black League and Spartacist supporters protest January 12 at whitewash "trial" of cop Sullivan, killer of 66-year-old Eleanor Bumpurs.

Howard Beach killers dug up a 1975 arrest for Cedric Sandiford in Virginia, and trumpeted that they'll use it to hound him off the stand if he dares testify about Griffith's murder and his own savage beating. Even the dead aren't spared, as the police reopened a four-year-old unsolved murder case claiming Michael Griffith was a suspect.

They're also dragging the name of Eleanor Bumpurs through the mud, the black grandmother gunned down in

1984 in her Bronx public housing apartment by two shotgun blasts from NYPD Emergency Services Unit cop Stephen Sullivan in the infamous "eviction-by-murder." As the whitewash trial of the racist cop began January 12 in Bronx Supreme Court, police lawyers grotesquely tried to pin Mrs. Bumpurs' death on her daughter Mary! When Sullivan's lawyer Smirty claimed the shooting might have been

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Koch's Cops Kill! Vengeance for Eleanor Bumpurs!

Amtrak Murder

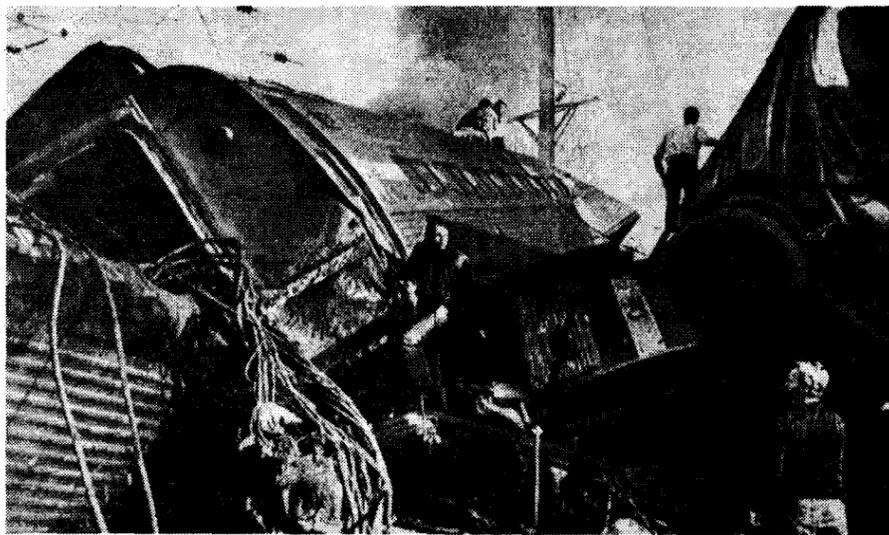
It was capitalist murder. On Sunday, January 4, the Amtrak Colonial with over 600 passengers and crew slammed into three Conrail engines at over 100 miles per hour as it approached the Gunpowder River bridge crossing northeast of Baltimore. Sixteen people died and over 170 were injured, many seriously, as the Amtrak coaches, heavily loaded with returning holiday passengers, were thrown off the tracks and split open like tin cans. Only the fact that the first car was held empty by the conductors prevented scores more from dying. In the wake of this horrible "accident," the capitalist press has launched a rabid campaign to blame "hot rod" engineers "high on pot." But safety experts and rail consultants have spilled the beans: Amtrak bosses knew that sooner or later people would die because the money wasn't spent to make the trains safe.

The slower-moving Conrail engines entered the high-speed Amtrak track seconds before the Colonial arrived. Desperately trying to stop, engineer Ricky Gates and brakeman Edward Cromwell jumped clear at the last second, Cromwell breaking his leg. Jerome Evans, the 35-year-old Amtrak engineer, didn't have a chance, barely applying the brakes before being killed in the collision. Now, in an orchestrated campaign to blame anyone but the government-run Conrail and Amtrak, company officials and government investigators are claiming the Conrail crew were using drugs. And Amtrak officials hideously performed an alcohol blood test on the remains of Evans,

lamenting the fact that "Tissue samples were insufficient to test for the presence of drugs"! Four hundred mourners, mostly rail workers from up and down the East Coast, attended Evans' wake in Baltimore.

The notoriously inaccurate tests done on the Conrail crew showed meaningless marijuana traces from 13 to 87 nanograms (*billionths* of a gram)! Even the labor-hating *New York Times* was forced to admit at most this shows nothing more than use or exposure to marijuana *weeks ago!* Begun as a campaign to justify racist cop terror in the ghetto and to regiment a working class in no mood for U.S. imperialism's war plans, Reagan and the Democrats' anti-drug hysteria is being used to scapegoat these workers for capitalist murder.

The criminals responsible for the Amtrak collision were exposed in a revealing *New York Times* interview (12 January) with L. Fletcher Prouty, a government rail consultant whose seven-year-old grandnephew was on the Colonial. "Since the late 1970's, when the Department of Transportation decreed that Northeast Corridor tracks must in perpetuity carry freight as well as passenger trains, the corridor has been a Russian roulette game. Fatal crashes are inevitable." Prouty pointed to Japan's Shinkansen ("bullet train") and France's high-speed TGV, which have safely carried billions of passengers at much higher speeds than Amtrak. Both operate on separate high-speed tracks, with fail-safe braking systems. U.S. freight railroads *removed* automatic braking devices from their engines



Decaying capitalist-run railroads removed fail-safe braking systems, making fatal crashes inevitable.

when Amtrak was created in 1971 and they no longer had to carry passengers. If the Conrail engines had been equipped with such fail-safe systems, Brother Evans and 15 others would be alive today.

When the Northeast Corridor was planned and built 20 years ago, American imperialism was spending billions of dollars on its bloody, losing slaughter in Vietnam, and a safe rail system was "deemed prohibitively expensive." In 1987 both capitalist parties are hell-bent on war against the Soviet Union, from Nicaragua to Afghanistan, with billions for Tridents and Star Wars. Decaying capitalism, from the rust bowl of the Midwest to the decrepit and dangerous railroads responsible for the Amtrak murder, is incapable of rebuilding American industry. Reagan's current budget includes the sale of the Washington-Boston route, Amtrak's only "profitable" line, to private industry in order to artificially lower the

mammoth budget deficits produced by the anti-Soviet war drive. The rest of the passenger railroads in this country will go on the junk heap. In Japan, rail unions have been battling a similar "privatization" plan slashing thousands of jobs and destroying the unions.

Amtrak and Conrail are run like other capitalist corporations, and under the guise of "profitability" safety is sacrificed down the line. Instead of the present chaos, there should be a single nationalized rail system (without a penny of compensation to the former owners), with union control of hiring and safety, and the unlimited right to strike. Capitalism has left the railroads to rot, destroying what is a necessary part of any industrial society. Rebuilding the railroads will be the task of the victorious workers revolution, which will also bring to trial those who have butchered and maimed countless thousands in industrial "accidents" in their drive for profit. ■



TROTSKY

Lenin on the Eve of the Russian Revolution

On the 12th anniversary of "Bloody Sunday" which marked the beginning of the Russian 1905 Revolution, and on the eve of the February 1917 Revolution which opened the road to the proletarian conquest of power, Lenin told a meeting of young workers in Zurich:

We must not be deceived by the present grave-like stillness in Europe. Europe is pregnant with revolution. The monstrous horrors of the imperialist war, the suffering caused by the high cost of living everywhere engender a revolutionary mood; and the ruling classes, the bourgeoisie, and its servitors, the governments, are more and more moving into a blind alley from which they can never extricate themselves without tremendous upheavals.

Just as in Russia in 1905, a popular uprising against the tsarist government began under the leadership of the proletariat with the aim of achieving a democratic republic, so, in Europe, the coming years, precisely because of this predatory war, will lead to popular uprisings under the leadership of the proletariat against the power of finance capital, against the big banks, against the capitalists; and these upheavals cannot end otherwise than with the expropriation of the bourgeoisie, with the victory of socialism.

We of the older generation may not live to see the decisive battles of this coming revolution. But I can, I believe, express the confident hope that the youth which is working so splendidly in the socialist movement of Switzerland, and of the whole world, will be fortunate enough not only to fight, but also to win, in the coming proletarian revolution.

—V.I. Lenin, "Lecture on the 1905 Revolution" (22 January 1917)



LENIN

FREEDOM NOW FOR GERONIMO PRATT!

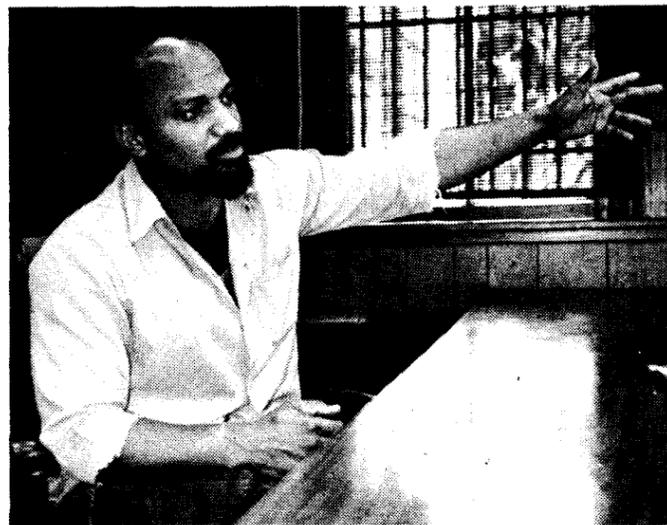
The Partisan Defense Committee and the Bay Area Labor Black League for Social Defense have called a demonstration on behalf of former Black Panther Party leader Geronimo Pratt, for February 21 at the Oakland City Hall Plaza Park. The demonstration's two demands are "Freedom Now for Geronimo Pratt!" and "Down with Meese/FBI COINTELPRO Frame-Up!"

Pratt has been in prison for over 16 years, eight in solitary confinement, a victim of the vicious FBI/COINTELPRO vendetta that physically exterminated the Black Panther Party. When hundreds of cops, guns blazing, failed to kill Pratt in a siege of Los Angeles Panther headquarters, the forces of state repression framed him for murder—a crime he did not and could not have committed. An appeal for a new trial is slated for the Federal 9th Circuit Court of Appeals. The PDC

supports pursuing every legal channel to secure Pratt's freedom, but puts no faith in the "justice" of the capitalist courts.

Pratt's fight for freedom must be labor's cause—backed up by mass protest and drawing in all who oppose this racist frame-up! Get your union or community group to endorse and mobilize for February 21! Financial contributions are needed; checks earmarked Geronimo Pratt demonstration should be sent along with endorsements to the Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 5555, San Francisco, CA 94101. Call the PDC at (415) 839-0852 to get leaflets to distribute. Send telegrams and letters demanding Geronimo Pratt's freedom now to the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals at the U.S. Courthouse, 450 Golden Gate Ave., San Francisco, CA 94102.

ALL OUT FEBRUARY 21!
12 noon, Oakland City Hall Plaza Park



Geronimo Pratt in San Quentin, March 1985.

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League of the U.S.

DIRECTOR OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS: Liz Gordon

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Workers Vanguard (USPS 098-770) published biweekly, except 2nd issue August and with 3-week interval December, by the Spartacist Publishing Co., 41 Warren Street, New York, NY 10007. Telephone: 732-7862 (Editorial), 732-7861 (Business). Address all correspondence to: Box 1377, GPO, New York, NY 10116. Domestic subscriptions: \$5.00/24 issues. Second-class postage paid at New York, NY. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Workers Vanguard*, Box 1377, GPO, New York, NY 10116.

Opinions expressed in signed articles or letters do not necessarily express the editorial viewpoint.

No. 420

23 January 1987

Afghanistan:



Sobolev/TASS



Novosti

Soviet troops defend basic social gains in Afghanistan. Young girls on their way to school (left), freed from slavery under the veil.

Extend Gains of Bolshevik Revolution to Afghan Peoples!

When Soviet troops went into Afghanistan seven years ago to defend the beleaguered nationalist-reformist regime in Kabul against CIA-backed Islamic guerrillas, Jimmy Carter launched Cold War II. America's rulers pumped in massive military support to the reactionary "holy warriors." Iran/Contragate revelations show the Afghan *mujahedin* at the top of the list of recipients (\$400-500 million a year) from a "Reagan Doctrine Superfund" set up to finance "covert" anti-Soviet wars around the globe. Up to *one billion dollars a year* in arms and other aid is being funneled by the U.S. and its allies to these barbaric champions of feudalism, mass illiteracy and the enslavement of women. But contrary to the pronouncements from their patrons in Washington, arming these 7th century cutthroats with 20th century weapons has failed to turn the tide in the civil war.

Far from being bogged down in the Hindu Kush mountains, the Soviet-backed forces of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA) are win-

ning hands down. The *mujahedin*, lacking support in the cities, are increasingly relying on long-range firepower supplied by the U.S., launching indiscriminate rocket attacks on Kabul. They scored three direct hits... on the U.S. embassy. Even the Americans' shoulder-fired "Stinger" anti-aircraft missiles have proved ineffective against Soviet armored helicopter gunships. But the mullah-led "freedom fighters" did score one "victory": last month they shot down a civilian plane with 30 people on board. Likewise, in a hideous May 1984 bombing at Kabul airport, a "moderate" guerrilla group murdered a dozen children on their way to school in

the USSR. The policy of Reagan's Afghan terrorists toward the urban population seems to be: "kill 'em all and let Allah sort 'em out." Following the December 1979 Soviet intervention, gutless "leftists" throughout the West joined the imperialist hue and cry over "fiercely independent Afghanistan." Social democrats, liberals, conservatives and fascists united in Jimmy Carter's anti-Soviet "human rights" crusade. The international Spartacist tendency, in contrast, forthrightly proclaimed: "Hail Red Army!" Sixty years earlier the Red Army of Lenin and Trotsky liberated the peoples of Soviet Central Asia from the chains of feudal and pre-feudal barbarism and fundamentalist Islamic reaction. The Soviet Army intervention in Afghanistan, undertaken for defensive reasons, raised the possibility of revolutionary social transformation in this hideously backward and enslaved country. We called at the time, and repeat that call today, to "Extend social gains of the October Revolution to Afghan peoples."

Recently there have been reports of a possible Soviet pullout from Afghanistan. Returning from Kabul, where a high-level Kremlin delegation met with Afghan leaders, Moscow foreign minister Eduard Shevardnadze called for a "political settlement" and declared that "the time for a withdrawal of Soviet troops is not far off." (Already last fall, six Soviet regiments—roughly 8,000 soldiers—left amid great fanfare.) And speaking to a meeting of the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDPA) last month, Afghan leader Najib (who just returned from a visit to Moscow) ordered a cease-fire, beginning January 15, calling for "national reconciliation." Najib added: "We don't want to exclude different political groups, moderates, monarchists and heads of armed anti-Government bands active abroad, from national reconciliation" (*New York Times*, 2 January).

This "peace initiative" from Moscow and Kabul is misguided and dangerous. The modest social gains achieved by the Soviet-backed regime are directly threatened by any kind of deal with the CIA-backed rebels. And a coalition government ranging from Islamic guerrillas to Communists is simply impossible. In the Pakistani refugee center in Peshawar, a rally was called by the guerrilla leaders to reject the cease-fire. While tens of thousands chanted "Death to Russians! Death to Communists!" one *mujahedin* chief demanded the overthrow of the Kabul government,

establishment of an Islamic state, and the surrender of Soviet Central Asia (*New York Times*, 18 January). There is a civil war in Afghanistan, and one side or the other must win. Offers of "compromise" will only embolden the imperialists. The sooner the feudalists are smashed, the sooner the bloodshed will end and the road to social progress will be secured.

Imperialist Godfathers of Islamic Jihad

The imperialists profess a touching concern for the "national sovereignty" of Afghanistan against "Russian expansionism." But the Afghan guerrillas aren't on the receiving end of the biggest "covert" aid operation since the Vietnam War just so they can preserve such quaint national traditions as skinning "infidels" alive or trading women like sheep. The imperialists have their sights trained on a much bigger target: the Soviet workers state. Everyone in Washington knows the *mujahedin* can't win. But unlike the contra losers in Nicaragua, there's no danger of them precipitating direct U.S. intervention and the American bourgeoisie's dreaded spectre of "another Vietnam." So for Democrats and Republicans alike, Afghanistan is the "good war." As one Reagan aide put it, the U.S.' immediate aim is "to keep the Russian blood and money flowing until they find settlement a better alternative."

Nowhere has the bipartisan anti-Soviet consensus been clearer than over

Afghanistan. Indeed, the Democratic Party has been way out in front of the Reaganites in pushing aid for the Afghan "rebels." Two years ago the Democratic-controlled House of Representatives *tripled* Reagan's request for aid to the Afghan contras. "There were 58,000 [American] dead in Vietnam," said Texas Democratic Congressman Charles Wilson, "and we owe the Russians one" (*Washington Post*, 13 January 1985). But for all the claptrap over Afghanistan being "Russia's Vietnam," the *New York Times* (19 June 1986) reported that "a Government study in April 1985 found that the Soviet forces were gradually wearing down the rebels." That led Reagan to issue National Security Decision Directive 166, calling for driving Soviet forces from Afghanistan "by all means available." But the Red Army is still mopping up the Afghan contras.

During 1986 DRA forces all but wiped out rebel forces in Herat and Kandahar, and mounted a spring offensive that smashed an important guerrilla stronghold at Zhawar, a mile from the Pakistani border. According to *Jane's Defence Weekly* (2 August 1986): "The forces were comprised primarily of DRA armed forces and militia, many of the latter former resistance men.... Resistance sources admit that the Afghan troops fight effectively, and there are no reports of desertion or collapse of units." [emphasis added]

Like any military clash between two social systems, the civil war in Afghanistan is a political struggle. The Soviet Army intervention has brought doctors and hospitals, schools and literacy to Afghanistan. Formerly veiled and invisible, Afghan women have been brought

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Der Spiegel

Afghan feudalists cutthroats gloat over body of downed Soviet pilot.

ning hands down. The *mujahedin*, lacking support in the cities, are increasingly relying on long-range firepower supplied by the U.S., launching indiscriminate rocket attacks on Kabul. They scored three direct hits... on the U.S. embassy. Even the Americans' shoulder-fired "Stinger" anti-aircraft missiles have proved ineffective against Soviet armored helicopter gunships. But the mullah-led "freedom fighters" did score one "victory": last month they shot down a civilian plane with 30 people on board. Likewise, in a hideous May 1984 bombing at Kabul airport, a "moderate" guerrilla group murdered a dozen children on their way to school in



Lochon/Gamma

Soviet forces land at Kabul airport, December 1979. Spartacists in 11 January 1980 *WV* hailed Soviet intervention against the theocratic counterrevolutionaries.

WORKERS VANGUARD

While Carter Stews, Soviet Army Rolls Back Afghan Mullahs

Hail Red Army!



ATLANTA—A January 17 march in Forsyth County, Georgia commemorating Martin Luther King's birthday narrowly escaped a bloodbath when it was attacked by hundreds of racists led by the Ku Klux Klan. Brandishing Confederate flags, chanting "White Power!" and giving the Nazi "Sieg Heil" salute, they rained rocks and bottles down on the 100 peaceful, largely black demonstrators. After the police ordered the marchers back into their buses, the KKK staged a race-hate rally of 1,000 at the county courthouse.

The man who organized the Forsyth Klan attack was none other than the South's most notorious racist killer: J.B. Stoner. Klansman Stoner was identified as the mastermind behind the Birmingham, Alabama church bombings during the civil rights movement—including the 1963 bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church, which killed four little black girls. Convicted of an earlier bombing of another black Birmingham church, this murderer was released last November and is free to kill again. The King Day marchers almost became his latest victims.

And what were the cops doing while Stoner's KKKers were rioting? "We lost control of the crowd," said Bonnie Pike, an inspector for the Georgia Bureau of Investigation. Lost control of the crowd?! Nationwide TV coverage showed the police allowing Klansmen to

Klan Riot in Georgia

take the high ground where they lay in wait for the King Day marchers to arrive. And then the cops did nothing to stop the attacks on the black demonstrators. The whole thing smacks of



Downs/Atlanta Journal and Constitution
Klan terrorizes King Day march in Forsyth County, Georgia.

collusion between the cops and Klan, only nine of whom were arrested, some charged with carrying concealed weapons.

The King Day marchers were set up for Stoner. Their main organizer, Hosea Williams, an Atlanta city councilman and former top aide to King, knew perfectly well what would happen if a handful of blacks tried to march in Forsyth County. This is an *all-white* area from which the entire black population was driven out around 1910 through a series of savage lynchings. The 1980 census showed *one* black resident in the county, and now according to Forsyth sheriff Wesley Walraven there are none.

But black "leader" Williams, working closely with the sheriff, screened participants to make sure that no one "that has any violence in them takes part" in the march (*Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, 17 January). As if the threat of violence came from the blacks! Now Williams, along with Jesse Jackson, has announced they will lead another march into Forsyth County next weekend. And outrageously, Williams stated he would be willing to march *with the Klan* in support of the "right" of these racist terrorists to rally in the College Park suburb of Atlanta.

It will take a latter-day version of

General William Tecumseh Sherman's Union Army—this time, a red army—for blacks to march safely in Forsyth County. Sherman's march through Georgia broke the back of the Confederacy, liberating black people from chattel slavery. But the Radical Reconstruction of the South was betrayed in a deal between Northern capitalists and Southern Bourbons. The civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s was an attempt to complete the unfinished tasks of the Civil War: black equality and racial integration. Today, the limited and even the token gains won by the civil rights movement through mass struggle are being reversed and eroded.

Moreover, these gains rarely extended beyond some of the larger Southern cities. The "New South" extends about as far as the Atlanta city limits. Racist enclaves like Forsyth County will not be eliminated with pacifist illusions or reliance on the "good will" of racist capitalism. J.B. Stoner and his racist terrorists will be smashed by the united power of the black masses and racially integrated labor movement. A taste of that power was demonstrated in Washington, D.C. on 27 November 1982 when a 5,000-strong Spartacist-initiated labor/black mobilization stopped the Klan from marching through the nation's capital. That day the working people and black masses won and the racist scum were on the run. ■

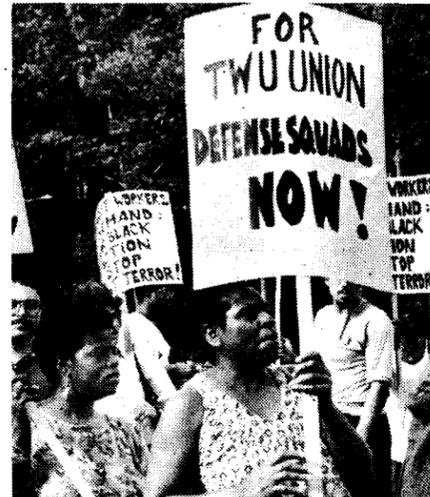
Union Power Must Crush the Racists!

Remember Willie Turks!

It took the racist murder of Michael Griffith in Howard Beach, Queens to put the name of another New York City lynch mob victim back into the news: black transit worker Willie Turks. A little after midnight on 22 June 1982, Turks and two fellow subway car maintainers, Dennis Dixon and Donald Cooper, finished their shifts at the Coney Island transit shop in the Gravesend section of south Brooklyn. They stopped off at a nearby bagel shop on Avenue X. As they got back into their car, the three black workers were surrounded by 15-20 white hoodlums brandishing sticks, baseball bats and bottles. Dixon, hit in the face and on the head by beer bottles, was felled but was able to scramble away. Bleeding profusely from a gash in his head he sought assistance from the cops, who of course did nothing. Cooper, a 200-pound ex-Marine, also managed to get away. But Turks, his arm in a cast, was dragged from the car, clubbed and left on a sewer to die, his skull crushed and his face

beaten in.

Gravesend like Howard Beach is a notorious racist enclave. One year earlier in front of the very same Avenue X bagel shop a racist gang had attacked Roscoe Fountain, a black Housing Authority cop who saved his life only because he was armed. On 17 April 1982, a racist mob set upon Frank Tyrrell when he left the bagel shop shortly after midnight. Tyrrell spent several days in the hospital in a coma (*Newsday*, 23 June 1986). But Gravesend also contains the large transit repair shop and adjacent Marlboro black housing project. In response to the lynch mob murder of their union brother Willie Turks, militant transit workers of the Committee for a Fighting TWU called on their Transport Workers Union Local 100 to mobilize its 37,000-strong membership in a determined show of integrated labor power. They called for dispatching squads of flatbed trucks filled with TWU brothers and sisters to ensure the safety of *all* working



WV Photo

TWU militants demand union action to smash lynch mob terror, denounce acquittal of gang leader in killing of Willie Turks, July 1983.

people in the streets of Gravesend.

But then-president of Local 100, John Lawe, his flunkies and his loyal "opposition" around Arnold Cherry, worked overtime to sabotage the call for a TWU mobilization in Gravesend. Lawe even got on black radio station WBLS to complain that such anti-racist labor action would "disturb our good relations with management." Cherry issued a dirty red-baiting leaflet entitled "Turks' Killing Not Just a Racial Issue" which not only denounced a union mobilization but also attacked the Committee's support for the right of armed self-defense.

The black Democrats together with black demagogue Herbert Daughtry and that recruiter for the CIA/South African mercenaries in Angola, CORE head Roy Innis, staged small impotent marches in Gravesend along streets lined with larger numbers of white racists screaming racist epithets. Lawe even hailed the Innis-led march for "stabilizing" the community. In fact, these stunts were displays of weakness which only provoked more racist violence, leaving the black residents and workers in Gravesend to face the

inflamed racist thugs and cops.

As with Howard Beach, over the Gravesend murder of Willie Turks the pro-Democratic TWU bureaucrats relied on the bosses' courts for "justice." Most of the lynch mob murderers of Willie Turks never stood trial; the others were given a slap on the wrists. None were charged with murder, including Gino Bova, the club-wielding scum who bashed in Turks' skull. Paul Mormando, who dragged Turks out of the car and held him while Bova committed racist murder, was convicted of *mis-demeanor* charges. A militant integrated demonstration called by Local 100 members to protest the racist acquittal of Mormando in July 1983 at the Brooklyn Supreme Court drew one hundred transit workers and supporters.

It was the Brooklyn D.A.'s office of liberal Democrat Liz Holtzman that gave the racist killers of Willie Turks the kid glove treatment and turned them loose to kill again. Last year Holtzman dragged black transit clerk James Grimes through the courts for four months, seriously aggravating his already ill health, for defending his life with a gun against a murderous attack by three muggers while he was on the job. Backed up by the persistent mobilization of fellow transit workers in spite of the sabotage of the TWU bureaucracy, Grimes was able to defeat every charge including a gun rap.

This victory assisted black transit worker Austin Weekes, who was arrested at Transit Authority headquarters last September for an act of armed self-defense six years ago against two racist punks on the run from beating to death a Hispanic man in Brooklyn. Though all charges were dismissed against Weekes the TA fired him while the TWU bureaucracy did nothing. Austin Weekes and James Grimes are alive today because they exercised their right to armed self-defense. Gun control kills blacks!

The pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy is selling out our livelihoods and our very lives to the profit-hungry bosses and the murderous racist mobs. If the TWU had defended its own and all working people with a demonstration of integrated labor power after the murder of Brother Turks, his racist killers would not be back on the streets to kill again. That kind of demonstration would have been felt throughout the city and country, and 23-year-old black construction worker Michael Griffith would be with us today. ■

Spartacist Forum

Racist Lynching in Howard Beach For Labor/Black Defense To Stop Racist Attacks!

Speakers:

Ed Kartsen

Spartacist League Central Committee
NY Labor Black League for Social Defense
1985 Spartacist candidate for
Manhattan Borough President

Marjorie Stamberg

Spartacist League Central Committee
1985 Spartacist candidate for Mayor

Richard Dundy

Partisan Defense Committee,
New York representative

Friday, January 23, 7:30 p.m.

P.S. 41 Auditorium, 116 W. 11th St. (at 6th Ave.)

For more information: (212) 267-1025

NYC Transit Militants Demand:

Labor Must Mobilize to Stop Lynch Mob Terrorists!

In response to the Howard Beach lynch mob murder of Michael Griffith, militants in New York City's 37,000-member Transport Workers Union Local 100, the Committee for a Fighting TWU, issued the following leaflet on December 24:

Last Saturday a racist rampage took place in Howard Beach. Blacks, Hispanics and a white fireman were attacked. Michael Griffith was brutally killed as a result of the attack on three black men. This was an act of racist terror and it demands a response of militant protest

from all the working people of this city. Racist murder must be stopped! And the cops from the "Stun Gun" Precinct won't stop it! Koch's cops carry out their own brand of terror from the Bronx to the 106th Precinct.

Remember Eleanor Bumpurs? Remember Michael Stewart? These were victims of Koch's racist cops. If Michael Griffith had a gun at least he might be alive today. But he might also be in jail. The anti-gun laws are killing black people! The victims of racist terror are made out to be criminals if they take any measures of self-defense. The liberal

anti-gun laws are used to keep decent citizens helpless in the face of racist mob terror.

The Democratic Party and the liberal left are exploiting the Goetz case in order to strengthen the anti-gun laws. By doing this they ensure that racist killer cops like Sullivan are the only ones who are armed. The racist right-wingers also used the Goetz case for their own ends to inflame vigilantism. But the James Grimes case was a clear cut case of armed self-defense. This case was backed up by a mobilization of transit workers which resulted in his acquittal of all charges including the one of gun possession. If James Grimes didn't have a gun he wouldn't be alive today.

Transit workers, remember the brutal racist murder of brother Willie Turks in Coney Island! We also must remember the burning deaths of token booth clerks at the Broad Channel station. Hundreds of flat-bed trucks filled with black,

white, and Hispanic union members in an organized caravan is what is needed to get the point across to the punks who killed Michael Griffith and who terrorize innocent people every day. These punks should remember who Benito Mussolini was and what happened to him.

The following motion should be passed by every division in this union committed to halting the race-hating killers:

THE TWU MUST take the lead in mobilizing NYC labor in staging a powerful demonstration of opposition to and hatred of the racist killers throughout this city, taking the form of a caravan of flat-bed trucks filled with integrated union defense squads, to patrol Howard Beach to ensure that this neighborhood is safe for all working people.

COMMITTEE FOR
A FIGHTING TWU

Howard Beach...

(continued from page 1)

prevented "if members of the deceased's family had complied with their family obligations," angry black protesters in the gallery erupted with booing, hissing and shouts of "liar!" and "cover-up!" In fact, the family tried to pay \$180, half the back rent, but the city refused to take it! A former housing authority employee testified that "partial payment" was unacceptable and so the killer SWAT team was dispatched.

In this farce of a trial, Sullivan is charged only with second-degree manslaughter. In the first moments on the opening day, Judge Fred Eggert granted the motion of Sullivan's lawyer, Bruce Smirly, for a non-jury trial for his client. The cop lawyer explained, "The average lay person might find it difficult to understand why the police were there in the first place, and why a shotgun was employed" (*New York Times*, 12 January). You bet—they'd be hard put to find 12 honest people in this city who believe that the cops had to shoot the infirm black grandmother because she was a "threat" to the professional killers in blue who stormed into her home. Now the defense and "prosecutor" debate whether, after cop Sullivan's first blast blew off her hand, the "second shot" to her chest was "necessary." What about the first shot?! Both sides in this "trial" represent the capitalist state,

Bronx State Supreme Court, January 12: Spartacists demand labor/black mobilizations to smash racist terror.



dered, NYC's Number One racist pig, Ed Koch, compared the killing to a lynching in the Deep South. But the deadliest gang of racist killers in "Up South" New York is Koch's 30,000-strong NYPD. From Sullivan to the transit cops who killed black artist Michael Stewart, to the Ozone Park 106th Precinct (covering Howard Beach) which uses 5,000-volt "stun guns" on black youth, the police are on a murderous rampage. Ten thousand armed cops surrounded the Bronx courthouse when D.A. Mario Merola indicted Sullivan. As for Queens D.A. Santucci, it turns out he and the head of the police intelligence squad Peter Prezioso had a 14-hour lunch with reputed mob death-squad chief Sal Reale, described by the *Daily News* (18 January) as "president of the Roma Detective Agency—a firm depicted in an investigative report as a

Koch for calling this racist murder a lynching, and his advisers said Santucci should have compelled Grimes and Sandiford to testify "by threatening to jail" the victims. A political alliance was forged over Michael Griffith's dead body. The *Amsterdam News* (17 January) editorial summed it up, saying "Cuomo acted presidentially."

Meanwhile, Koch—who was Jew-baited in predominantly Italian American Howard Beach—is trying to resolidify his white ethnic constituency by branding black youth as dangerous criminals. In an op-ed article in the *New York Times* (19 January), Koch disgustingly empathizes with the racist mob:

"We cannot avoid the fact that crime in New York City is disproportionately committed by young men who are black.... A black man walking into an all-white neighborhood may be suspected by some white residents of being up to no good."

That's exactly the line of the Howard Beach lynchers.

So the city's black Democratic politicians are debating over which racist politician's pocket they're going to be in. Machine politicians like Congressmen Charles Rangel and Floyd Flake along with demagogue Rev. Herbert Daughtry troop to City Hall to sing "We Shall Overcome" with Koch. The pro-Cuomo crowd have replaced calls for boycotting pizza shops by the demand, raised by Democratic state assemblyman Roger Green, for a boycott of all white-owned businesses on January 21. "Black folks don't buy and die where you can't live and work," is the slogan for the boycott action. This is a call for blacks to stay in the ghetto: the KKK would love it! Whether they're pushing anti-Jewish, anti-Arab or anti-Italian boycotts or "buy black" capitalist schemes, it's all bourgeois ethnic politics, which diverts into race war the struggle against the racist capitalist system.

Since he's in Cuomo's camp, Jesse Jackson first came out against the boycott, then endorsed the January 21 march after grumbling from local black Democrats. The "point of tension" he said, should "be the White House." He doesn't mean mobilizing blacks and labor to bring down Reagan, but "vote

Democratic in '88." Channeling black outrage back into the kept confines of bourgeois politics is Jesse's specialty. In 1983 he told 10,000 black workers and youth who were marching in Norfolk to defend school busing that "I am not marching for desegregation, I am marching for the voter registration booth." Black protest was defused, school integration in Norfolk was killed, and Jackson hustled votes for Fritz Mondale and Geraldine ("No to forced busing") Ferraro.

What's needed is a fight to break with the racist Democratic Party, the main vehicle tying the black masses to their capitalist oppressors, and to forge a multiracial revolutionary workers party! The key to smashing lynch mob terror is mobilizing the powerful, integrated city unions to drive the racist killers back into their holes. That also requires a political struggle in the unions to oust the labor fakers.

NYC's labor tops, needless to say, have done nothing to answer the Howard Beach murder. A "trade union press conference" January 9, brokered by Workers World/All People's Congress, was nothing but hot air. A *Workers Vanguard* reporter pointed to the call by transit militants for integrated union defense squads to go out to areas like Howard Beach. She asked what concrete actions the January 9 meeting was planning. "It is not for us to lead the struggle against racism," responded Greyhound/ATU Local president Harold Mendlowitz. Certainly there won't be any leadership from these bureaucrats and their reformist hangers-on. In transit, at a section meeting of the 207th Street repair yard January 15 when supporters of the Committee for a Fighting TWU, in Local 100, put up their proposals for integrated union defense guards, a supporter of the dubious Workers League, G. Nebbia, echoing the racists, called the proposal a "provocation." This was the same slander they raised in November 1982 when a Spartacist-initiated 5,000-strong labor/black mobilization stopped the KKK cold in Washington, D.C.

In the wake of Howard Beach, the ominous climate of racist terror hangs over the city, as incidents continue to mount. And it's everywhere. As Martin Luther King Day was celebrated, the Urban League 1987 *State of Black America* report concludes that blacks are "besieged by the resurgence of raw racism, persistent economic depression, and the continued erosion of past gains." A vicious attack on Klan marchers in Forsyth, Georgia dramatically underlined this point. The only force which can turn back this rising tide of racist terror is the racially integrated labor movement. The ghetto must be linked to the labor movement. No reliance on the cops, courts and capitalist parties. For workers revolution to sweep away the lynch mobs once and for all! ■



Pescatore/NY Daily News



Higgins/NY Times

Democrats' "special prosecutor" scheme announced by Gov. Cuomo (left). Lawyers for Howard Beach victims (right, conferring with Rev. Daughtry) seek to pressure Democrats.

nobody speaks for Eleanor Bumpurs. Outside the courtroom January 12, supporters of the Spartacist League and Labor Black League for Social Defense were protesting, with placards demanding "Jail Killer Cop Sullivan! Vengeance for Eleanor Bumpurs!" and "Remember Michael Griffith, Willie Turks! Gun Control Kills Blacks!" A transit militant carried the sign "Labor Must Mobilize to Stop Lynch Mob Terrorists!" SL posters also demanded "Break with the Democrats! Build a Workers Party!" and "Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!"

When Michael Griffith was mur-

haven for rogue cops who performed contract killings."

On January 13, Mario Cuomo announced the appointment of special prosecutor Charles Hynes to handle the Howard Beach killing. The *New York Times* (15 January) reported that a six-hour session between the governor and the black Democratic pols also produced a vague agreement for "a mechanism for expediting requests for special prosecutors." The price was agreement by lawyers Mason and Maddox to cooperate with Hynes. They asked for it, they got it—but it doesn't spell justice for black people. Cuomo denounced

Shuttlegate: More Grisly Revelations

Blood of Challenger Crew on Reagan's Hands

With Reagan in trouble, the plan of both major parties is to "save" the holy office of the imperial presidency with a limited investigation into the blown Iran/Contra operation, in which only expendable subordinates will be sacrificed. But the demise of the president's "credibility" sets off a process which is not that easy to control. Light has inadvertently been cast on other White House skeletons, such as last January's explosion of the space shuttle Challenger. After the explosion, the administration knew it had to face a certain amount of heat over NASA's bureaucratic unconcern for safety. Yet with the cooperation of the most "responsible" and "sober" of the bourgeois press it hoped to keep the lid on the key question of the role of the White House in the fatal rush to launch. And it worked... for a while.

Last June, the presidentially appointed Rogers Commission, charged with investigating the Challenger disaster, issued a whitewash report whose main function was to absolve top-level officials of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and, most importantly, the White House itself. The higher-ups were supposedly "unaware" of the swirling controversy over the faulty O-ring booster rocket seals which were ultimately blamed for the disaster. In recent months NASA has been given a cosmetic management "reform." But "Shuttlegate" doggedly haunts the Reaganauts,



White House chief of staff Donald Regan.

for whom the tragedy of Challenger was not that seven human beings were killed, but that the "Star Wars" nuclear first-strike schemes were checked.

A recent *New York Times* (21 December 1986) exposé revealed that "Top NASA Aides Knew of Shuttle Flaw in '84," including then-associate director Lt. Gen. James A. Abrahamson, who now heads Reagan's "Star Wars" project. NASA had even developed a fix for the O-rings, and components were actually in production at the time of the disaster. But the bureaucrats did not want to delay launches for mere safety. The 7 December *Times* revealed that the fatal flaw in the rocket built by the Utah-based Thiokol company was recognized as far back as 1973, when a competing bidder wrote that the reliability of the O-ring was "largely a matter of faith." "The only reason we selected that terrible design to begin with was that [then-NASA chief James] Fletcher was a



Halstead/Time

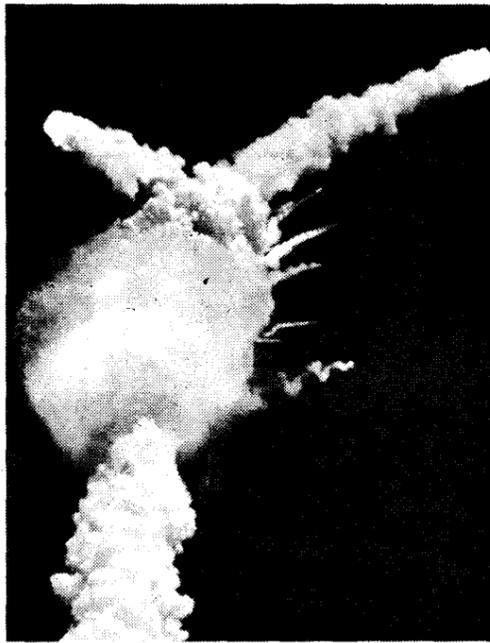
Mormon and from Utah," insisted retired NASA engineer William C. Bush. Fletcher was recently reappointed by Reagan as head of the space agency.

Additional evidence of a massive cover-up has been brought by former NASA budget analyst Richard Cook, who after talking with rocket engineers had prophetically warned back in 1985 that "failure [of the seal] during launch would certainly be catastrophic." In an article in the November 1986 issue of *Washington Monthly*, Cook revealed how NASA broke previously iron-clad precedents on January 28. "For the first time in the history of the shuttle, Thiokol had to prove why NASA should *not* launch, rather than why it should." The night before launching, Thiokol engineers on the spot bravely refused to authorize an unprecedented launch in the dangerous sub-freezing temperatures, but they were overruled. When the ice team went out to inspect the launch pad that fateful Tuesday morning, they found enough dangerous icicles hanging on the service tower that the team leader radioed back to the firing room: "I'd say the only choice you've got today is not to go" (*New York Times*, 5 November). But they went.

On October 30 Cook submitted a letter to Attorney General Meese, demanding a special prosecutor on the shuttle affair and charging that "crimes may have been committed by high government officials in covering up the reasons" for the reckless launch. Needless to say, Meese sat on it, and the media ignored it.

"Get That Thing Up!"

Cook points to accumulating evidence of direct White House pressure to launch the Challenger in time for Reagan's scheduled State of the Union address on Tuesday, January 28. He noted there was a "peculiar cancellation of the scheduled Challenger launch the preceding Sunday" when a bad weather



28 January 1986: Seven astronauts blown to bits in the reckless rush to get them aloft for Reagan's State of the Union address.

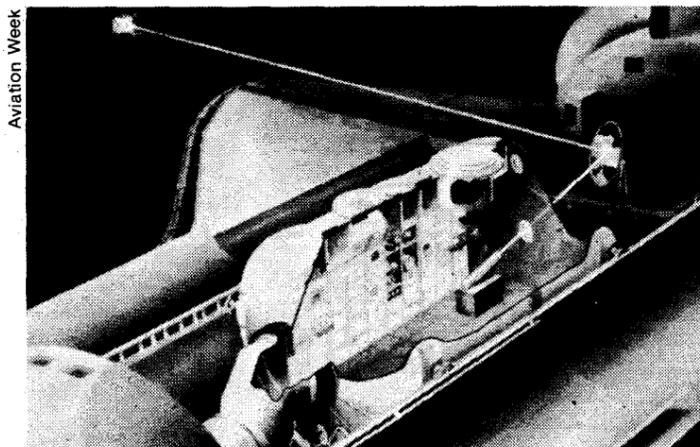
forecast came in. "Here again NASA followed a procedure unprecedented in its history" by scrubbing the mission before the spacecraft had even been fueled up. Loading and unloading the fuel takes time and, for safety reasons, can be done no more than twice in a 48-hour period. "So, by canceling the launch on Saturday before they had fueled up, they increased the chances that the shuttle would be in the air by Tuesday night, when Reagan delivered the state of the union address."

Who could miss the timing of the Challenger launch—only hours before Reagan was scheduled to give his State of the Union address on nationwide TV? As we wrote shortly after the disaster:

"Unable to talk directly with god in real-time, the Great Communicator would do the next best thing, speaking to the heavens by sending greetings to Christa McAuliffe aboard the space shuttle Challenger. So the shuttle *had to be* launched by the 28th—the weather be damned..."

—"Challenger Blows Up in Reagan's Face," *WV* No. 397, 14 February 1986

Rumors were rampant in Washington afterward of a White House connection. Word was that Reagan's chief of staff Donald Regan had ordered the space agency to "get that thing up" (*Cable News Network*, 26 February 1986).



Drawing of plan for "Star Wars" laser system mounted on shuttle.

Democratic Senator Ernest Hollings and others began pushing for a Congressional investigation, and prepared to subpoena NASA telephone logs from the night before the launch to trace White House pressure. "There is a rumor circulating," said commentator Tom Braden on CNN's *Crossfire*, "that the president had arranged to put those people in space on the telephone in the middle of his State of the Union address which was planned... for that evening. Is that the reason why it was a hurry-up?"

But the story was spiked on orders from the Oval Office. White House press spokesman Larry Speakes berated reporters outside the hearing room of the Rogers Commission. "I'm tired of that story," he whined, "you've gotten it from your press colleagues, that's the most vicious and distorted rumor I have ever heard." Six months later, a *Los Angeles Times* (2 September) roundup on "Rumors as News" reported, "Most editors decided to continue investigating the story but not to print anything unless they either found confirmation or someone in a responsible position was willing to raise the issue on the record." In other words, the media would shut up unless they found some bigwig who would push the question... fat chance!

Take the White House phone logs: Congress had politely dropped the matter after the White House supposedly "investigated" its own phone logs and issued a terse statement concluding, according to the *New York Times* (4 April 1986), that "there was no evidence the communications [with NASA] entailed pressure on the launching schedule." In this farcical "investigation" by the culprits, Speakes was compelled to admit that "nine White House staff members had telephoned NASA in the eight days before the launching." Furthermore, only calls from the White House were scrutinized, omitting calls from NASA. Cook also noted that in response to a Congressional review the acting administrator of NASA, William Graham, "excluded any calls he had made during that weekend" before the launch! In a damning conclusion, Cook notes that the Rogers Commission "never interviewed anyone from the White House."

The "smoking gun" might be in the original text of Reagan's State of the Union address which was scrapped after the Challenger disaster (if it hasn't been shredded along with the Irangate documents, a copy might be found in Pat Buchanan's office). Robert Bowman, the retired colonel who ran the Air Force's space command under Jimmy Carter, noted:

"We know that Graham submitted a portion of the State of the Union message to White House speechwriters, we even know that Richard Cavoli, the student who had an experiment aboard the Challenger, was in the White House when the shuttle exploded. He was going to be paraded before the country that night as part of the State of the Union address, so the shuttle must have been a major part of the speech."

—*Guardian* [New York], 12 November 1986

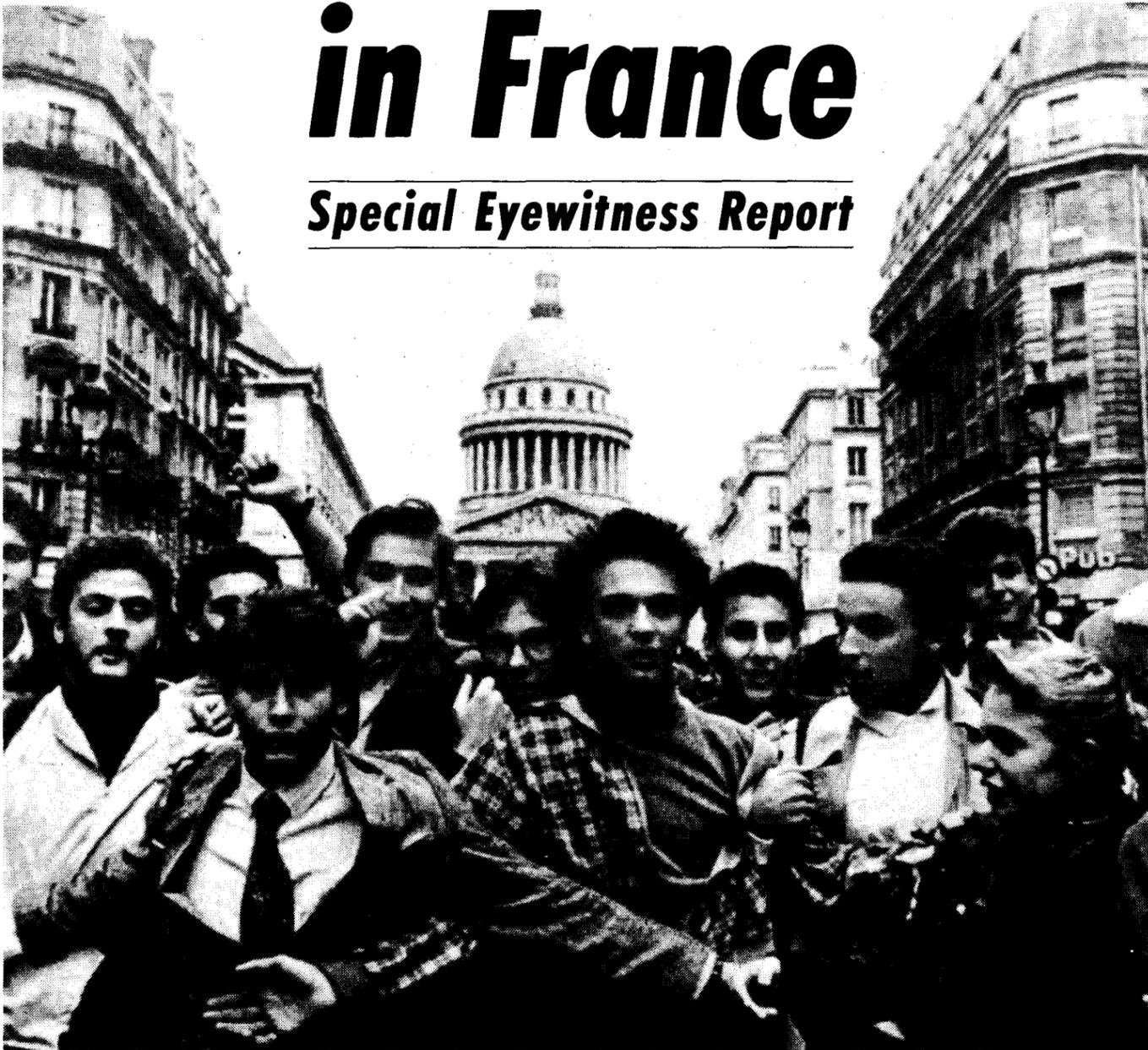
Cook and Bowman are counting on the backing of Senator Ernest Hollings, soon-to-be chairman of the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation

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Young Spartacus

With the Students in France

Special Eyewitness Report



Philipipot/Syigma

Paris, November 23: French students protest elitist "reform" of education system. Victory was wrested when labor flexed its muscles in strike action, forcing the government to back down.

Last month a young comrade asked for advice on what she should do with three weeks' unanticipated vacation. Senior comrades suggested: France. Massive student demonstrations were taking place, sparked by the French government's proposal for an elitist educational "reform." The Ligue Trotskyiste de France (LTF), French section of the international Spartacist tendency, was intervening actively. And so our American comrade went to

France. She kept a journal, and upon returning wrote this eyewitness report.

by Carla Darcy

Riding the train in from Brussels, I got my first taste of France in a state of crisis. I was just about to doze off when a team of three frontier police began making the rounds, demanding passports and visas. With hundreds of thousands of students in the streets

protesting the elitist educational "reform" of President Mitterrand and Prime Minister Chirac, all but a few of the CRS cops, paramilitary riot police, were in Paris. The remainder were prowling the borders of France.

A few days earlier, Chirac and Pasqua (minister of justice) had denounced the student revolt in an anti-communist, racist attack against "foreign agitators." It was pretty scary for me, as a black woman Spartacist from the U.S., when

the police seized my passport and told me I would have to leave the train to get a visa in Mons, Belgium. It was all part of the "war against terrorism" initiated since the senseless Paris bombings last fall—"anti-terrorism" being the code word for an accelerated program of racist attacks to reinforce the segregation of the immigrant population of France.

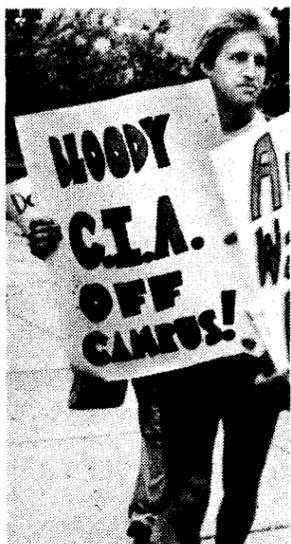
"You are lucky to be an American," an Arab passenger told me. "Usually they just take you and put you back on the plane." It was the first time I ever thought myself "lucky" to be an American. I got a visa in Mons, got back on the train and watched as the police came through again, guns in hand, pulling several others off the train, as we crossed the border into France.

That night I met my comrades in the Paris local of the Ligue Trotskyiste de France (LTF). I was not the only "foreigner" there. We were all there to witness and participate in the social struggles that were rocking France, particularly the student strikes. Would events follow the pattern from 1968, when student strikes spurred a workers' general strike and a prerevolutionary situation in France?

We were all waiting for the special supplement we were putting out on the planned strike called by the CGT and the CFDT (the Communist and social-democratic trade-union federations) union bureaucracy for the next day. In the meantime, comrades wanted to know about the Spartacist League/U.S. protests against the British Labour Party's (BLP) leading scab, Neil Kinnock, which I had been part of in Boston and Washington, D.C. With Kinnock's social democracy having shown its true colors by betraying the miners strike in Britain last year, we wanted to use this to illuminate the role of French social democracy and Socialist Party (PS) president Mitterrand, the Greenpeace bomber. One of the comrades of the Spartacist League of Britain told me that since we had held up our side of the work in the U.S., it was important that his section maintain a sustained fight against the labor traitors of the BLP in Britain.

In preparation for the mass protest the next day, we reviewed the events of the past week to get some idea of what to expect. In the last few days, the government had withdrawn the Devaquet (minister of higher education) education bill; the regime was forced to back down in the face of the CGT/CFDT union mobilization. The Stalinists in the

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Young Spartacus

Protests Hit Spy Recruitment

Hate the CIA, Hate Imperialism!

In a wave of demonstrations across the country, students have taken up struggle against the CIA, U.S. imperialism's "Murder, Inc." From Brown University to the University of Colorado, student protests have forced the

CIA to cancel scheduled interviews, relocate, or keep their cloak-and-dagger recruitment top secret. Every blow against the CIA's ability to recruit for its terrorist adventures

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Young Spartacus

Madison Spartacus Youth Club leads protest against CIA (above and left), September 22.

France...

(continued from page 7)

union bureaucracy had called for a day-long strike for Wednesday, after a student of Algerian descent, Malik Ousseki, was beaten to death by the racist *flics* (cops) of Mitterrand/Chirac. The bureaucrats would not have called a strike unless they had to, meaning that the struggles gripping France were spilling out of their control. On the campuses, the social-democratic student bureaucrats who were running the strike could no longer claim sole direction. The protests spread throughout France, with students painting graffiti, constructing barricades to defend themselves against the cops and the cops' fascist allies, holding general assemblies to debate which way forward, both in high schools and at the *fac*s (universities).

Early on, some of the students' frustration had been diverted into anti-Americanism, expressed in the slogan "No to the Coca-Cola Universities." The murder of Malik was the symbol of the kind of education students were getting on the streets of France, at the hands of Mitterrand/Chirac's vicious, racist cops. "*Malik est mort par coeur attaque. La cause: la matraque*" ("Malik is dead by a heart attack. The cause: a police club") read one spray-painted sign. And working-class parents were beginning to see the attack on the education of their children as an issue for the working class as a whole.

The LTF printed 20,000 supplements for distribution around the country. The front-page headline called for a general strike against the anti-worker, anti-immigrant and anti-youth attacks of the Mitterrand/Chirac government. "Forge a Bolshevik party! For a workers government!" We noted that the repeal of the Devaquet reform had been wrested from the government by the threat of workers' strikes. In stark contrast, the reformist tailors of the popular front in the union bureaucracy coined the slogan "*Plus jamais ça*" ("Never again") for the march. It was purposely ambiguous and counterposed to the order of the day. As we told people that day, "*La lutte continue!*" ("The struggle continues"), recalling the famous slogan of '68.

We were the only organization that sought to expose the role of Mitterrand in the politics of "cohabitation." The rest of the French left were tripping over each other, calling for "unity" against Chirac/Pasqua—all in an effort to build a new PS/PCF (Socialist Party/Communist Party) popular front. The popular front is an electoral alliance between the reformist workers parties and the parties of the bourgeois exploiters where the labor bureaucracy seeks to show its usefulness by betraying and constraining social struggles, suppressing any traces of an independent proletarian program. It was our staunch defense of the gains of the Russian October, our opposition to the popular front and its student bureaucrat clones, and our call for labor/minority mobili-

zations to defend immigrant areas against the fascists, that made us stand out as the bright red pole.

The morning of the daylong strike, I was at Nanterre, where the LTF was a student fraction that intervened actively during the strike. The university is known as Nanterre La Rouge (Red Nanterre) for the leading role it played in the student strikes of 1968. Our comrades there were fighting hard against the social-democratic leadership of the strike committees, against the narrow perspective of the student

Paris, December 10: Student demonstrators protest racist cop murder of Malik Ousseki and Abdel Benyahia.



bureaucrats who wanted to contain student outrage and direct it solely to opposing Devaquet's bill. Also, in spite of the vicious police assaults, students were still making a distinction between "good" police—the campus forces (who used tear gas on students at the Sorbonne)—and "bad" cops, the CRS riot police squads. And particularly early on during the strike, there was the students' suicidal notion that had to be combatted: the idea that the fascist thugs who attack immigrant areas and student demonstrations should be allowed to "debate." We maintained a hard line—no platform for fascists!—and fought to mobilize students against the fascist goon squads. We made a point of linking the firebombings of immigrant homes in Paris to the attacks by fascist gangs on student demonstrations.

In the general assemblies at Nanterre, where thousands met to debate the course of the strike, the student bureaucrats wanted to keep the discussions "apolitical"—a cover for the very real politics (pacifism, anti-communism and anti-Sovietism) of both the UNEF-ID (a student "union" tied to the PS) and the so-called "far left" of the fake-Trotskyist Lutte Ouvrière (LO) and the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR). The same forums that would allow the fascists to "debate" would try to exclude our comrades from speaking—all in the service of the anti-Soviet war drive. We sought to expand political debate to discuss the need to mobilize students and workers against the fascists, to fight the anti-immigrant policies of the government, to build our Bolshevik party that would link the struggles of students to the power of the working class in a fight for state power.

At the march we distributed 1,270 supplements. I met several groups of students from French-speaking Africa and other former French colonies, and many of them stopped and bought the supplement after seeing my "Stop Nazi/Klan Terror" button. A group of three Guadeloupians stopped and asked where I came from. I told them I was from the U.S. Spartacist League. They said, "We are from Guadeloupe, but we are French. But it is very difficult for us to get a job." I said yes, I know. You are French like I am American.

The main difference between the U.S. and France is the strength of social democracy and Stalinism, the presence of mass "workers" parties, the PS and

PCF. Both parties despicably capitulate to French chauvinism and patriotism, embracing the anti-immigrant hysteria. Racism in France is anti-Arab, anti-black, targeting much of the immigrant working class. It was not unusual for me to be waiting on the platform for the train from the immigrant area outside Paris where I stayed, and see a group of CRS cops harassing and brutalizing a black or Arab—demanding his papers, passport, employer's name, then throwing him on the train.

Our comrades in the LTF are known

for staunch opposition to the popular front. An older black African Stalinist approached me at the march, denouncing *Le Bolchévique* as "anti-working-class": "You didn't support Mitterrand in 1980. You don't support the popular front and neither do the capitalists." I said that while the capitalists may oppose the pop front from the right, and use it to mobilize right-wing reaction, we oppose it from the left, and fight for the independent power of labor. I wasn't really sure I understood everything he shouted back at me, but when I left him, an onlooker came after me and bought the supplement.

The march on Wednesday effectively signaled the final act of the student mobilization, but already it was clear that France was shaken. More than 600,000 people took to the streets of Paris that day, and it was a real high, a small glimpse of what Paris would look like in the midst of a political general strike, one that poses the question of working-class state power. One comrade remarked that three weeks earlier, the only Métro graffiti was the work of fascists. Now it was not unusual to find signs denouncing various government officials: "Pasqua's a fascist," etc.

In the aftermath of the student protests, we found students a bit disoriented and shaken—mainly because of the deaths and beatings suffered at the hands of the cops—following their first political experience. At a class given by the LTF on the strike in '68, one student had to ask whether or not a victory had really been achieved, although the government had withdrawn the bill; another said that the events had left her "confused." At the campuses I went to, many of the students had clearly been politicized, but didn't know what to do next, and had no idea where they would go to stop a government they had begun to realize was not their own. It reminded me of the anti-apartheid protests in the U.S. in the spring of 1985.

At the Sorbonne, two cops were posted at every entrance, a menacing reminder of the cop attacks two weeks earlier that had students constructing burning barricades in the nearby Quartier Latin. One student came up to me and asked if we really thought the student strike could lead to something more, like in '68. When he realized I was from the U.S. he asked, "Are you from the Black Panther Party?" I told him how the state had carried out an extermination campaign against the Pan-

thers. It struck me how few student activists in the U.S. would know who Cohn-Bendit (a leader of the May '68 student strike) is, and how much more politically advanced students in France are. When another student said that the strike at the Sorbonne had been started by a German friend of his, another student came up and said in English, "We are all German Jews," a rallying cry from '68 after the French state had German-baited and Jew-baited Cohn-Bendit. We ran into a few Lambertists who didn't know anything about their organization except that they supported Mitterrand and the pop front and we didn't, and a few students from LO who weren't buying their role in the "apolitical" strike leadership.

As with all situations, the Russian question was usually the immediate point of debate. Cohn-Bendit, known in '68 as "Danny the Red," now notoriously anti-communist and better known as "Danny the Yellow" (scab), showed up at Nanterre and wanted to debate the fascists. He then made a sinister equation between fascism and the far left, and attacked our comrades for defending Soviet troops in Afghanistan. As the audience tried to shout us down, we chanted "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" We defend the Soviet troops who are fighting CIA-backed Islamic reactionaries that skin schoolteachers alive for the "crime" of teaching girls to read.

Everywhere people were talking politics, even when they claimed to be "apolitical." At Tolbiac, a university inside the city, the protofascists of UNI were leafletting when we showed up, as though they were any other political group. They were born in opposition to the May '68 events, and are affiliated with the World Anti-Communist League. In the 1983-84 demonstrations over government support for private schools, they marched to the obscene racist chant "Throw Arabs into the Seine!" That day, they counseled students to return to "more serious matters." With vermin like these scampering about, the LTF spent much of the early part of the strike intervening against them, calling for mass mobilizations against the fascists.

Yet when we mentioned this to some of the students at Tolbiac, there was the



May '68: High school students take over school building in support of workers' general strike.

response of "we can just ignore them," not realizing that the fascists don't go away if you ignore them. It was in part a function of the strong pull of social democracy in France. One student came up to me and wanted to know why we called ourselves Spartacist, if we were Trotskyists. "Luxemburg wasn't a Leninist," he said. He was interested in the Luxemburg who fought Lenin, and not the Luxemburg who was betrayed by the social dems. Here was yet another reflection of the pervasive anti-Sovietism linking the PS and its left tailors.

Every so-called "left" outfit in France is trying to win a new generation of radicalized students to the old rot that is

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CHICAGO

CIA...

(continued from page 7)

around the world is a victory for the workers and peasants of all countries.

Local Spartacus Youth Clubs have won new members and supporters by initiating and participating in actions against the CIA at Oberlin, Madison and the University of Chicago. In a leaflet issued for a united-front protest last November at the University of Chicago, the Spartacus Youth Club called on students to drive "Murder, Inc." off campus:

"Whether they don pinstripes or battle fatigues, the CIA is the deadly enemy of every struggle for social progress anywhere in the world. In South Africa, while millions of black workers and students are battling apartheid slavery, the CIA helps the Botha government track down and murder ANC militants and other anti-racist fighters. In Nicaragua, where the worker and peasant masses have liberated themselves from the tyranny of the Somoza dictatorship, the CIA is training the contras to gun them down, while in Afghanistan they school the reactionary mullahs in opium agronomy and murder to protect their 'right' to keep 'their' women in veils. All those who are outraged by the CIA's crimes—students, faculty and campus workers—must unite to drive these killer spies off campus!...

"It was the CIA that fingered then-fugitive ANC leader Nelson Mandela in 1962, making possible his arrest and imprisonment by the apartheid police. A CIA agent lured Mandela to a meeting in the South African city of Durban: 'Instead of attending the meeting, the CIA man told the police exactly where and when the most hunted man in South Africa could be found' (Alexander Cockburn, *New York Times*, 13 October [1986])."

After a hot spring of anti-apartheid protests, many student radicals were questioning what to do next. Their central demand for divestment was co-opted by the bourgeoisie which sees South Africa as a risky investment. To maximize profits, universities and multinational corporations have been dropping South African holdings like hot potatoes—with no positive impact on the struggle for black freedom in South Africa. In contrast to the divestment "movement" which preached

social democracy. Often this was attempted by liquidating into front groups—an LO student was postering for LO and Tolbiac's Marxist-Movement group at the same time, as though they were the same. Strikingly, in most cases only the Ligue Trotskyiste de France distributed its newspaper and fought politically in its own name.

With the student strike over, everyone was immediately asking—would the workers now strike? One morning, as I was getting ready to go out the first answers came. The lights went out. I recall the headline of *Libération*, something like "Tout à coup la lumière coupée par sauvages." I thought it meant "Suddenly, the light cut off by savages." I learned later that *sauvage* is (very indicative) French for wildcat strike—the utility workers were using their power with a flick of a switch. The dock workers had already been out for a week, in a strike that was getting little attention. The next day, several Métro lines were shut down, and even the bourgeois journalists of Agence France-Presse weren't moving any copy. On Friday, it was announced that no trains would be running on Monday. With rail and dock workers on strike, the possibility for shutting down commerce for all of France was posed.

Meanwhile, students in Spain, Italy and Belgium were reportedly following the lead of students in France, protesting proposed educational "reforms" by

reliance on bloody U.S. imperialism to take action against its junior partner, South Africa, the anti-CIA protests are directly aimed against a terrorist arm of the U.S. government itself.

But single-issue protest campaigns, however militant, have historically ended up in the reformist dead end of pressuring the Democratic Party. What is urgently necessary is a *class understanding* of U.S. imperialism and its counterrevolutionary war aims. What links together the CIA's crimes, U.S. support to apartheid South Africa, racist terror and union-busting at home, and the "contra international" which the CIA finances and operates, is the *bipartisan* drive for war against the Soviet Union. Decaying U.S. imperialism sees the hand of the Soviet Union, homeland of the first successful proletarian revolution in history, behind every struggle of the oppressed, and sends its CIA dogs of war to crush it. An international party of the working class must be built to deal the deathblow to imperialism and finish the work the Bolshevik Revolution began by abolishing capitalist exploitation and establishing a planned economy and collectivized property.

The War At Home

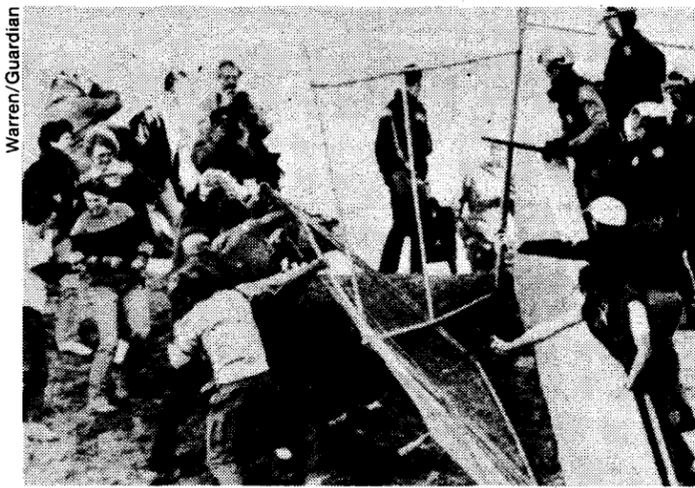
As campus administrators seek to make every college and university a loyal command post for the anti-Soviet war drive, they turn the cops and kangaroo "disciplinary courts" loose on student protest. Across the country, students are being "educated" by the business end of cops' nightsticks:

• At the University of Colorado at Boulder, site of two days of mass demonstrations and hundreds of arrests in the spring of 1985, the administration

"socialist" governments which apply restrictive entrance requirements. The demands for high quality education had inspired struggles throughout Europe, and there was an understanding that what was needed was working-class power, but as in '68, people were wondering under whose direction. The PS and PCF claimed to be socialist and communist. If that's socialism, many were saying, I'm not buying.



January 1984: Against popular-front illusions, French Trotskyists fight for working-class action to crush the fascist vermin.



Boulder, Colorado, November 17: Cops in riot gear attack anti-CIA protesters.

built a fence topped with barbed wire to keep protesters from disrupting the CIA's appearance this past November 17. Over a hundred riot gear clad state troopers, local and campus cops escorted potential imperialist spies into the recruitment center in vans, then turned on the anti-CIA demonstrators, spraying them with mace and arresting 15.

• Several days later at UMass Amherst, over 100 protesters occupied the university's public relations building to protest CIA recruitment. The sit-in included a delegation from Brown University and New Leftover Abbie Hoffman, who gave advice on how to wear handcuffs and raise bail as the cops closed in. Brown student Amy Carter, daughter of Jimmy Carter, joined the protest which was met with a heavy police presence, attack dogs and mace. Carter and others lay in front of a bus which was to haul other arrested demonstrators to jail and were themselves arrested. University officials "banned" Carter, Hoffman and 20 others from the campus.

• Most recently, at Rutgers, the cops arrested 19 of about 200 demonstrators, six of them brutally, "literally throwing people to the ground, pushing faces into the ground, twisting their arms behind their backs, kicking them in their legs, stepping on them and grabbing them by their hair and their ears" (*Daily Targum*, 5 December 1986). Drop the charges and rescind the bans against all anti-CIA protesters! CIA off campus!

Build a Workers Party!

For years during and after the anti-Vietnam War movement, the CIA and government agencies in general were *persona non grata* on campus, having

So the crisis of revolutionary leadership that Trotsky wrote about is posed all the more starkly now in France. While the bourgeoisie and its agents in the workers movement—social democrats and Stalinists—are trying to keep the lid on, rank-and-file workers are fed up, and there's a real chance to split the base from the top. Rail strikers were denounced by Mitterrand, who made it clear that he was no longer playing soft cop to Chirac's hard cop routine. The next day, two days before Christmas, the postal union went out, in solidarity with the rail strike. Mitterrand and the union bureaucracy ranted about the cruelty of such actions around Christmas time. But the French workers weren't flinching.

At the Gare du Nord, where many of the trains going to other parts of Europe are stationed, the rail workers were going out on the track by hundreds, putting themselves there to stop oncoming trains. When a train stopped a few feet away from one group, they decided that they would simply cut all electricity going to the tracks. No trains moving there!

It seemed that these strikes would last only until Christmas, but instead they gained momentum. The bourgeoisie is worried and it's showing. Mitterrand is busy trying to prove to the French bourgeoisie that he can play hardball against the strikers, while Le Pen, of the fascist National Front, denounces Chi-

been driven off by militant student protest. Now the CIA has embarked on a concerted effort to reconquer the campuses. But the memory of Vietnam still lives, and a lot of students are rejecting a "future" as cannon fodder for U.S. imperialism's bloody adventures. Even before the orders to invade Nicaragua are written out, the U.S. government faces an upsurge of student protest, so that today architects of mass murder like Jeane Kirkpatrick can't set foot on a college campus without stirring up a hornet's nest of protest.

On some campuses, anti-CIA protests have been met by College Republican and Moonie counterdemonstrators who perversely raise the banner of "free speech" on behalf of their CIA mentors. "Free speech"? That's pretty bizarre coming from the College Republicans, who mimic charity appeals with their "Save a Contra" campaign. "For only 52 cents a day..." you too can help buy bayonets to remove a fetus from the womb of a pregnant Nicaraguan mother. What the CIA is up to in Nicaragua is *murder*, not "speech"—and outraged students across the country understand this.

At Brown University, a referendum calling for Reagan's impeachment was defeated by only 19 votes last November. Students for Ethical Government, who sponsored the referendum, cited as main crimes of the Reagan administration the war in Nicaragua, the KAL 007 spy mission, and the terror bombing of Libya. The referendum concluded, "...we renounce Ronald Reagan's presidency. We no longer consider his power to be legitimate. We demand his impeachment."

Impeachment is not enough! The problem is not one dim bad actor but the whole capitalist system! The Democrats are no alternative—they line up behind Reagan and shovel his bullshit as fast as they can—from funding the mercenary contra scum to dishing out racist terror and union-busting at home. In order to change society, student struggles must be linked to the factory and the ghetto. We need a class-struggle workers party in this country and internationally, one that can lead the growing discontent of the working class into a struggle for *proletarian power*. The Spartacus Youth Clubs are fighting to win students to partisanship with the struggles of the working class and the oppressed to build this revolutionary workers party. Join us! ■

rac for his "capitulation" to the students. It is becoming more clear for rank-and-file workers that social democracy has nothing to offer the working class. When the next "reform," the racist Nationality Act, is addressed in April, the immigrant working population, perhaps some of the most combative in France, will likely become galvanized. And many are pro-Soviet, in spite of Stalinist betrayals, and are open to a Trotskyist defense of the USSR.

It was exciting to be in France with talk of '68 turning to action. The Spartacist tendency was only a small group in 1968, recently expelled from the bureaucratic, revisionist American SWP. Then, French workers smashed the New Left conception that the working class was "bought off," and a generation of American student youth, radicalized by the civil rights and antiwar movements, were made to recognize the power of the working class as *the* force for social change. Today, events in France gave me the opportunity to see not only a country gripped by social struggle, but also the importance of furthering revolutionary struggle here in the U.S. Both here and in France, it is the international Spartacist tendency, fighting to reforge the Fourth International, which can take the lessons of the past, apply them to the present crisis of decaying capitalist rule, and build a party which can take state power. ■

Red Sox "Fans" Riot Against Black Students Smash Racist Attacks At UMass Amherst!

Chants of "Red Sox, Red Sox!" became the battle cry of a racist mob of several hundred whites who savagely attacked black students at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst on October 27. It was the last night of the World Series, and a group expecting a Red Sox victory in the seventh game had bought firecrackers and cherry bombs to celebrate. When the Sox lost, up to *one thousand* whites poured into the school's southwest residential area known as the "Pyramids," and set upon a group of *twenty* black students.

According to witnesses, white NY Mets fans were also out at the Pyramids, many of them chanting "Red Sox suck." But as one black student interviewed by *Young Spartacus* said, "Many of the people with me who were chanting Mets were white, but it was only the blacks who they went after." Steven Jones, a UMass junior, told our reporter that white students were chanting as they approached the black students. "One of the persons I was with said he liked the Mets and they pushed him to the ground. At that point they started to fight and other people joined in. One of them said, 'We're going to beat up all you n-----s.'"

Screaming racial insults, the white mob attempted to surround the black students and then chased them into the nearby Crampton dormitory. Yancey



Usin/Springfield Newspapers

Amherst, October 28: UMass students protest racist mob attack which left Yancey Robinson (right) in neck brace and crutches.



Jennifer Dempsey

escalating today. The connection between Boston and the racist riot at Amherst was not lost on Lester Williams, a black UMass junior from Boston's heavily black and Hispanic Field's Corner neighborhood, and a Red Sox fan until the seventh game of the World Series. On that night, black Red Sox pitcher Dennis "Oil Can" Boyd was scheduled to start—after a season of outrageous harassment, from repeated drug testing to frame-ups by the Chelsea cops. "Oil Can" never got to the mound even after Bruce Hurst, who started, was knocked out and a series of Sox pitchers went packing to the dugout. As Williams told *Young Spartacus*, "I know Boston is a racist city, but it compounded everything I had seen and experienced that night they decided not to let 'Oil Can' Boyd pitch. So for that game I became a Mets fan." Williams was also injured in the racist rampage at Amherst, but the real pain, he said, "was the mental and psychological damage, more than anything else."

Boston teams have long been seen as the "great white hope" of sports, but the background of escalating racial violence on the campus indicates that almost *anything* could have ignited this fight. Black students at UMass Amherst are a besieged minority of 500 out of a student population of nearly 20,000. Several black students received phone calls threatening rapes and beatings on that upcoming Halloween eve, known as "Devil's Night." Taking their cue from hooded KKK marauders, white bandits hoped that Halloween masks would prevent their crimes from being traced. UMass chancellor Joseph Duffey responded to these threats by outlawing masks on Halloween. Yet racist fraternity jocks awarded first prize in a costume contest to a white male wearing a Ku Klux Klan outfit and carrying a hangman's noose. Taking no chances, many black students left campus for that weekend.

The surge in racial harassment of black students is an ominous nationwide trend. Just next door to UMass at Smith College, a black woman senior from Memphis wrote a letter to the campus newspaper recounting a series of racial insults uttered by the genteel white ladies of this elite women's college. Two days later, someone spray-painted the message, "Quit complaining and get out," on the steps of the Mwangi Cultural Center, along with derogatory names for blacks, Hispanics and Asians. Racist incidents at other campuses in-

clude a cross-burning in front of a building designated for a black sorority in Alabama, and murderous attacks on anti-apartheid activists in symbolic shanties carried out by arsonists calling themselves the "Aryan Collegiates" in Texas, frat rats at Johns Hopkins, and sledgehammer-wielding right-wing scum from the *Dartmouth Review* crowd. A black cadet at South Carolina's military institution, The Citadel, awoke in the middle of the night to find five white cadets in Klan hoods burning a cross right in his room.

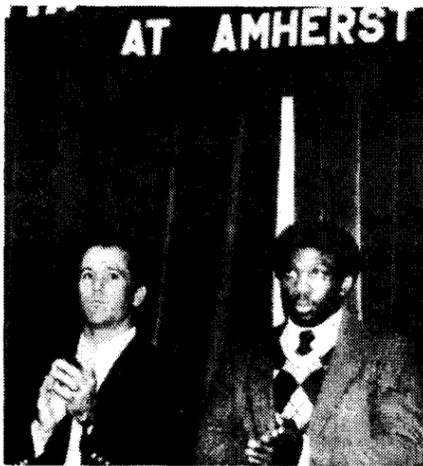
Then there's the more subtle racism which grinds down every minority person in this country but rarely makes the news because it's so "routine." The everyday "routine" for the few black students who get into the posher universities is unremitting cop harassment, demands that they produce identification because they "don't look like a Harvard student" or a "Yalie," while the inner-city schools are patrolled by more security guards than Macy's. And everywhere there's the demeaning "advice" from professors that minority students switch to "less demanding" majors.

All of this occurs in the context of a dramatic decline in black enrollment at the nation's universities as Reagan and the Democrats roll back busing, slash financial aid and throw black youth on the scrap heap. From the increased Klan activity in Northern cities like Chicago and throughout the South, to the racist massacre of Philly MOVE by black Democrat Wilson Goode, to the lynch mob murder of Michael Griffith in Howard Beach, Reagan and the Democrats have given a green light to race-hate terrorists. University administrators in the Amherst area soul-searched and argued that the "problem" was

"generational," that these racists were in diapers at the time of the civil rights movement. Indeed those scum who severely injured Yancey Robinson and nine other black students took their cues from today—and right from the top—from Reagan and Meese who are rolling back every hard-won gain of the civil rights movement and union struggles.

The day after the rampage at UMass, black students in the United Greek Forum, a group of fraternities, held an integrated rally and march of 300 to protest this vile racist attack. However, the central demand was for "increased awareness" sessions on racism and *more* campus cops. The administration arranged for Marty Barrett of the Red Sox and Mookie Wilson of the Mets to come to campus and discuss what happened. Even this liberal palliative backfired—the white Boston infielder was given a standing ovation while the black New York outfielder was booed. Psychological analysis of racist scum in close-contact "bull" sessions won't put an end to racism, any more than the cops who stood by as Yancey Robinson was beaten unconscious are going to defend the right of black students to get an education at UMass.

What's needed at UMass is united action to stop racist attacks. In 1981, the Spartacus Youth League initiated an emergency demonstration of 400 anti-racist militants at Amherst to mobilize against the anti-black and anti-gay attacks by a fascist group called UTOPIA. Militant students won to the Marxist program of revolutionary integrationism, and strategically allied with the social power of the working class; must take their place in smashing racist terror at its root—the capitalist system—in the fight for socialist revolution. ■



Carpenter/Boston Globe

NY Mets star Mookie Wilson (right) and Marty Barrett of Boston Red Sox speak at Amherst in wake of racist rampage.

Robinson, a black sophomore who had been studying, walked into the area, unaware of the racist rampage. Police grabbed Robinson for questioning. A group of white thugs then also grabbed Robinson, beating him to the ground. *The cops stood by and watched until Robinson was beaten unconscious.* Robinson suffered injuries to his neck, legs and abdomen requiring that he use crutches and wear a neck brace. The next day, Robinson phoned the police to identify his assailants and also reported threatening phone calls he had received. The cops made no arrests of the racist thugs but outrageously "followed through" on the phone threats by moving Robinson out of his own dorm room!

Though located in the green pastures of western Massachusetts, Amherst is not that far from Boston, where racist mobs mobilized to destroy busing for school integration over a decade ago, and where cross-burnings, racist attacks and murders of blacks and Asians are

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MADISON

Iran-Iraq...

(continued from page 16)

but the key to the liberation of the Iranian and Iraqi masses."

—"Iranian Left and the Test of War," *WV* No. 271, 2 January 1981

At the same time, it is the elementary duty of the international proletariat and defenders of democratic rights to come to the defense of oppressed national minorities, in particular the Kurdish people, who are up against an all-sided genocide in Iran, Iraq, Turkey and Syria. A 9 January press release of the Kurdish Democratic Party speaks of a "wide-scale barbaric attack" by Iraq on the Aqra and Shekhan districts, and appeals for medical care, food and clothing for the population of 40 villages forced to flee. For the right of the Kurds to self-determination! For a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan!

Reagan and Khomeini: Brothers Under the Skin

Asked how the Reagan administration's chaotic actions—of supplying weapons to Khomeini, providing covert assistance to émigré groups trying to overthrow Khomeini, slipping the ayatollahs' secret police names of Iranian Communists to be arrested and executed as Soviet agents, and feeding both sides in the Iran-Iraq war false intelligence—could add up to a policy, one former U.S. official ruefully remarked: "You had to have been there." Coherent or not, the Reaganites' covert arming of Iran has had an effect not only in Teheran and Baghdad, but also in Moscow where the Kremlin is now understandably tilting toward Iraq in response.

A recent Moscow statement on the war sharply denounced the provocative U.S. actions:

"Publicly stating its desire to see the end of the Iran-Iraq conflict, the United States in reality is fanning the flames of the war, provoking further bloodshed between the two neighboring countries.... Washington is trying to justify its political machinations and behind-

the-scenes arms deals by references to the so-called 'Soviet threat' to the Persian Gulf countries."

—*New York Times*, 12 January

So far, the ayatollahs' anti-American stance has prevented an open U.S.-Iran alliance, and Washington has maintained an ostensibly neutral posture in the war. But the character of the war may be shifting.

Behind Reagan's overtures to Khomeini is the bipartisan anti-Soviet war drive, and the desire to recruit the Islamic fanatics for an apocalyptic onslaught against what both the president and the ayatollah consider the Soviet "evil empire." This scheme wasn't simply the brainchild of Lt. Col. Oliver North and the Israelis. Two years ago *WV* quoted right-wing columnist Patrick Buchanan, now Reagan's official speechwriter, arguing for an alliance with Iran:

"Taking the long view, the U.S. has no strategic quarrel with Iran, and many concurrent interests.... Tehran's long-term interests lie in association with the U.S...."

"Second, if there are any pro-American elements silent now inside revolutionary Iran, they are likely in the officers corps, particularly the air force. How do we maintain these assets by shooting the tiny Iranian air force out of the sky?"

—*New York Post*, 31 May 1984

Buchanan fretted that "a military deba-



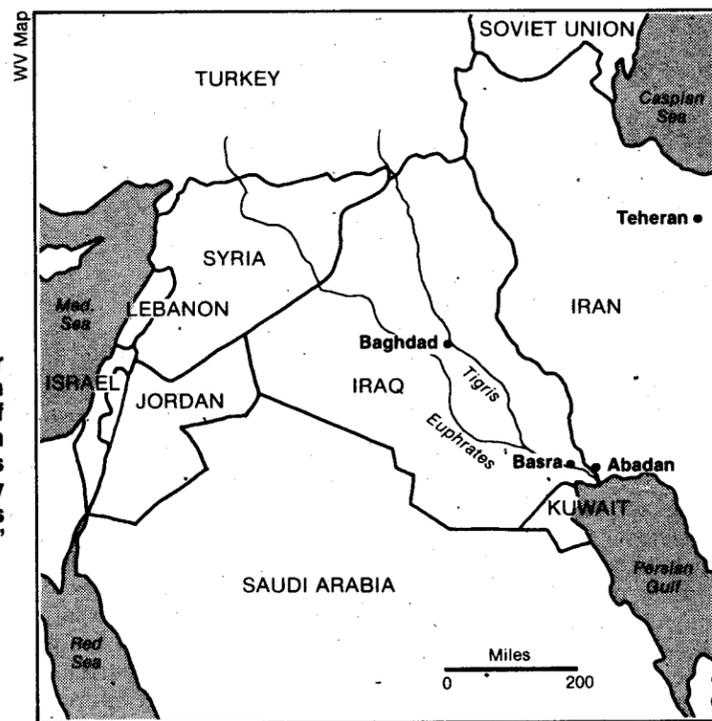
Wright/Miami News

and two of them were almost used up during that time.

Columnist William V. Shannon pointedly asked in *New York's Daily News* (8 August), "Did NASA also launch a coverup?" He wrote: "The timetable is instructive. By late March, the emergency air-packs had been recovered. NASA says it did not look at them until May 20 and it was not certain they had been used until June 27, three weeks after the Rogers report was released. Is this pace plausible?... I believe it [NASA] deliberately prolonged the search in the hope that the warm waters would decompose the bodies, making autopsies more difficult." Shannon concludes NASA was determined that the "truth would never become known."

The original space shuttle Columbia had ejection seats, but these were removed to save weight—NASA was trying to cram in a few more pounds of spy satellite for the Pentagon. Now they are belatedly designing a "shuttle crew escape system," but it will probably not be ready in time for the scheduled resumption of shuttle flights in 1988. Even when installed, this jerry-built "escape" system works only when the shuttle is stable, puts explosives in the crew cabin to blow out the entry hatch, requires climbing down a ladder and attaching a rocket to each astronaut, takes forever... and will not work during the first two minutes of flight, as in the Challenger disaster. Designing an escape system for the crucial first two minutes "would require enormous restructuring of the shuttle," said NASA engineer Arnold Aldrich (*New York Times*, 28 December), and that would mean another delay in deploying "Star Wars" in space. From the very beginning, the design

Iran-Iraq war in oil-rich Persian Gulf region, which U.S. threatens to hold by "any means necessary."



could bring about the dismemberment of Iran, with the Soviets moving in to pick up the pieces."

Furthermore, Washington's main ally in the Near East, Israel, has always supported Iran against Iraq, both under the Shah and Khomeini, on the principle that an enemy of an Arab country is a friend of the Zionist state. Doubtless the Persian mullahs cheered when the Israelis in a provocative act of international terrorism bombed an Iraqi nuclear reactor in 1981.

In his 1980 State of the Union address to Congress, President Jimmy Carter declared that "an attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America." He vowed to hold onto the oil-rich region by "any means necessary," including military force. It was made clear by "leaks" that this included the use of "tactical" nuclear weapons, and Carter created a 300,000-strong Rapid Deployment Force to back up his imperialist threat. Since then the U.S. has sent "pre-positioned" military sup-

plies into the Middle East for such an intervention. Exactly what event would trigger U.S. alarm bells has varied according to whoever was running the trigger-happy National Security Council. This week a report from the German magazine *Der Spiegel* claims that the U.S. is planning to intervene militarily if Basra is in danger of falling to the Iranians.

The Near East is a seething cauldron of nationalist conflicts and ever-shifting alliances which are inflamed by U.S. imperialism's drive to destroy the Soviet Union. In this sense the region resembles the Balkans before World War I, where a senseless act of nationalist terrorism set off four years of imperialist bloodletting. From the raging Iran-Iraq war to the Arab-Israel conflict, there is always the danger of escalation into a direct U.S.-Soviet military confrontation. The threat of nuclear holocaust, which could be triggered by some insane Near Eastern conflict, can be ended only when the imperialist warmongers are disarmed through international proletarian revolution. ■

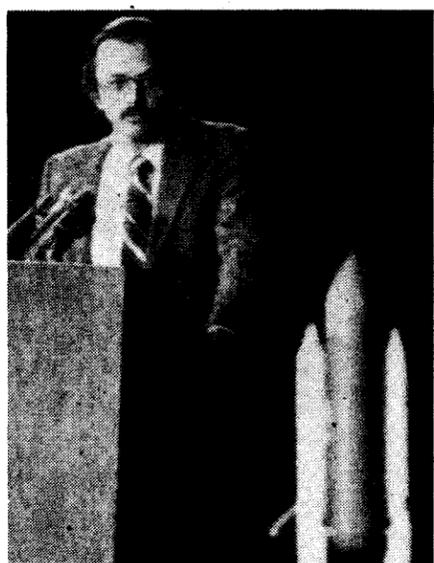
Challenger...

(continued from page 6)

Committee, to conduct a thorough investigation. This is pie in the sky.

"Uh-oh!"

As late as mid-July NASA had been insisting that the shuttle crew had died instantly and had no awareness of the disaster. But a couple of weeks later they were forced to release tapes of the crew's final words, where pilot Michael J. Smith remarks "Uh-oh" 73 seconds into the fatal flight. It took almost *three minutes* for the crew module to crash to earth after the explosion. Finally NASA admitted that at least three of the crew emergency air packs had been activated



New York Times

Richard C. Cook, former NASA employee, who warned of fatal flaw in rocket design.

of the shuttle was "dictated by military missions of the future" (*New York Times*, 21 December 1984), and in 1980 NASA and the "Defense" Department signed a deal giving priority to military cargo. Reagan's trillion-dollar scheme for a space weapons "shield" accelerated the military takeover of the shuttle, which is the prime U.S. space delivery vehicle. Now commercial payloads, once touted by Reagan as an example of successful privatization of government, have been dumped from the shuttle. According to *Aviation Week* (13 October 1986), "By 1993, according to the manifest, the space shuttle program will become almost entirely devoted to space station assembly and Defense Dept. space missions." And the \$13 billion space station has now been openly declared a military project by the Pentagon.

Christa McAuliffe and the rest of the Challenger crew were the first victims of Reagan's "Star Wars." In a grotesque symbolic reminder of this, NASA has buried the remains of the shuttle in an abandoned missile silo! The hectic schedule to "get that thing up" again is driven by the Pentagon's demand for C3I (command, control, communications and intelligence) satellites crucial to U.S. plans for "prevailing" in a nuclear first strike against the Soviets. Yet the spineless liberals in Congress, who support the bipartisan anti-Soviet war drive, will do nothing to stop Reagan's dangerous crackpot schemes. The fate of mankind depends on the timely intervention of the world proletariat, particularly American workers, to drive the war-crazy capitalist rulers from power before they send us all up in a giant Challenger fireball. ■

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Conragate Murder Plots...

(continued from page 1)

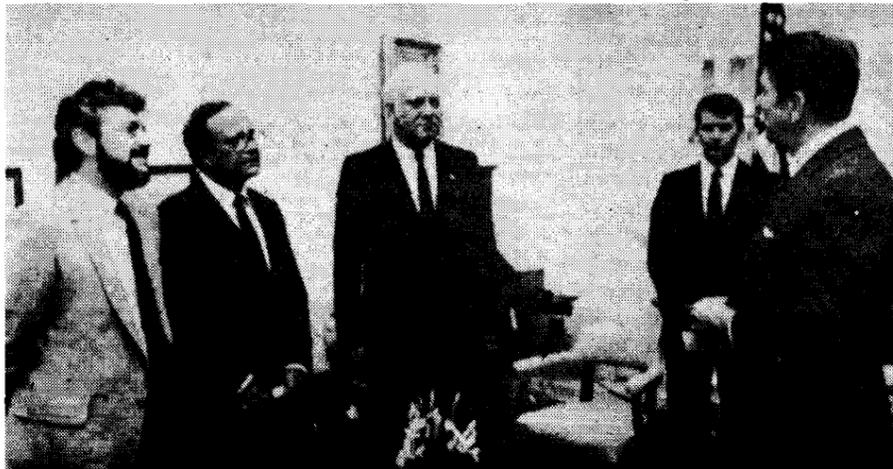
the government wants to keep the lid on this one, and how the antics of North, Poindexter & Co. link the Reagan administration to earlier CIA "dirty tricks" going back to Vietnam and before.

Guns, Drugs and Murder

American mercenaries and the contras: Sheehan's affidavit reports that in January 1984 a network reporter who had earlier visited contra training camps in Florida went to Tegucigalpa, Honduras to observe a meeting of American mercenaries that would "finalize specific plans for obtaining U.S. military equipment" for the contras. There he met Thomas Posey, head of "Civilian Material Assistance," a pro-contra mercenary outfit including members of various Southern National Guard units. One of the reporter's sources provided detailed information about the CMA obtaining allegedly "surplus" military equipment from the U.S. Army's 20th Special Forces Unit in Alabama and access to a "surplus" armed forces airplane in New Jersey to transport this materiel from the U.S. via El Salvador's Ilopango Air Base to the ranch of an American named John Hull in northern Costa Rica.

In 1982-83 millionaire rancher Hull had given over his land to the CIA to be used as staging areas for landing and off-loading weapons and ammunition to contra forces just over the border in Nicaragua. In June 1984 the reporter was introduced by Posey to Robert Owen, who declared he was "the personal representative to the Contras of Marine Corps Lt. Colonel Oliver North" of the National Security Council, and was acting as a go-between because the Congressional ban on aid to the contras (Boland Amendment) made it impossible for him to meet them directly. Owen said he was "taking orders" from the contra commanders for weapons and military equipment, and seeing to it that their orders were filled.

Drugs and terror—the attempted murder of Pastora: In San José, Costa Rica, journalists Avirgan and Honey, attempting to track down the authors of the Pastora assassination attempt, came across a Nicaraguan contra, "David," who was part of an "international brigade" of contras based on the Hull ranch. David told a mutual contact, Carlos Rojas, that the brigade "was directly involved in the trans-shipment of large quantities of Colombian cocaine from the airstrips on John Hull's farm." In May-June 1983, two Cuban Americans set up the drug operation, receiving cocaine from two of the biggest narcotics traffickers in Colombia, Jorge Ochoa and Pablo Escobar, and reshipping it to Miami, New Orleans and Memphis. Part of the income from this drug smuggling



Washington Post

Contra leaders (left) meet at White House with godfather Reagan and his henchman Oliver North, 1985. Victims (right) of contra terrorists.

operation went to finance military equipment, ammunition and explosives for the contras.

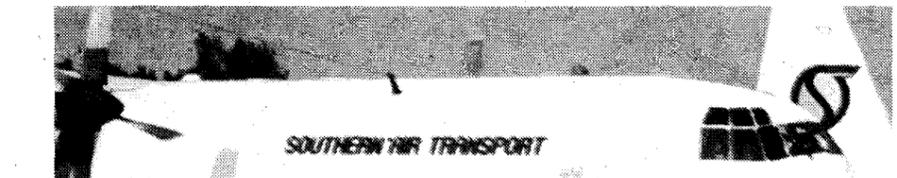
David informed Avirgan/Honey via Rojas that in 1983, contra leader Edén Pastora began to have difficulty with Hull and the CIA's man on the scene, Duane "Dewey" Clarridge, because of Pastora's refusal to merge with the Honduran FDN contras, led by former officers of Somoza's National Guard. According to the affidavit, the preliminary decision to assassinate Pastora was

The *New York Times* (1 June 1984) printed a story by Stephen Kinzer quoting Pastora as fingering the Nicaraguan government. However, according to the *San Francisco Bay Guardian* (3 December), "Pastora later told Avirgan and Honey that he had said no such thing. Instead... Pastora claimed he had blamed the CIA."

David was reportedly kidnapped, beaten and tortured to death and buried on Hull's ranch in 1985. Avirgan and Honey began receiving death threats to



Leonardo Barreto



DEA Cancellare/U.S. News & World Report

CIA-connected Southern Air Transport carries guns to contras, carries back drugs.

made in a series of meetings at the Hull ranch around January 1984. The hit man selected was Amac Galil, an anti-Qaddafi Libyan terrorist working at the time for the secret police of Chilean dictator Pinochet. Galil was paid \$50,000 for the job. In the bombing three journalists and five of Pastora's contras were killed and a dozen others wounded. The fact that the CIA will kill its "own" people if they get out of line—and Pastora was on the Company's payroll—shows the totally degenerate, gangster mentality of the men running this country.

The press accounts of the bombing were confused. According to Avirgan and Honey, several Washington reporters received tips from U.S. government sources pinning the blame on the Basque separatist group ETA, acting on behalf of the Sandinistas. ABC-TV, CNN and PBS reported that account.

"stop your investigation or be killed," and were provided armed guards by the Costa Rican government. Instead they published an 80-page document, "La Penca: Pastora, the Press and the CIA." Hull sued the journalists for libel in a Costa Rican court last year and lost. Pastora himself testified, and in a dramatic courtroom scene identified Hull as a CIA operative. After two days, the judge threw out Hull's suit and ruled that Avirgan and Honey were "totally absolved" of charges of defamation, slander and injury.

Drugs and terror—the plan to murder Ambassador Tambs: The most spectacular charge in the Avirgan/Honey suit was of a plot by the CIA-supervised contra brigade on Hull's ranch to assassinate the U.S. ambassador to Costa Rica.

"David told Carlos that [Colombian cocaine kingpin] Pablo Escobar had put a \$1,000,000 'bounty' on the head of U.S. Costa Rican Ambassador Lewis Tambs because Escobar was infuriated at the efforts made by Tambs, when Tambs was U.S. Ambassador to Colombia, to obtain an extradition treaty between Colombia and the U.S. which would allow the extradition of Escobar and other cocaine traffickers to the U.S. for prosecution for drug smuggling. David told Carlos that the bombing and the assassination of Tambs would be made to look like the work of the Sandinista government of Nicaragua—in an effort to instigate direct military action by the United States against Nicaragua—while the International Brigade collected the \$1 million bounty to aid them in their purchase of military equipment for use in their military effort against Nicaragua."

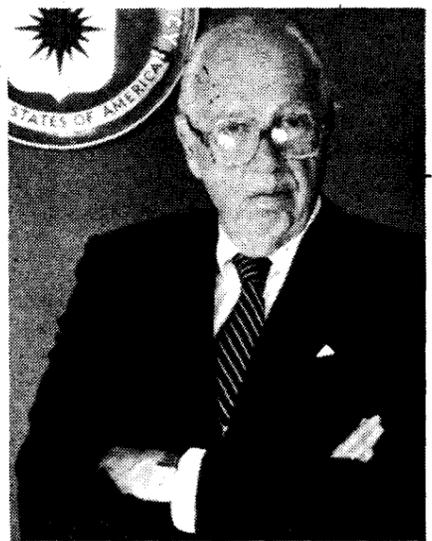
David was worried that he had gotten in over his head, and wanted out.

For many months, the Avirgan/Honey suit was the only account of the Tambs assassination plot: "it seemed

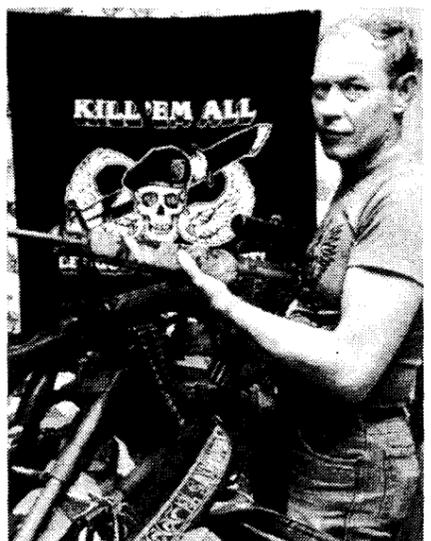
more like the far-fetched plot outline to a thriller set in Central America," wrote the *Los Angeles Times* (16 December), and the bourgeois media wouldn't touch it. But in the wake of the Iran/Contra revelations, new evidence has surfaced. John Mattes, an assistant public defender in Florida, made public a sworn affidavit from Jesús García, a former Dade County deputy sheriff, who said he had been working with Tom Posey's Civilian Material Assistance when, in February 1985 at a Howard Johnson's Motor Lodge in Miami, "They asked me to help bomb the U.S. Embassy to kill [U.S. ambassador] Tambs."

"At this meeting, Mr. [Sam] Hall presented a blueprint of the United States embassy and a schedule of the ambassador's daily activities," said García. But "I told Posey, no... I wasn't willing to hit an American. It was too dangerous." According to García, another participant in the meeting, Steven Carr, wrote to him a few months later in a letter that ended bitterly: "I'm an American all the way, but I stop at killing other Americans for the sake of CIA war games..." Carr, who had been speaking with Congressional investigators and feared he would be killed if forced to testify, died suddenly on December 13 violently convulsing on a driveway in Los Angeles. The police said it appeared to be a drug overdose. Sam Hall was captured that same weekend in Nicaragua at the Punta Huete military air base, carrying hand-sketched drawings of military installations in his socks.

All of these charges have been known to U.S. authorities for months, but according to the Sheehan affidavit, at least six different investigations have been aborted by the Reagan administration's Justice Department. An FBI investigation of Lt. Col. Oliver North and Robert Owen for violations of the Neutrality Act and the Boland Amendment was halted by Attorney General Edwin Meese in the fall of 1985. A DEA investigation of John Hull for narcotics trafficking was halted in the summer of 1985 after North learned of it. In March 1985 the U.S. attorney's staff in Miami was ordered by Meese to move "very, very, very slowly in the investigation" of arms smuggling to the contras from the



McNamee/Newsweek



Bell/Gamma-Liaison

CIA chief William Casey and merc Thomas Posey.

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WASHINGTON, D.C.

Free Speech on Trial at S.F. State

Guillermo Bermúdez, Spartacist activist, goes on trial January 21 in San Francisco municipal court for the "crime" of passing out a Marxist leaflet on the SF State campus. Bermúdez, a student at UC Berkeley and a former student at SF State, is charged with violating a South Africa-style ban slapped on him by the SFSU administration after he and other young Spartacist "Red Avengers" held a rally on campus two years ago to raise money for Nicaragua's defense against U.S. imperialism. On 16 November 1984, campus cops arrested Guillermo for breaking this ban by coming to campus and distributing leaflets. The police report described his

"motive" as: "to pass-out 'Spartacus' Nicaraguan support flyers."

The Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee fought for dismissal of the charges all the way to the California Supreme Court, which refused to review the case. The vendetta against Guillermo is aimed at intimidating and silencing all those who would protest the criminal policies of the U.S. government and its campus henchmen. It is part of a policy of pre-emptive strikes against campus protest that goes all the way to the Reagan/Meese White House. If this South Africa-style banning order is not beaten back, many more will follow. Several professors, such as

R.W. Major, lecturer for Black Studies, and Sam Wellbaum, lecturer for the Speech Department, along with Lamont A. Coleman, president of the Pan-African Student Union*, Melchor Ferrer, president of the Associated Students*, and Bill Insley of the California State Employees Association*, have endorsed Guillermo's case.

Funds are urgently needed for Guillermo's defense. Checks should be made payable/mailed to the Partisan Defense Committee, Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013, earmarked for Bermúdez defense. Defeat the South Africa-style ban! Defend Guillermo Bermúdez!

*Organization listed for identification purposes only.



Young Spartacus

Spartacist Guillermo Bermúdez defies ban at San Francisco State.

Fort Lauderdale airport.

In addition, an FBI investigation into the conspiracy to assassinate Ambassador Tambs was stopped by U.S. attorney Leon Kellner in Miami. A DEA investigation of contra cocaine smuggling by Francisco Chanes during 1984-85 was called off by the Justice Department's Drug Task Force. And last October, following the capture of American mercenary Eugene Hasenfus, shot down over southern Nicaragua while delivering arms to the contras, the Justice Department called off a Miami probe of the "private" contra aid network.

From Nicaragua to Vietnam

By courageously pursuing their investigations, Avirgan and Honey are helping to lift the curtain of secrecy over the government's deadly covert operations, in Central America and around the globe. Now others are coming forward with information. Sheehan has said he has the names of six civilian pilots who in exchange for immunity from prosecution will testify that they flew guns, ammo and C-4 explosives to Hull's ranch and then ferried cocaine back to the U.S. (*Daily News*, 31 December 1986).

The Avirgan/Honey suit traces the ties of many of those who are prominent today in the Iran/Contragate scandal back to the U.S.' dirty war in Indochina, where many of them first met. To a man, they or their close associates were active in various CIA and Pentagon "unconventional warfare" (terrorist) operations, including smuggling opium for the Vang Pao secret army in Laos and the Phoenix Project which assassinated some 60,000 Vietnamese. During 1966-68 a Special Operations Group was established in Vientiane, Laos headed by General John K. Singlaub. Air Wing Commander for the SOG was General "Heine" Aderholt. His deputy was Air Force General Richard Secord. One of the members of an Army Special Forces unit in the Group was Dwight Owen, older brother of Robert Owen. And "serving under Singlaub in Laos for a period at the end of 1968 was a young 2nd Lt. by the name of Oliver North."

Their CIA bosses during the Vietnam War are also involved in the current affair. The CIA chief of station in Laos during 1967-71 was Theodore Shackley; his deputy was Thomas Clines. From 1971 through 1973, Shackley and Clines were chief and deputy chief of the CIA's Western Hemisphere division in Washington, where they directed the "Track II" operations in Chile which resulted in the bloody Pinochet coup and the assassination of Salvador Allende. In 1974 and 1975, Shackley/Clines were in Saigon directing the Phoenix Project. Following the historic victory of the Vietnamese peasants and workers over American imperialism and its Saigon puppet regime, the defeated U.S. spies and assassins were dispersed. Several thousand members of the CIA's Opera-

tions Division were fired during a mass purge in 1977-78.

Shackley rose to become the Assistant Deputy Director of Operations, No. 2 in the CIA "dirty tricks" department. But he and his sidekick Clines were shunted out of The Company in 1979 as Carter's man Stansfield Turner tried to clean up the Edwin Wilson Libya mess. The Sheehan affidavit refers to a "Secret Team" of former high-ranking American CIA officials, former high-ranking U.S. military officials and Middle Eastern arms

appears to have been shed in a frenzy of back-stabbing in the U.S. intelligence community":

"Many intelligence veterans have long been upset about the White House's reliance on a highly covert, private-sector, paramilitary organization to carry out the secret arms deals with Iran and to supply and direct *contra* operations against Nicaragua. And they have been angered that CIA Director William J. Casey allowed the National Security Council to usurp the Central Intelligence Agency's role in secret operations: Intelligence pros...have responded by anonymously leaking—to



Sam Hall

Reuters



Lewis Tambs

New York Post



John Hull

Mullin/Insight

merchants—who also specialized in the performance of covert political assassinations of communists and 'enemies'...." When Congress formally prohibited direct or indirect U.S. military aid to the contras, this "Secret Team" was activated to fill the gap.

Crisis of the American Empire

There is a curious aspect to the Iran/Contragate affair: why did it surface? Just because some Lebanese weekly paper broke the Iranian arms deal? Certainly the spectacle of McFarlane & Co. sneaking into Teheran with Irish passports, bearing gifts of pearl-handled revolvers, a key-shaped cake and a Reagan bible, is mind-blowing. But pieces of this puzzle have been revealed before and they were always squelched. The affair went critical when the contra funds diversion was revealed: a blatant slap in the face of Congress. Yet it wasn't an enterprising investigative reporter that did it. To this day, in the heat of the biggest crisis of the Reagan administration, with Congress blowing hot and heavy and legions of journalists digging away, they still haven't tracked the Iran money to Central America.

So why did Ed Meese lift the lid, turning an awkward Iranscam into the Iran/Contragate crisis? Some very highly placed people are the only ones who had enough information to blow the cover. The Joint Chiefs of Staff are likely candidates: a Congressional source was quoted saying "the chiefs are getting ready to unload" with gripes over not being consulted on Iran arms shipments and Reagan's Reykjavik "disarmament" proposals (*Los Angeles Times*, 19 November 1986). Another powerful disgruntled sector is...the CIA. *Business Week* (29 December 1986) writes that if there's blood in the water over this affair, "much of it

the press and to private groups investigating *contra* aid—intricate details of three decades of the private operators' activities."

The American ruling class is seriously worried that their president has drifted off into never-never land. "Reagan's mental outlook and grasp of issues are of increasing concern on Capitol Hill," reports the *New York Times* (14 January). And conservative *Time* magazine (26 January) worried in print: "Has the President wandered so far out of

touch that he is losing his ability to govern the country?" He's taken to sending notes to the NSC, adorned with Alfred E. Newman "what me worry?" self-portraits, thanking this den of run-amok plotters "for all you do day in and day out for me and most importantly for our country." The neo-liberal neo-conservative *New Republic* declared the administration "Brain Dead."

The crisis of the imperial presidency is a crisis of the American empire. And from Franklin D. Roosevelt, who declared the first Somoza "our son of a bitch," to John F. Kennedy, who staged the Bay of Pigs fiasco and committed U.S. imperialism to the Vietnam War, Democratic presidents are right up there with Reagan when it comes to war crimes. And the Democratic Congress has voted funds for Reagan's contras, from Afghanistan and Cambodia to Angola and now (once again) Nicaragua. But the American people have no stomach for "another Vietnam" in Central America.

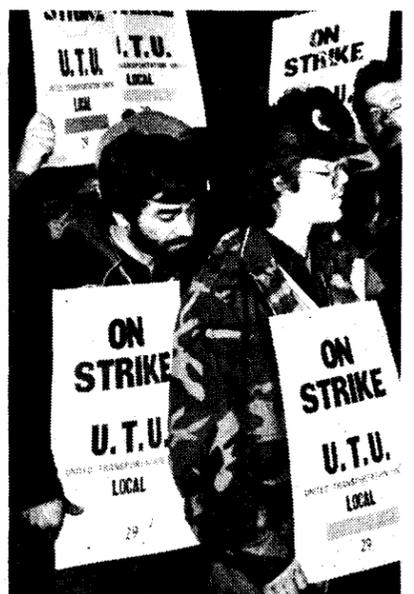
The Reagan administration resorts to a shadow CIA of privateers and mercenaries because of their difficulties in selling their war plans. This is a continuing legacy of U.S. imperialism's humiliating defeat in the rice paddies of Indochina, a defeat which continues to stay their bloody hand in Central America. But while the Vietnamese did their job in driving out the colonialists and imperialists, the nefarious activities of the Contragaters today are an expression of the fact that the American working people have not yet done their job in settling accounts with the imperialist war criminals once and for all. ■

Victory to the LIRR Strike!

JANUARY 20—Chanting "No contract, no train," angry Long Island Railroad workers demonstrated outside negotiations in NYC, before they hit the bricks on Sunday. Hog-tied by their union leaders' acceptance of two federal "cooling off" periods and without a contract for over two years, LIRR workers finally struck against the MTA's attempt to slash medical benefits and gut seniority. On Tuesday the MTA ran seab buses and extra subway trains for over 100,000 Long Island commuters.

The Transport Workers Union must shut down the MTA's scab operation in solidarity with the LIRR strike! The many LIRR unions must present a solid front—one out, all out! But included in the bargaining coalition is the cops' so-called union, the PBA. These sworn enemies of labor and minorities have no place on a picket line—cops out of the labor movement!

The MTA wants to place the LIRR unions under the no-strike Taylor Law, which the Democratic Party



WV Photo

strikebreakers used against transit workers in 1980. As an LIRR worker told *WV*: "I want to win this one.... It's for all of us." Smash government union-busting! No arbitration trap! Victory to the LIRR strike!

Afghanistan...

(continued from page 3)

into public life. Over 300,000 peasant families have received land. This social progress is helping win the war against Islamic counterrevolution. James Steele, writing in the *London Guardian* (25 February 1986), quoted a Kabul River valley peasant who joined his village militia after being freed from debt and receiving his own plot of land: "We will not allow anyone to be against the revolution in this country."

The Cold War liberals, of course, have joined Reagan in praising the Afghan "democratic resistance." Writing in the *New York Review of Books* (18 December 1986) Jeri Laber of the Helsinki Watch Committee rails against "Soviet expansionism" and in defense of feudal reaction: "The Soviets are pursuing expansionist policies in Afghanistan, under the guise of bringing progress. But the progress they offer the Afghans—literacy, industrial development, a centralized economy, and equality of the sexes—is not what most Afghans want [!]. . . . Most Afghans are set in their tribal ways, and want only to be left alone." Laber depicts the Islamic guerrillas as intrepid defenders of small children against the evils of Soviet education ("long-term indoctrination"), and speaks glowingly of Afghan contra kidnappings and "rehabilitation" of children to be spies and assassins for the *mujahedin*.

For seven years the liberals and the media have portrayed the Afghan contrast as nature's noblemen being trampled on by Soviet totalitarianism. But even the imperialist media have had difficulty disappearing the Afghan drug connection. Last summer the *New York Times* (18 June 1986) quoted a *mujahedin* leader explaining, "We must grow and sell opium to fight our holy war against the Russian nonbelievers." When the Pakistan army tried to pull a crackdown against Afghan drug traffickers in Karachi, a rather clear picture emerged of these "freedom fighters." To defend their lucrative trade, gangs of Afghan and Pakistani Pathans went on a terrorist rampage against neighborhoods inhabited by Muhajirs, Muslim refugees from India. Armed with automatic rifles supplied by the *mujahedin* rebel leaders, axes and daggers, they dragged Muhajir women and children into the streets where they were beaten and hacked to death. After five days of this communalist pogrom over 160 people were reported dead and hundreds wounded.

From the "April Revolution" to "National Reconciliation"

The Islamic *mujahedin* are fighting the "godless Communist infidel" in order to preserve a society based on the cruelest, bloodsucking social para-



New Afghan leader Najib (center) calls for "reconciliation" with murderous mullah reactionaries.

sitism, criminality and slavery. Pre-1979 Afghanistan was a squalid hellhole where emigration was virtually a national aspiration. Per capita income was \$200 a year. Women were kept smothered under yards of heavy cloth covering them from head to toe. Illiterate and ignorant, they were sold like chattels under the bride-price system. The landlords and tribal khans literally held power of life and death over the mass of peasants, controlling 42 percent of the cultivable land and the irrigation systems. Half the children died by age five and life expectancy was 40.

The 1978 "April Revolution" was essentially a left-wing military coup which brought the People's Democratic Party to power. A petty-bourgeois nationalist front, of schoolteachers, university students, government officials and army officers, the PDPA had no base among the peasant masses nor the tiny urban working class. Coming to power in one of the most primitive and tradition-bound countries on the face of the earth, they had little support for even the limited democratic reforms they introduced—i.e., land redistribution, compulsory education for both sexes, separation of church and state. In particular it was the regime's steps toward the equality of women which fueled reactionary resistance.

Faced with the certain defeat of its Kabul allies by an Islamic *jihad*, the USSR intervened in late December 1979. The protective wall of Soviet tanks and helicopters made possible a real social transformation in Afghanistan. Some of the changes reflect most of all the abject backwardness of the country. For example, since 1979 the number of doctors has been raised by some 50 percent—to around 1,500—while hospital beds have doubled, to 4,800! At the same time more than 1.5 million people have passed the state-run literacy course in a country where previously 90 percent of the population was illiterate. The Soviet Union has poured millions of rubles in consumer goods and industrial projects into Afghanistan, developing mines, petroleum wells and hydroelectric plants.

The most striking changes have

occurred in the position of women in Afghan society. Liberated from the *chador*, 5,000 Afghan women have taken up arms as members of the Soviet-backed DRA militia. Formerly enslaved and secluded, now many women work in Afghan industry. Women workers at the Guzargah textile factory in Kabul, for example, are unionized and have access to free child care and health care at the plant. Previously it was forbidden for a doctor to touch a woman, and when West German feminists tried to start a health clinic in an Afghan refugee camp in Pakistan they were all but lynched by the mullahs and tribal chieftains (see "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!", *Women and Revolution* No. 31, Spring 1986). The *mujahedin* have shot more than 2,000 teachers for teaching young girls and women to read and write.

Ominously, however, these steps toward a social transformation in Afghanistan are now being held back by the DRA government in the interests of conciliating the forces of Islamic reaction. Education for girls is no longer compulsory but "voluntary"—which for the masses will mean its elimination—and the land reform has been cut back. Over the last couple of years the *ulema* (Islamic clergy) has been increasingly coddled by the government. Their lands and tithes are exempt from taxation or redistribution, and many of the mullahs and khans are on state salary. The new constitution pledges to "respect, observe and protect holy Islam." Last year Najib was brought to power, replacing Babrak Karmal (who was installed at the time of the 1979 Soviet intervention) as the leader of the PDPA, in order to "broaden the base" of the regime. Najib makes a point of being seen praying in mosques around Kabul.

Now, ominously, Najib is calling for "reconciliation" with the chiefs of the CIA's murderous bands. According to the Afghan news agency Bakhtar, at a special plenum of the PDPA on December 30, he called for "making compromise with the political forces who are in opposition" and for "active contacts... with the leading personalities of the past regime as well as the Islamic parties." Najib added that "creation of a coalition government with the participation of the above mentioned groups is possible." The PDPA leadership is not proposing to commit suicide: Najib points to the 809,000-strong army, more than 170,000 party members and the "strong, loyal and trusted friends, that is, the Soviet Union." But the social reforms are up for negotiation: he doesn't mention the "April Revolution."

Mop Up the Afghan Counterrevolutionaries!

The Afghan news agency report made it clear that the "national reconciliation" came from Moscow. Following a reciprocal visit to Kabul, Soviet foreign minister Shevardnadze talked of a "sovereign independent" Afghanistan "pursuing a policy of neutrality and non-alignment." He added, however, that a Soviet withdrawal "would require an end to the support of the rebel forces by the freedom-loving cowboys of the U.S." What is the Kremlin proposing here? As one American professor put it, the Soviets "might in fact be acceding to what they describe in private as a

'Finlandization' of Afghanistan—the emergence of a largely non-Communist coalition government that would nevertheless not be hostile to Soviet security interests" (*New York Times*, 6 May 1986).

Try as they will, Mikhail Gorbachev et al. aren't going to get a Finland on the Soviet Union's crucial southern flank. Backward Afghanistan could never sustain anything remotely resembling a stable bourgeois democracy: even the most minimal bourgeois-democratic reforms provoked a violent feudal reaction. It took the intervention of the Red Army to carry them out. The Kremlin Stalinists keep dreaming of "détente," of "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism. But the U.S. imperialists are committed to keeping Afghanistan unstable through funneling millions in arms and aid to the Islamic reactionaries. As CIA director William Casey put it (*Der Spiegel*, 7 April 1986), the U.S.' goal is to "bleed the Russians"—as part of their war drive to "prevail" over the Soviet Union.

The only "political solution" is to complete and extend the social transformation begun with the Red Army intervention in 1979, through finishing the job of mopping up the reactionary cabal of landlords, tribal chieftains and mullahs. This would have a revolutionary impact throughout the region. General Zia's Pakistan is highly unstable: Baluchi and Pashtoon peoples separated by an imperialist border from their



Afghan peasants. Limited land reform is threatened by attempts to conciliate Islamic reaction.

tribal brothers to the north already are attracted by overtures from Kabul, and there are reportedly thousands of Pakistani oppositionists in exile in the Afghan capital. And smashing the Afghan Islamic fanatics could revive revolutionary agitation among the working class in neighboring Iran, now suffering under the theocratic, clerical-feudalist regime of Khomeini's ayatollahs no less than it did under the hated Shah.

Writing in 1919, as the revolutionary wave was receding in Central Europe, Trotsky noted that the Red Army could pave the way for extending the October Revolution to the East, beyond the border of the former tsarist empire:

"We have up to now devoted too little attention to agitation in Asia. How-

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TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA

ever, the international situation is evidently shaping up in such a way that the road to Paris and London lies via the towns of Afghanistan, the Punjab and Bengal.... Naturally, we had had in mind even earlier on the need to assist the revolution in Asia and had never abandoned the idea of revolutionary offensive wars."

—The Trotsky Papers, Vol. 1 (1917-1919)

Within the framework of Afghanistan alone there is no solution to national and social oppression. These questions are linked, historically as well as socially, to the fate of the Russian Revolution. One need only look next door to Soviet Central Asia to see the gains won by the proletarian liberation of these pre-capitalist areas by courageous Bolshevik agitators and the Red Army. Compared to Afghanistan today, the social progress in these areas can be measured not in decades but in centuries, despite the Stalinist degeneration of the Soviet workers state.

Soviet Communist Party leader Mikhail Gorbachev, speaking at the CPSU congress last February, called the Afghan war a "bleeding wound." The *Far Eastern Economic Review* (14 August 1986) noted:

"Gorbachov denounced the theory of 'revolutionary war' before the 27th party congress as a Trotskyite heresy, 'completely at variance with Marxism.' 'Today, too, we are more firmly convinced that promoting revolutions from outside, and even more so by military means, is futile and inadmissible.'"

In a speech at the Soviet Far Eastern port of Vladivostok in September, he announced the withdrawal of Soviet regiments from Afghanistan, as part of a broader initiative aimed at improving relations with China. In addition, the Kremlin has "sought in recent months to give the impression of prodding Vietnam to be more forthcoming in seeking a negotiated settlement in Cambodia as well" (*Washington Post*, 7 January). Certainly an end to the hostile confrontation between the Soviet Union and China is to be desired. But *not* at the expense of Afghanistan and Indochina!

A few years ago we suggested a rather different response to the imperialists, for revolutionary proletarian internationalism rather than a bureaucratic nationalist accommodation:

"What is the necessary response to the insane American provocations? In the first place, reach an understanding with the Chinese.... Rectify the 17th century (and later) treaties between the tsars and the Manchu emperors. A generous gesture explicitly motivated: 'Well, it looks like the U.S. is going to come for us now, and we hardly want you people to hit us from behind. And while you're at it, take the pressure off the Vietnamese so they can finally clean up the Cambodian mess'....

"Next, clean up Afghanistan... instead of capitulating to the mullah reaction, by limiting land reform and literacy campaigns, the Soviets should be pouring the money in there on a massive scale: land to the tiller *and* cheap credit, health programs, etc. But that means *social revolution*, a tremendous leap from feudal backwardness to proletarian dictatorship on the backs of the Soviet Red Army. And that does not square with the Kremlin's policies of détente and 'two-stage' revolution. Reformism abroad, by conciliating the forces of reaction, undermines defense of the Soviet Union."

—"Reagan, Begin & Hitler," *WV* No. 308, 25 June 1982

Afghanistan should become an independent workers republic with an open border with the USSR and a ruble-convertible currency. Look at Mongolia for a model. An Afghan workers' assembly might have an exchange of observers with the USSR soviet. But it will take proletarian political revolution in the USSR to restore the Red Army and the Soviet state to their internationalist and revolutionary mission, through defending and extending the gains of the great October Revolution. Only the defeat of imperialism internationally, through workers revolutions under the leadership of a Trotskyist world party of socialist revolution, can lay the basis for the genuine social equality of all peoples. ■

China...

(continued from page 16)

deeply frustrated by their country's economic and social backwardness compared to the imperialist West and Japan. In their frustrated nationalist aspirations, they grasp at one solution and, when that doesn't work, at another one.

The extreme volatility of the Chinese student milieu reflects the *instability* of the Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy with its constant, sharp zigzags. In the 1950s and '60s students were drawn to the utopian voluntarism of Mao with his promises of Great Leaps Forward and instantaneous Cultural Revolutions. Used by Mao to terrorize intellectuals and intimidate his factional opponents in the bureaucracy, the Red Guards were then suppressed by the army when they got



Der Spiegel

Deng's China seals reactionary alliance with U.S. imperialism in blood: Chinese troops invade Vietnam, February 1979.

out of hand. The more troublesome ones were sent to the countryside "to learn from the peasantry."

A decade later a new generation of students was drawn to Deng's "Four Modernizations" with its promise of quadrupling China's national output by the year 2000 so that "our country's power will become truly strong." But the "Four Modernizations" ended up benefiting Western and Japanese multinationals while spawning a new class of rich peasants in the countryside and petty entrepreneurs in the cities.

"Disparities in income are now greater than at any time since 1949," that is, since the overthrow of capitalism in China, "a prime example of the new economic imbalances that have aroused envy among the many who have not profited from the reforms" (*San Francisco Examiner*, 7 September 1986). Unemployment has risen as factory managers have been given greater rein in hiring and firing workers. State subsidies which kept food prices low have been cut, resulting in a sharp inflation that is a deep-felt source of popular discontent.

During the current wave of student protests, one poster at Peking University admitted: "A recent opinion poll indicates that the public feeling of resentment of reform, including price increases and other aspects, is increasing by the day." But this same poster goes on to declare: "At this key moment, to support the reform faction and create public support for the reforms is the urgent task" (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, 15 January).

Workers in Shanghai, the *Washington Post* (8 January) reported, said "that while they sympathized with the students, their main concern was not to promote democracy but to counter anticipated price increases." What is involved here is not simply narrow economism. These price increases are the direct and inevitable result of Deng's market-oriented "reforms" which the student protesters support. To that extent this privileged petty-bourgeois layer stands opposed to the felt needs and demands of the toiling masses.

Dangerous Illusion of "Pure Democracy"

What is new about the current wave of Chinese student protests is the em-

phasis on "democracy"—as if there were such a thing as pure, classless democracy. The student protesters have not spelled out, or probably even thought out, how to organize "democracy" in the concrete conditions of China today. Suppose a parliamentary government based on universal suffrage could be realized in the bureaucratically deformed Chinese workers state. What would be the effect?

A majority of the population consists not of workers but peasants. Furthermore, Deng's "reforms" have practically eliminated collective farming. A parliamentary majority would thus represent the peasant smallholders, some of them relatively wealthy. Under the relentless pressure of the world capitalist market, these petty proprietors would become dependent on Western and Japanese industrialists and financiers... and on the Chinese bourgeoisie,

sands of indigenous people to impose their rule. This bloody military dictatorship became the "free world's" China, protected by the U.S. Seventh Fleet, its people ruthlessly exploited by the Fortune 500 corporations. Taiwan also became a main training ground for the Central American death squads.

What obscene hypocrisy for American imperialist spokesmen to lecture Chinese students on the supposedly inseparable virtues of capitalism and freedom! A *Wall Street Journal* editorial (23 December 1986), entitled "Marching in Shanghai," claims: "Political liberty and economic liberty go together; they are warp and woof in the fabric of freedom." Tell that to the Taiwanese!

Down with U.S./China Anti-Soviet Axis!

Washington did not diplomatically recognize the People's Republic of China until Mao & Co. entered a strategic alliance with the U.S. against the Soviet Union in the early 1970s. The Washington/Peking axis was sealed by acts of war, from Angola (where China armed CIA-backed black mercenaries during the 1975 South African invasion) to Deng's unsuccessful attacks on Soviet-allied Vietnam in 1979 and since.

Justifying China's alliance with imperialism, Deng has declared that an "open door" to the West is necessary to overcome the legacy of "poverty, backwardness and ignorance." Foreign capitalists are not interested in modernizing Chinese industry but in sweatshop operations to exploit cheap labor or in opening the domestic market, creating a direct link between the world capitalist market and the new layer of well-off peasants.

In reality, the Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy's alliance with Wall Street and Washington is not an open door to prosperity and modernization but to war and counterrevolution. The heavily armed Sino-Soviet border is one of the trip wires on this planet for World War III. And if U.S. imperialism succeeds in its ultimate goal of destroying the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China will not long survive.

Given China's extreme economic backwardness, the Stalinist program of building "socialism in one country" is more obviously utopian than in the Soviet Union. The efforts of the Peking bureaucracy, from Mao to Deng, to rapidly transform China into a great world power have led to one dead end after another. Today Deng's "Four Modernizations" program is foundering. It is increasingly unpopular and resisted by the toiling masses. And the recent student protests both expose and will surely deepen the alienation of educated youth from the regime.

In short, Stalinist rule in China remains highly unstable internally. If a severe crisis were to bring about the paralysis and disintegration of the regime, the program of "Western-style democracy" could possibly be an avenue for mobilizing capitalist counter-revolution, which would not be at all "democratic" but a bloody civil war. What is needed in China is a *workers and peasants government based on soviet democracy*—a proletarian political revolution to oust the Peking bureaucrats.

Socialist construction in China, even more obviously than in Russia, is integrally linked to extending the revolution to the advanced capitalist countries, especially Japan, the industrial powerhouse of Asia. The "open door" to the modernization of China can only be based on international socialist planning. No step can be taken on this road without breaking China from the imperialist warmongers in Washington and lifting the siege of embattled and heroic Vietnam. A Trotskyist party of the proletariat in China is essential to these tasks, as part of the struggle to reforge the Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution. ■

which remains alive and thriving on the offshore islands of Hong Kong and Taiwan. "Pure democracy" could only be a bridge—a very short bridge—to bloody capitalist counterrevolution and the renewed domination of China by imperialism.

Not that the students chanting "Long live democracy" desire this outcome. The Western bourgeois media found little in the way of overt counterrevolutionary agitation to report, presumably not for lack of trying. Fairly typical was the admission by the *Washington Post's* Peking correspondent: "The students favor holding members of the huge Chinese bureaucracy more accountable.... But few students talk about overthrowing the Communist Party. Most seem to want to reform the system from within."

It is illuminating to compare the current Chinese student protests with the movement around Polish Solidarność. Solidarność activists openly identified with Ronald Reagan's "free world" and longed to restore the old pre-Communist Poland. They openly glorified Marshal Pilsudski, the fascist dictator of interwar Poland. The strength of Pilsudskiite nationalism in present-day Poland has its roots in the fact that the overthrow of capitalism was not the result of a massive rebellion against the old order, but was carried out from above and under the shield of the Soviet army. Pilsudski's counterpart in China was Marshal Chiang Kai-shek. There are no reports that the Chinese student protesters glorify Chiang Kai-shek and long to reverse the historic victory of 1949.

Chiang was defeated in the civil war by Mao's peasant-based Red Army. Hundreds of millions of peasants rose up and seized the land on which their forebears had been exploited from time immemorial. The rule of the murderous warlords and bloodsucking moneylenders, the rapacious landlords and wretched bourgeoisie, was destroyed. Barbaric practices rooted in the old Confucian order, such as the binding of women's feet, were abolished. A nation which had been ravaged and divided by imperialist powers for over a century was unified and freed from foreign subjugation.

Defeated in the civil war, Chiang and much of the Chinese bourgeoisie fled to Taiwan, where they butchered thou-

WORKERS VANGUARD

Reagan and the Ayatollahs

Iran-Iraq War: Rivers of Blood



The marshes of Basra, Iraq, strewn with bodies, 1985.

For all his Rambo posturing against "Iranian terrorists," it turns out Ronald Reagan is one of the biggest backers of Ayatollah Khomeini's Islamic theocracy. The Iran/Contragate scandal has revealed that, with the help of his Israeli pals, Reagan sent more than 2,000 anti-tank missiles to Iran along with Hawk anti-aircraft missile equipment and who knows what else. Now, Iranian reports on their latest offensive in the war with Iraq brag about "anti-tank units" which reportedly destroyed a hundred Iraqi armored vehicles, and boast of shooting down 25 Iraqi planes. Amid new reports that *the U.S. fed doctored intelligence data to both sides* in the war, Washington's credibility as imperialist master is in pieces.

Now the Iranians have launched a major offensive across the Shatt al Arab waterway at the head of the Persian Gulf. The Iraqis have good reason to worry. While it was apparently not the much-touted "final offensive," the

Iranian push did manage, at the expense of perhaps 10,000 dead, to buy about four square miles of Iraqi territory within a few miles of Basra, Iraq's second largest city. Together with Iran's seizure of the Iraqi Fao peninsula in early 1986, this raises the possibility of a pincer movement on Basra that might succeed in splitting off Shi'ite-dominated southern Iraq, thereby threatening the Baghdad regime itself.

When it launched the war in 1980, the Iraqi dictatorship of Ba'athist colonel Saddam Hussein had hoped for a quick grab of the oil-rich regions of Iran, while Ayatollah Khomeini of Iran used the opportunity to launch a fanatical "holy war" for control of the Muslim world. The result was a stalemate as both sides repeatedly spilled rivers of blood in a slaughter reminiscent of World War I. By 1985 the casualty estimates in NATO capitals ranged "from 420,000 to 580,000 Iranian dead, with the number of Iraqi dead put at 300,000" (*New York*

Times, 23 September 1985). That's nearly a million killed in five years. And since then tens of thousands more have died.

The Iraqis' technically superior army, well supplied with Soviet weaponry and enjoying a 5-to-1 advantage in aircraft, soon lost its conquered territory and has barely held off the "human wave" assaults of the Iranian forces, which enjoy a 3-to-1 advantage in population resources. In desperation, Hussein not only revived the use of mustard gas in warfare (last used in the '30s by Mussolini in Ethiopia) but has been the first to use the nerve gas Tabun, invented by the Nazis. The Iranians have used their surface-to-surface missiles to wreak mass terror on the civilian population of Iraqi cities including Baghdad and especially Basra, where Iranian shells were reported landing at a rate of one a minute.

Most of the left had cheered on Khomeini against the hated Shah, and

initially supported the Iranian mullahs against the Iraqi colonels. (By this time, thousands of leftists in Teheran had been executed by the new clerical-reactionary regime.) The Spartacist tendency, however, had proclaimed "Down with the Shah, down with the mullahs!", and we stated from the beginning that the proletariat has no side in this squalid war:

"A defeat for either side could open revolutionary possibilities for the Iranian and Iraqi proletariat not seen in years. Given the Communists' historic strength among the strategic Iraq oil workers, a humiliating outcome for Hussein's great military gamble could well produce a proletarian-centered popular explosion. As for Iran, a military defeat would give a revolutionary proletarian vanguard an exceptional opportunity to break the laboring masses from the chauvinism and obscurantism of the Shi'ite clergy. This is why revolutionary defeatism is not simply an internationalist obligation

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Student Protests in China

JANUARY 18—Once again the world's attention is gripped by turmoil in China. Once again tens of thousands of students are marching through Shanghai and Peking, this time under the slogans of "democracy and freedom." Once again a top Chinese leader and heir apparent to supreme leader Deng Xiaoping has been ousted, presumably for allowing the student protests to get out of hand.

The Western bourgeois press claims the students are marching for "Western-style democracy." The Peking bureaucrats, after first taking a soft line toward the protests, hardened up and denounced the students for "bourgeois liberalism." At the same time, some Chinese officials and Western journalists have compared these protests to the Red Guards rampaging during the Cultural Revolution in the 1960s. The reality is more complex, contradictory and fluid.

Certainly, many of the students have illusions in "Western-style democracy." In one protest they carried a poster of the Statue of Liberty with a quote from Abraham Lincoln—"government of the people, by the people, for the people." More importantly, Chinese students have tuned in to the Voice of America to find out about protests in other cities, and an American VOA reporter was cheered when he turned up in Shang-



A. Friend

hai's People's Square. "We can trust the VOA," one student stated.

On the other hand, students in Shanghai carried red banners proclaiming, "Down with the new bureaucrats." At the same time, there is evident sympathy for the "reform faction" of the ruling bureaucracy headed by Deng. Thus students marched through Peking singing the *Internationale* and carrying banners reading "Support Deng Xiaoping and the Four Modernizations" and "Oppose conser-

vatives and reactionaries."

The target of the last major Chinese student protest, in September 1985, was a state visit by the principal figure of the "free world" in the Far East: Japan's right-wing prime minister Yasuhiro Nakasone. Nakasone enraged Chinese students by honoring the Japanese war dead killed during Japan's rape of China in the 1930s and '40s. Under the slogan "Down with the second occupation," they were also protesting the increased presence of Japanese capitalists in



Reuters

Students burn *Peking Daily* (top); march in Shanghai. Large-scale protests expose instability of Stalinist rule.

China, a direct outcome of Deng's "open door" economic policy.

From the Cultural Revolution to the "Four Modernizations"

Is there a common thread running from the Red Guards of the Cultural Revolution to the anti-Nakasone protest to the current marches for "democracy and freedom"? Chinese students—the young intellectual elite, seeing themselves heirs to the future China—are

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