

Young Spartacus

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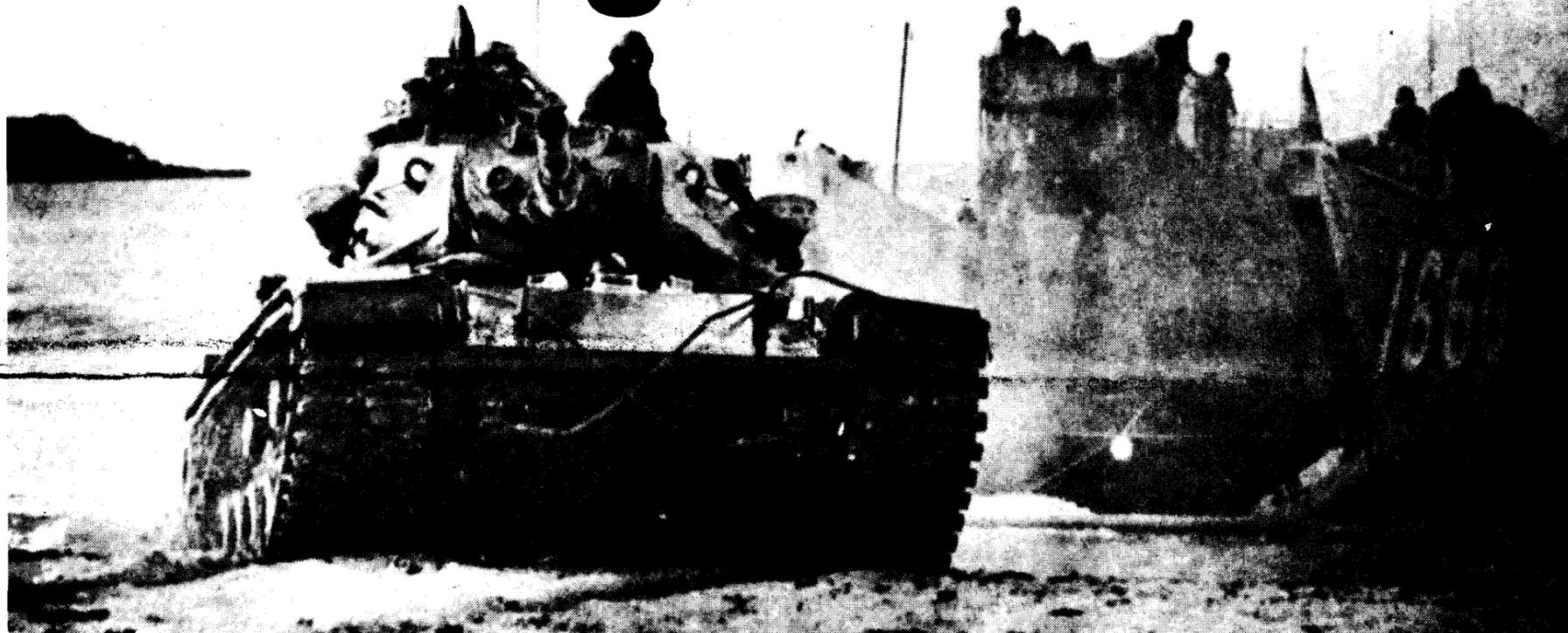
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SUMMER 1985

Smash U.S. War Moves—Labor Has the Power!

Archives Barricada Internacional

Nicaragua Under Reagan's Gun



U.S. tanks and landing craft in Honduras prepare for war against Nicaragua.

U.S. imperialism is poised for an invasion of Nicaragua. Pentagon preparations for the invasion are "largely complete" according to a two-part article in the *New York Times* (4-5 June). Democratic Party Congressional "opposition" vanished into thin air as the House voted \$27 million in aid to the "contras," then empowered the Reagan White House to deploy troops under any imaginable pretext (UPI dispatch, 26 June). American military advisers have talked themselves into the idiotic assumption that invading Nicaragua will be like "falling off a log" and

even welcomed by the people who lost 50,000 lives in their fight to overthrow the hated Yankee-installed Somoza dictatorship.

You can pick your pretext: Sandinista Nicaragua is, according to Reagan's latest Big Lie, the center of international terrorism; it's a bulwark of Soviet "totalitarianism" in the region; it poses a "direct threat" to the imperialist colossus to the North. Any absurdity will do for Washington. Reagan has wanted a "showdown" in Central America from the start. Now, smarting over his Jimmy Carter-like image in the Near East

hijacking, Reagan has seized on the Nicaraguan card. The last time he was in trouble in Lebanon, he ordered the invasion of Grenada. Even that was not exactly "falling off a log"—20,000 U.S. military personnel barely took the island from 700 Cuban construction workers. And Nicaragua will be no Grenada.

Rear Admiral Gene R. La Rocque and Lieutenant Colonel John H. Buchanan estimate that "after four years, \$10 billion, and over 20,000 Nicaraguan and American lives, the Sandinistas would continue to fight, and Americans

would continue to die in a festering guerrilla campaign—with no end in sight" (*Village Voice*, 25 June). The Nicaraguan masses are armed and determined to defend their revolution. An accompanying article in the *Voice* noted:

"Have the members of the National Security Council... been told that any American citizen can wander about in Nicaragua and hear mothers, many mothers declare that they would rather have their children die than live in tyranny?"

"This is the mood of Managua, increasingly urgent in the last few months."

Until the troops are actually deployed and the bombs start falling, the imperialists wage a psychological war of terror against Nicaragua, called "perception management," whereby the country is kept constantly under the threat of imminent invasion. Reagan & Co. seek to create war weariness without a war. However, such ploys have also served to heighten the preparedness of the population, to train them for the real thing. A recent headline in *Barricada*, the Sandinista newspaper, captured the mood in the capital: "¡Nicaragua Alerta!"—Nicaragua is on alert.

Young Spartacus prints below an edited version of public talks given by comrade Alison Spencer, of the Spartacus

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Nicaragua

Nicaraguan population armed and determined to defend its revolution. Women make up 35 percent of the country's militia.

Defend, Complete, Extend the Revolution!

EDITORIAL NOTE

From Philly to Harlem—

Stop Cop Terror Against Black America!

Especially in the aftermath of the Philadelphia holocaust, it could not be more starkly obvious that having illusions in the "good will" of the Democratic Party—not least its "black elected officials"—is *suicide* for the workers and oppressed of this country. Black Democrat mayor Wilson Goode did what his white racist predecessor, Frank Rizzo, never could. On his order, eleven black members of MOVE—four of them babies—were incinerated by a bomb dropped from a police helicopter and an entire neighborhood of black homeowners was burned to the ground. Had Rizzo attempted such mass murder in the black community, the city of Philadelphia would have been engulfed by black outrage.

In New York City, the racist cops have also intensified their wanton killing of black people—from the grandmother behind in her rent, Eleanor Bumpurs, to the young black artist Michael Stewart. On June 13, 17-year-old black honor student Edmund Perry lost his young, promising life to the killer cops. Recently graduated from the prestigious Phillips Exeter Academy, working on Wall Street for the summer and headed for Stanford University, Perry was on the "wrong side" of the line

between Columbia University and Harlem (i.e., he was on the Columbia side). His "crime" was his black skin—and for that he was slaughtered. This outrage too explodes the myth so carefully peddled by Jesse Jackson & Co. that this system offers any future for black youth—no matter how talented, how privileged.

At a June 16 Harlem commemoration of the 1976 Soweto uprising in South Africa—only three days after Edmund Perry's killing—Jackson and other big-shot Democrats present mentioned the slain youth barely if at all. Their agenda: divert the seething fury of the community into getting the anti-Koch slate installed in City Hall. These same Democrats did their level best to co-opt the Columbia blockade of Mandela (formerly Hamilton) Hall last spring—the student action which sparked anti-apartheid protests on campuses throughout the country. Among the organizers of the June 16 travesty—an insult to the victims of racist murder—was the Workers World Party, veteran Democratic Party pimp. Not only was Edmund Perry's murder shoved to the background, but the word "Philadelphia" was hardly mentioned. Jackson told the crowd to "vote together"—

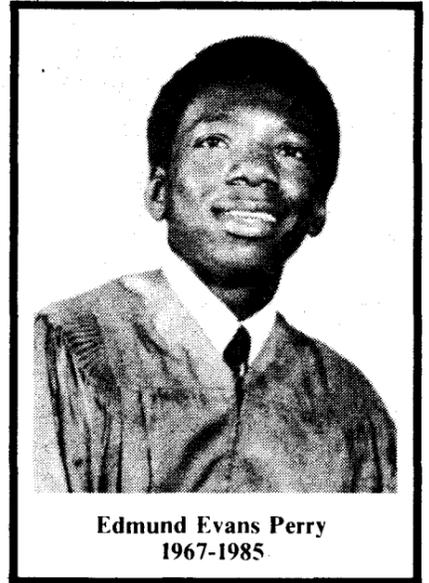
presumably for more Wilson Goodes.

From the speakers podium in Harlem that day, only Whitney Tymas, a leader of the Black Students Organization at Columbia active in the blockade, gave voice to the just anger of black America. To her credit, she pointedly and powerfully said what everyone else was so careful to avoid—the fact that Harlem and Soweto aren't so far apart:

"... just three short days ago yet another of our precious comrades, Edmund Perry, has been cut down only blocks from where we stand today. Sisters and brothers, the camel's back has already been broken; the death of this young man is beyond what can be called the last straw. Guilty or innocent, this incident proves that where blacks are concerned there is no justice, there is no jury, there is no judge, there is just life or death decisions made in the dead of night with no one held accountable.... "I'm young, but I'm old enough to know that democracy in this country at least is a farce. It's the biggest myth of our time."

We in the SYL appreciated these remarks, particularly after the ignominious conclusion of the Mandela Hall blockade.

There was indeed potential for the Columbia action to go beyond working "within the system" and to address the terrible reality of racist oppression here



Edmund Evans Perry
1967-1985

The Perry Family

as well as in U.S.-backed South Africa and to do something about it. As was the case in virtually every campus anti-apartheid protest this spring, the Columbia blockade had as its central demand the liberal/utopian call for "divestment" of university holdings in companies which do business with South Africa. This "strategy" is at best impotent and at worst counterproductive. Its popularity with everyone from Democratic Party hustlers to conservative Republicans is no accident, either: "divestment" rests on the proposition that the U.S. ruling class is in a position to exert "moral suasion" on the apartheid butchers. But the American ruling class has far more blood on its hands than Pretoria will ever dream of. Despite our opposition to "divestment" we saw in the Columbia blockade a

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Anti-Apartheid Protesters Defy Cornell's Crackdown

ITHACA, New York, 29 June—At 6:30 a.m. Tuesday, June 25, over 40 Cornell University cops—most in riot gear, sporting billy clubs—removed eight students sleeping in the anti-apartheid "Shantytown" built this spring by protesting Cornell students. "The voice on the bullhorn said, 'you have two minutes to get your things and evacuate'" (*Ithaca Times*, 27 June). Twenty minutes later the shanties and tents, erected last April to dramatize the plight of landless, disenfranchised South African blacks, were destroyed. Three protesters were arrested. Reportedly,

one woman was charged with obstructing government administration and resisting arrest after she returned to the area—cordoned off with steel posts and police fencing—to retrieve her shoes.

By noon, over 100 students rallied in protest. Police barricades were torn down and used to begin rebuilding the Shantytown. One protester was pushed to the ground by cops, sat on, handcuffed, thrown into a police car and now faces charges of "inciting to riot." Students who tried to block the police car holding their comrade were clubbed (one was dragged 20 feet), arrested and charged with disorderly conduct and resisting arrest.

Since the militant anti-apartheid protests which took place here last spring, over 1,200 arrests have been made at Cornell. Instead of beating students into the administration's hoped-for silent submission to "authority" these escalating attacks have been answered with increased militancy. Students here did not confine their actions to opposing the U.S.-backed apartheid butchers, but targeted U.S. war moves in Central America and racist repression at home. A Nicaraguan shanty was constructed as well as the "Karl Marx Shanty"—plastered with issues of *Young Spartacus* and *Workers Vanguard*.

With many students leaving for summer break, the administration saw its opportunity to smash the symbol of student protest and defiance of its precious "private property"—the Shantytown. Little more than 12 hours after wrecking the Shantytown, the campus

cops (who in the manner of Orwellian newspeak are called "Public Safety Officers") got on the bullhorn to read a restraining order against more than 20 named defendants and another 100 Jane and John Does. These 120 are prohibited under the order not only from constructing a new "Shantytown" but from congregating or assembling anywhere on campus "in such manner as to disrupt or interfere with normal functions" of the university. When the cops got to the part about the "violence" of the student protesters, the crowd responded with chants of "You, you, you!" And chalked on Cornell sidewalks are slogans reading "KKKornell is a police state."

As students at Cornell and across the country are learning—often the hard way, at the business end of a cop's club—any opposition to this government's policy is met with state terror. The U.S. rulers don't yet use against American student protesters their preferred methods against the workers and peasants of Central America or the black youth of South Africa or black babies in Philadelphia—but the intended message is the same. One student told *Young Spartacus* that residents of Shantytown openly wondered if Cornell was going to call in Philadelphia mayor Wilson Goode to firebomb them. Another reported that a cinder-block bunker constructed there was called the "MOVE bunker." We salute those protesters who made this honorable statement of solidarity with the MOVE martyrs. It represents the beginning of understanding that the fight against

Young Spartacus Photo



Cornell University: the "Karl Marx Shanty," part of Shantytown constructed by anti-apartheid student protesters this spring.

South African apartheid means a fight against the hideously racist ruling class of this country—including its Democratic Party black front men. In so doing, we might add, the Cornell protesters stood radically to the left of the reformist "socialists" who turned their back on MOVE to avoid alienating the likes of Jesse Jackson and Goode himself. Having staked everything on gaining influence among such "liberal" bourgeois politicians as their pay-off for explicitly renouncing militant class/black/student/anybody's struggle, in favor of the "lesser evil" at the polls, the reformist leftists' own political hides are at risk. Should angry youth and seething ghettos go outside the bounds of

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Young Spartacus

Young Spartacus (ISSN 0162-2692) is the newspaper of the Spartacus Youth League. The Spartacus Youth League, youth section of the Spartacist League, is a socialist youth organization which intervenes in social struggles armed with a working-class program, based on the politics of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky.

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Summer 1985

No Administration Reprisals! Abolish the CRR!

Witchhunt, Harvard-Style

John C. Berg spent nine months in jail. His "crime": during massive student demonstrations against the Vietnam War, he escorted a dean from an administration building. Berg was also expelled from school. The year: 1969; the school: Harvard University, that blue-blooded institution whose logo "Veritas" could be more appropriately titled "Profitas." Berg was one of many Harvard students and faculty purged for their opposition to the U.S.' dirty, losing war against the Vietnamese people. Jailing, beating, expelling antiwar protesters and axing dissident faculty members became a sort of Harvard specialty in the late '60s/early '70s. So this spring the Harvard administration watched with horror and fury while "its" well-bred students erupted again in protest against South African apartheid. And, as a standard-bearer of repression, Harvard is now busily gearing up a machinery to smash student dissent. Brutal but not dim, Harvard has concluded that once Reagan invades Nicaragua all bets are off in the "student quiescence" department.

Thus the resuscitation of the Committee on Rights and Responsibilities (CRR)—a kangaroo court initiated during the anti-Vietnam War protests boycotted by students since its inception.

That the CRR is an explicitly political-purge-body is no secret. It was reported to us that during one of its hearings in late spring, CRR chair Richard Kronauer noted that the "CRR is here to stay" because "once there are U.S. troops in Nicaragua it will be a whole different ballgame around here." In the wake of anti-apartheid protests, the CRR's hit list was swiftly drawn up: three undergraduates were denied diplomas and at least 15 others, including one Harvard Spartacus Youth League member, face disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. The CRR is utterly indiscriminate in victimizing student protesters. Many of its targets participated in a militant action on May 2, led by the SYL, against the appearance of South African consul-general Abe Hoppenstein. At the same time, many are prominent members of the quisling Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) and those who joined DSAs in a laughable "action" at the Governing Board's 17 Quincy Street office where suit-and-tie students respectfully "sat in" during business hours, then left after vacuuming the floor. Whether you joined the 100 students who sought to

militantly protest Hoppenstein—the agent of the apartheid regime addressing a Conservative Club luncheon at Lowell House—or joined the DSA in providing late afternoon cleaning service to the Corporation at Quincy Street: you're in for it.

Enter one Dean of Students Archibald Epps III, with whom regular readers of *Young Spartacus* will be

Harvard tradition begun in the late '60s. After ejecting the corpulent Epps and other deans, radical students led by SDS (Students for a Democratic Society) opened up secret files in the 1969 actions. Harvard's bloody complicity in the genocidal war in Vietnam was clearly documented: Harvard's "academic" imperialists invented napalm, free-fire zones, carpetbombing... a host

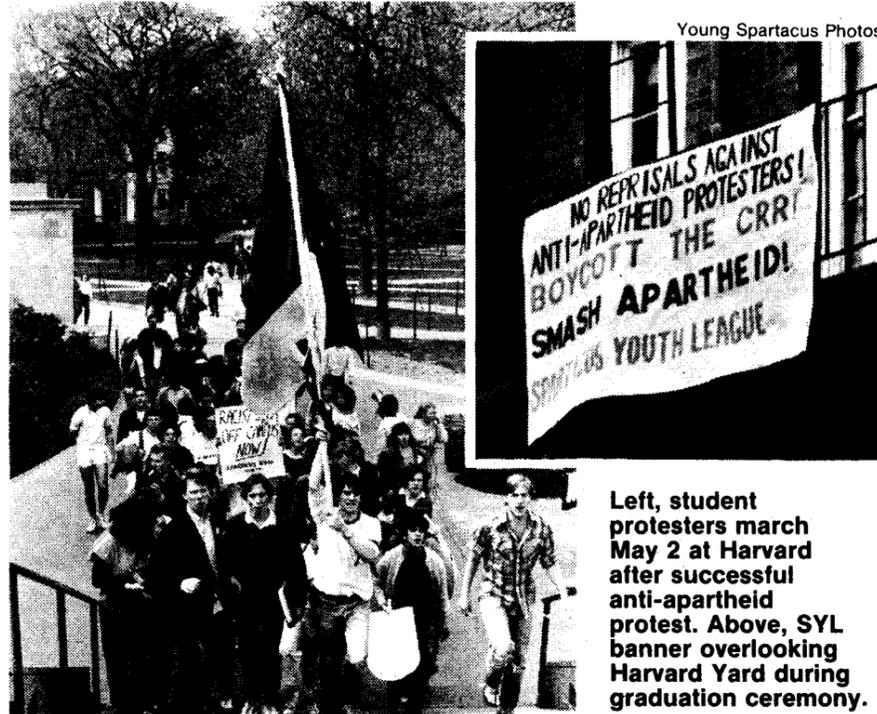
administration—including and especially with Archie Epps. In so doing they did not, however, spare themselves from the CRR's witchhunting. The DSA even encouraged Epps to speak at demonstrations. That's a sight that should turn the stomach of any decent student militant. And has since 1969:

"By this time, Assistant Dean of the College Archie Epps, who had been thrown out of the building earlier, had re-entered University Hall through another entrance. A girl noticed him and yelled, 'Hey, what's he doing back in here? Somebody get Epps the hell out of the building.' Several students picked up the cry, 'Get the hell out, Epps. Get the hell out,' and pushed him out the door again. Epps, eschewing nonviolence, threw several good punches at the demonstrators on the way out."

—Eichel, Jost, Luskin and Neustadt, *The Harvard Strike* (1970)

For our part, the SYL has all too frequently had the occasion to note that Harvard is one dirty business. In November 1981 when Conservative Club members, Moonies and others of their ilk attempted unsuccessfully to shut down our forum on Poland and the role of counterrevolutionary Solidarność, SYL supporter Keith Manning was framed up on phony assault charges. Harvard bucks and legal counsel were thrown into the frame-up, but we defeated this nasty attempt to jail our comrade. When War Secretary Caspar Weinberger (class of '38) came to campus in November 1983, he was met by 600 student hecklers. Infuriated by this "reception" of one of its illustrious alumni, Harvard threatened the expulsion of two SYL members—singled out as an "example." That witchhunt failed too.

Now at Harvard the ax is supposed to come down selectively but without mercy in order to keep this bourgeois



Young Spartacus Photos

Left, student protesters march May 2 at Harvard after successful anti-apartheid protest. Above, SYL banner overlooking Harvard Yard during graduation ceremony.

familiar. Epps, the black McCarthy of Harvard, is reportedly spending his summer vacation poring over freshman registers and cop photographs in order to identify students for further persecution by the CRR. What a job. But then, Archie has never been the same since 1969 (he was one of the deans unceremoniously ejected from University Hall). His personal vendetta against any vestige of student radicalism has not abated. Meanwhile, the administration made plans to bankroll its witchhunt to the tune of several thousands of dollars: hoping to push through as many "hearings" as possible before students return for fall semester, Harvard offered airfare and housing to students—some as far away as London and Hong Kong—who would agree to attend their "trials" over the summer. A free trip to Cambridge, and you too can be expelled. Its plans backfired, however, and the administration's kangaroo court has been forced to postpone its witchhunt until September.

Kronauer is continuing that famed

of methods to maim and murder Vietnamese women, children, old men. It was Harvard's "best and brightest"—the Kennedys and the Kissingers—who were the architects of these massacres. When students revealed the ugly truth of what crawled under the ivied walls, Harvard responded with a vengeance. State troopers were called in to smash the student strike. The "Committee of 15"—precursor of the CRR—was convened to convict and eliminate radicals. Harvard's determination to snuff out political protest was codified in the formation of the CRR, set up as a virtual military tribunal. Hearsay evidence was allowed, students had no right to counsel, were presumed guilty from the start and there was no right to appeal.

Small wonder this star chamber has been boycotted by virtually every class since its inception. The moribund CRR hadn't heard a case since 1975; but Harvard is now getting down to business, casting aside any pretense of "democratic" student participation and reviving the Committee with seven faculty members who meet in private chambers behind locked doors patrolled by armed guards.

In the latest round of Harvard vs. students, the honorable tradition of boycotting the CRR has for the most part been upheld. Only three of the 18 charged have even gone to the CRR to request postponement of their trials until September. One of the seniors denied his diploma by the CRR vendetta against anti-Hoppenstein protesters, Ben Robinson, told the *Boston Globe* (6 June), "I feel that the student body has consistently rejected the legitimacy of this body [the CRR] for 15 years. I think the whole aim is to stifle political protest."

The hapless DSA likes to preach the myth of "democratic" imperialism in which the university is one big, happy, reasonable family. It must be mentioned that throughout the protests this spring, the Harvard DSA engaged in the most disgusting fraternization with the



"Get the hell out, Epps!" Radical students ejecting the dean during 1969 takeover of University Hall.

enclave safe for Cold War II and Nicaraguan invasion think-tank. But we can promise Epps & Co. that no matter how well oiled, their repressive machinery will be resisted. During commencement exercises, the SYL initiated an open letter, signed by 59 students and alumni opposing the CRR witchhunt. As we summarized: "We refuse to stand trial to be judged by 'Hahvahd,' the proponents and apologists for race-terror, union-busting and war from Durban to Detroit to Managua. We denounce the CRR and refuse to participate in this kangaroo court!" Abolish the CRR! No Reprisals Against Anti-Apartheid Protesters! And Archie... we'll be seeing you. ■

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Nicaragua...

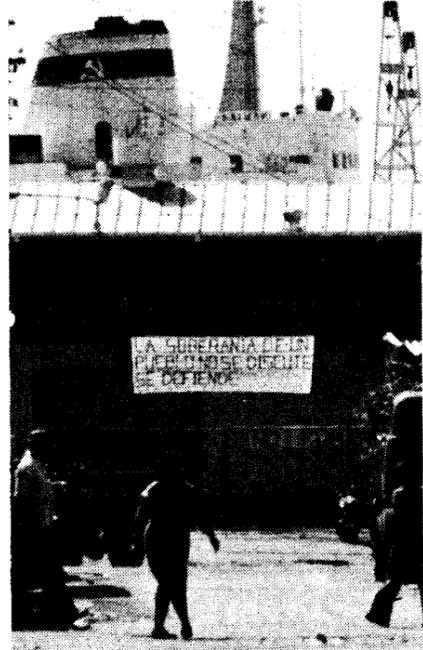
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Youth League National Committee, recently returned from Nicaragua. Delivered at the Borough of Manhattan Community College in New York City and Antioch School of Law in Washington, D.C. on June 6 and 15 respectively, comrade Spencer's presentation details her experiences on a visit to Nicaragua soon after the U.S. embargo went into effect. It is more urgent than ever today that class-conscious workers and youth take a side in the defense of the Nicaraguan Revolution against imperialist invasion. In defending Nicaragua, we further our own struggle.

The title of the forum, "Nicaragua Besieged" is apt: it is a country at war. Beginning last November, when the Nicaraguans had their first elections, primarily designed as a showcase for the Democratic Party—look, we'll have free elections, we'll subsidize the bourgeois candidates, etc.—even with that, the entire population was subjected to the most severe forms of psychological terror by the U.S. military. Every morning in Managua the population awoke to the sounds of war, to sonic booms by "Black Bird" SR-71 spy planes. And they didn't know if it was a real attack or just the Americans playing around.

Today the Reagan administration is openly talking of an invasion of Nicaragua. You even have the Central American neighbors, the supposed democracy of Costa Rica, already going into print with what their answer will be to the invasion, saying, "What we'll say is, it's unfortunate that the Sandinistas provoked this situation and I guess we'll have to deal with the refugees." So it's already planned out. We understood the U.S. trade embargo as an act of war, because economic wars lead to shooting wars. This embargo was signed as Reagan winged his way to Bitburg to lay a wreath on the graves of the Waffen SS. This coming on the heels of a "peace offer" made to the Sandinistas which their Foreign Minister D'Escoto aptly summarized as "Drop dead, or we'll kill you," because the United States "peace offer" was simply "Change your government. Relinquish power. Negotiate with the contra mercenaries, and don't you dare defend yourselves, or I'll invade." This is a "peace offer," a *diplomat*, worthy of the Führer himself. So with this embargo, in one fell swoop, Reagan has essentially cut off the local "branch office bourgeoisie" in Nicaragua from their home office, Yankee imperialism. And it's a little peculiar, because obviously the embargo is going to hurt the private sector, the bourgeoisie, more directly than the population itself, although there certainly will be austerity measures and a tightening of the

Workers Vanguard Photo



Soviet ship in Nicaragua; sign reads: "You don't discuss the sovereignty of a people, you defend it."



Young Spartacus Photo

Sandinista youth at May 16 Managua barrio protest of U.S. embargo.

economy for the entire population.

But that's the purpose of it, to tighten the screws, to "make that economy scream." And in so doing, Reagan may indeed force the FSLN, with a reluctant hand, to expropriate the bourgeoisie. This has been the U.S. policy all along, either drive them into submission or force a pretext for an invasion. And now there can be no illusions—Washington is prepared for an invasion. On May 2 the *New York Times* editorialized, "The Administration has been so afraid of 'another Cuba' that it has made it almost impossible for the Managua regime to behave like anything other than Cuba." We have, ever since the revolution drove Somoza from power, called for the full expropriation of the capitalists and landowners—for the completion of the Nicaraguan Revolution and its extension throughout the region.

Getting There Wasn't Half The Fun

So we went down there as soon as we could after the announcement of this embargo to have a look at what was happening there, to have an exchange of views with the Sandinistas, the workers and the population at large, the better to be able to come back and organize here against the U.S. war drive.

Now, I'm in the Spartacus Youth League so I thought I was ready for anything, right? But I had never been to Latin America before. You read about the war, and you read about the contras, and you read about the poverty, but it's really different to see it. The closest I could possibly come to an introduction to it would be a novel that you think is completely fantastic, like something written by Gabriel García Márquez, and you go there and you see that these novels are not fantastic; they're born out of the reality there. So you have a lush tropical paradise, studded with death squads and colonels; ten-year droughts followed by ten-year rains.

We thought we were heading straight for Managua but we got stuck in San Salvador for a few days because there was a downpour that closed the airport in Managua, which of course we didn't believe. We figured, they're invading, and that's why we can't get in. Our first stop on the plane was Belize, and this was our introduction to Latin America. I look out the window and I think, "Look at the palm trees! Wow, look at the bombs under the palm trees!" Then we get into El Salvador. We arrived on National Army Day, and the airport was a scene of military activities; there were practice parachute drops on the landing strip. It was a little tense, and every morning at 4:00 a.m. we went to the airport to try and get out. Then we thought since we didn't have our luggage, maybe we'll try and buy some swimming suits and hang out at the pool. The hotel doesn't sell swim suits. They sell T-shirts that say "Death to Communism." For a dollar more you can get another T-shirt that says "Instant Death to Communism." And then they have another one where this poor guy encircled by an entire army is saying, "Don't shoot, I'm a journalist!" Now, if I had had more of a sense of

humor at the time, I would have bought one for my comrade editors.

We went to a patio where there are beautiful mango trees and tropical plants and colorful parrots and I started to feel much more relaxed. Then we noticed that this mango tree had swastikas carved all over it. We wondered how we could get into Nicaragua. This was a useful introduction to where Nicaragua is in the region. You can't rent a car and drive there. Do you want to go through Honduras, which has become a U.S. army base and go through the contra forces on the north of Nicaragua? Do you want to fly to San José in Costa Rica and go through a Marine base and Edén Pastora's contra forces on the south of Nicaragua? There's no way in; it's a country whose borders are drawn in blood. You have to

Barricada



Nicaragua: Port of Corinto engulfed in flames after CIA sabotage explodes fuel storage tank.

fly in. So we had to wait until we could do that.

Another useful introduction to the contradictions we were about to see in Nicaragua was the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie's response to the embargo, written for the bourgeois newspaper, *La Prensa*. The article was censored in Nicaragua and printed in a gusano newspaper in Miami, which was the only newspaper carried on the Salvadoran airline. Their ten-point program for how to deal with the embargo began with asserting that Nicaragua is located in the Americas, therefore its destiny is with America, i.e., the United States of America, not with the Communist Soviet Union; that what's critical for the maintenance of Nicaragua is to stop any expropriation of the bourgeoisie; to smash and destroy the committees for defense of the revolution, which are the local committees set up in every barrio in Nicaragua to defend the population; full amnesty for the contras; free trade unions, the old CIA slogan; and this was really the giveaway about the situation in Nicaragua—you have the bourgeoisie clamoring to nationalize the army and the police. What other country in the world could you go to where the bourgeoisie is asking for this demand? The police represent the armed bodies of

force of the ruling class in most countries. In Nicaragua you have a peculiar situation of the bourgeoisie controlling 60 percent of the economy and a petty-bourgeois force, the FSLN, in complete control of the army.

Nicaraguan People Are Armed and Determined

We finally did get into Nicaragua, and my first impressions were of being quite overwhelmed by the poverty. The currency in Nicaragua, the *córdoba*, is completely worthless. From the airport to the hotel, which is not a long ride, the cab driver tried to charge us the equivalent of \$35 in *córdobas* but would accept a five-dollar bill instead. The landscape of Managua is really striking. You have the skeletons of buildings left from the 1972 earthquake, and vast expanses simply strewn with rubble, and then shantytowns. However, the poverty is really relative to the rest of Latin America, so that what you didn't see was a lot of beggars in the street. You didn't see children, like you would anywhere else in Latin America, working as shoeshine boys in the street, or in Brazil washing feet because the people don't have money for shoes. In Nicaragua children were in school. And able-bodied young men were either at work, in school or in the army.

The Nicaraguan people fought 50 years of Somoza's rule, direct Yankee imperialist interventions, lost 15,000 lives in the earthquake and 50,000 lives in their revolutionary struggle to free themselves from Somoza's tyranny. Since the revolution, they have fought five years more of contra war. They are tired and weary but there is no question

that they will defend what they've won. So I was slightly amused to see the *New York Times* reporting the Reagan administration saying that popular support for the Sandinista regime has been so severely eroded that for the U.S. to militarily take Nicaragua will be like "falling off a log." I think they're in for a rude shock. I would remind people that it took 20,000 U.S. troops to take Grenada from 700 middle-aged Cuban construction workers. In Nicaragua they are going to face an entire population that is armed and ready to defend themselves. Rather than falling off a log it may look a bit more like Reagan getting knocked off his strutting horse.

For example, there is a Sandinista youth leader I talked to who described his personal transformation into a revolutionary. He had been out of Nicaragua prior to the revolution; his parents had fled Somoza. He went back immediately after the revolution and he was all for it, except he could not reconcile himself to the need for military defense. So he requested to be assigned to the literacy brigades which much of the youth of Nicaragua is involved in, in teaching the peasantry how to read and write. He led a brigade that was about 20 miles from the Honduran border and one of his best friends was killed by a

contra attack on the brigade. He said it was like a curtain being lifted for him. For the first time he understood where violence came from, that in order to defend the revolution they needed arms, and he requested to be transferred out of the literacy brigade unit and has since worked training militias. And he said, look, I was a pacifist once; I should be able to explain to people what's wrong with pacifism, that some things are worth fighting for. But I'm not sure I'm going to be able to get back into the United States again, so could you do it for me?

This is who the U.S. is going to face if they go in there. They may get in but the question is how are they going to get out. The youth of that country are prepared to defend that revolution and when I talk about youth I'm not talking about "old" people in their twenties; "youth" in Nicaragua is a very short time span. There is a park in Managua dedicated as a memorial to a Sandinista named Luis Alfonso, who joined the FSLN when he was six years old, and was shot down by the Guardia Nacional when he was nine. This is the memory that people keep and will defend against any Yankee invasion. The role of education in the revolution was also interesting given what the Reagan administration is trying to do to education in this country—i.e., they're dismantling financial aid; they're dismantling education itself, because they don't want people to be able to question the values they're being taught in this society. Whereas in Nicaragua the right to learn is seen as part of the revolution. We ran into a soldier at a bookstore who had a whole armload of books—everything from Lenin to *A Tale of Two Cities*. And his only complaint about being at the front was that he couldn't buy books there, so every fortnight or so he tried to get into Managua to buy an armload of books to bring back to his fellow soldiers.

We did not see a great deal of argument between the FSLN and the bourgeoisie over the embargo, but there was a raging fight about who stopped Hitler. We were there May 8, "V-E Day," the anniversary of the Red Army's victory over Hitler, and there were trade-union meetings and defense committee assemblies called to celebrate. Meanwhile you had the bourgeoisie in *La Prensa* quoting Reagan at Bitburg saying that the main enemy is not fascism but the new Communist threat, and that who really stopped Hitler was the Americans at D-Day. Now in Central America—and particularly in Nicaragua today—this is not an abstract question. It is not simply that Ortega was that very day in Moscow asking for some relief, some aid from the hardships that would be necessary because of the U.S. embargo, and that Reagan was at Bitburg laying a wreath at the graves of the SS. Ortega made a speech that drew similar points to the article we wrote in *Workers Vanguard* on the contra/Nazi connection. When the Red Army liberated Europe from Nazism every last big war criminal the Red Army captured was killed. And when the United States went into Germany what did they do? They were worried about revolutionary outbreaks in Europe, and they secured safe transit to Latin America for Nazis like Klaus



Poster of Lenin at the combative FANATEX textile plant in Managua.

Barbie, the butcher of Lyons. These are the people who are working under the direction of the CIA, who have created the contra death squads and who work in the same manner as the old *Freikorps*. They specialize in the torture of civilians, of women and of children. This is the meaning of Reagan's Bitburg trip—let's get together this time against the Russians.

I didn't find it that peculiar that there was this raging dispute over who smashed the Nazis—the Americans or the Soviet Red Army—because when you pose the question of social revolution in Nicaragua today you run right into the "Russian question." Behind every movement for social liberation, be it the struggle for black freedom in this country, or the struggle against apartheid in South Africa, or the struggle for liberation from imperialism in Central America—the United States sees the hand of the Soviet Union. Which is their backhanded way of paying tribute to what the legacy of the Russian Revolution is, despite decades of degeneration under Stalinism. And it does give testimony to what the U.S. game plan for Central America is: they are for an anti-Communist rollback, principally aimed at the Soviet Union, which stands as the major military-industrial powerhouse against capitalist rule and for those states that have already overthrown capitalism. They have a new domino theory, which is "yesterday Grenada, today Nicaragua, tomorrow Cuba, then on to the big one, the Soviet Union." They're looking for an easy win, but Nicaragua is not going to be so easy. They hope very quickly to overcome the "Vietnam syndrome" which has stayed the hand of U.S. imperialism in no small measure.

Defend, Complete, Extend the Revolution!

So this is how we in the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth League view Nicaragua, as caught in the crosshairs of this anti-Soviet war drive. And this is why we have repeatedly stressed, much to the consternation of our enemies on the fake-left, that defense of Cuba and the USSR begins in Central America. There can be no middle road, but that is what the Sandinistas have tried to pursue for six long years now and it is wearing thin and it is going to go one way or another. When the FSLN came to power in 1979, they promised a "generous" revolution, by which they meant that the National Guard would not be prosecuted, and they vowed the

protection of private property and "political pluralism."

What this means concretely for the working people is a situation today of war communism without the communism. They are being asked to make enormous sacrifices. Factory workers work six days a week, and while the bourgeoisie is being subsidized with

Juventud Sandinista 19 de Julio



"Nicaragua alerta": soldiers on guard against "contra" attack.

price support payments in dollars, the working class is being asked again and again to tighten its belt. This is quite a dangerous policy because the FSLN is holding back a population that has had a taste of power and wants its own class rule. The FSLN is afraid to unleash this revolutionary appetite of the working population of that country and risks dissipating, disarming and defeating it.

We visited a textile factory now called FANATEX. The workers took over that factory in 1980 and attempted to establish workers control. When they overthrew Somoza they thought they were fighting for socialism, for their own class rule. But they were met by FSLN troops who explained, "I'm sorry, this is not that stage of the revolution yet; this is the anti-Somoza stage and the democratic stage and we can't go ahead further than that." They closed down the factory, fired everyone who had been involved there, reopened it a few years later and hardly any of the same workers involved in the factory occupation are still employed there. However, it remains a very combative workforce, and a critical one for that country. We saw at the factory posters of Lenin and Che, and an entire wall of the building is painted with the names of their comrades who have gone to the front.

We went there two days after there had been a strike at this factory over something archaic, a holdover from the Somoza regime. The income that they receive is so meager that they historically have supplemented their income with payment in kind of 15 yards of cloth, which they can either use or sell. Because of the embargo and the Sandinista policy of continued subsidizing of the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie, the FSLN wanted to take away the payment in kind without any commensurate increase in salary, and this provoked a two-day shutdown of the factory. The

contortions that the Sandinista leadership has to go through in order to do this are really revealing. The Sandinista trade-union paper goes through tortuous arguments to try to explain why the FSLN is the party of the working class, the vanguard of the working class, but why the working class cannot lead or take action. The CST [Sandinista Labor Federation] elaborated its position on the strike as being in general a historic gain of the working class. However, for the most part, today the working class in Nicaragua must "show off its political power because a strike is not the most efficient way to achieve the workers' goals."

What the middle road also means, and what a mixed economy also means is double and triple oppression of women, because the church is quite an important force in Nicaragua; an important force for counterrevolution. Women do not have the right to abortion. At first I was shocked to see so many teenage women already with two or three kids. The FSLN can't touch that question without taking on the church. One woman who works in a bookstore, whom we got to know quite well, is 32 years old and has six children who range in age from 17 to four. She works around the clock. She gets up at five in the morning to start feeding her children and send them off to school, which is quite a chore because there's only one plate and one fork. Most people in Nicaragua do not have plates and forks; they eat off banana leaves with their hands, which is a mixed blessing. They don't have running water two days a week in the barrios, so if you can't wash your dishes it's probably healthier not to have them. And then she goes to work and then to FSLN or CDS [Sandinista Defense Committee] meetings or organizes demonstrations. So the accommodation to the church has a direct effect on this woman's life and thousands of other women's lives.

Discussions with the leadership were quite different from talks with workers and people on the streets in Nicaragua. Our first discussion with the FSLN leadership was with somebody in charge at their newspaper who said, "Bourgeoisie? What bourgeoisie? Threat of internal counterrevolution? No, no, we have only patriotic, loyal bourgeoisie here in Nicaragua." And then you have those who take on the question directly, but only to say that the people from *La Prensa* or the people from COSEP, the bourgeois businessmen's association who claim that life was better before the revolution, are only Nicaraguans by accident of birth. But this is no accident. The contras are no accident, the bourgeoisie is no accident. These are capitalism's desperados, who are in action right now spurred by Reagan to heighten the contradictions that exist in Nicaragua. Meanwhile, one comrade who was in the Matagalpa area was talking to a soldier who explained, "We had the Sandinista revolution, but we haven't had the revolution yet. Have you ever heard of the class struggle?" One FSLN-leader we talked to, asking if there were going to be demonstrations against the blockade, against the embargo, informed us that no, absolutely not, the Party doesn't want them; it's much

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Workers Vanguard Photo

For international labor solidarity: West Coast longshoremen, March 1983, demand labor boycott of weapons shipments to Salvadoran death squad regime.

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Chicago
Tues: 5:00-9:00 p.m., Sat: 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
161 W. Harrison St., 10th Floor
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New York City
Tues: 6:00-9:00 p.m., Sat: 12:00-4:00 p.m.
41 Warren St. (one block below Chambers St. near Church St.)
New York, NY
Phone: (212) 267-1025

2, 3, Many Defeats for U.S. Imperialism!

VIETNAM WAS A VICTORY!



Victorious Viet Cong tank rolls into presidential palace in Saigon, April 1975 (above left). Defeat of U.S. imperialism and its puppets made possible scenes like the one above right, of smiling children strolling through streets of Ho Chi Minh City, 1985.

As the Reagan gang gears up to invade Central America and smash the Nicaraguan Revolution, the spectre of another Vietnam looms ever larger. Recognizing that the Vietnam War ended in a historic victory for the workers and oppressed of the world and a historic defeat for U.S. imperialism, the Spartacus Youth League sponsored a series of forums to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the liberation of Saigon on 30 April 1975. We are printing, in two parts, an edited transcript of this forum given by Spartacist League central committee member Joseph Seymour at UC Berkeley on April 27.

Part Two, to be printed in our September issue, will trace the origin and course of the Vietnamese Revolution, which triumphed first against French colonialism and then against American imperialism. It will also discuss how the Vietnam War deeply polarized American society, especially giving impetus to the radicalization of the black masses. And it will explain why the Trotskyists of the SL/SYL have for the past 20 years been the best defenders of the Vietnamese Revolution in this the heartland of world capitalism.

Part One of Two

On the morning of April 29, ten years ago, a leading CIA operative in the American embassy in Saigon read a message which sent him into a state of near shock. It was an intelligence report that early that evening North Vietnamese gunners would start shelling the presidential palace, located near the embassy, with 130 mm artillery. "Holy shit!" he thought. "If that hits this building all that will be left will be a crater about the size of the Grand Canyon." So he ran upstairs to his superiors, and they wired Washington. Washington replied: "Get the hell out!"

The American ambassador to Saigon at the time, Graham Martin, was such a fanatical anti-Communist nut he believed his own propaganda that the South Vietnamese puppet regime would somehow rally and stave off the North Vietnamese. So he left the evacuation and even the preparations for it to the last minute. You also must understand that for 20 years the American ambassador was the real ruler of South

Vietnam. He made and broke the various puppet governments with a proverbial flip of the wrist. He personally ordered the terror-bombing of peasant villages and the assassination of thousands. Yet at 7 p.m. that evening the last American ambassador to Saigon (soon to be renamed Ho Chi Minh City) folded up the American flag, climbed up to the roof of the embassy, went up the crawlway of a helicopter and got his ass out of there.

There's a famous saying, usually attributed to the ancient Chinese, that one picture is worth a thousand words. And certainly the picture of American officials fleeing the revolutionary forces in Vietnam is a powerful image of defeat and humiliation. But even this picture only begins to give you a sense of what it was like in the American embassy that day. In the course of the 20 years in which the U.S. ran South Vietnam, it created a veritable army of collaborators and agents. And, of course, these people were hated by the mass of the Vietnamese and feared their vengeance. So when the collapse came, they mobbed the American embassy trying to get in. They fought, gouged, trampled each other. At the same time, American officials from all over the city were desperately streaming toward the embassy. And when they got to the embassy this mob of Vietnamese collaborators would grab hold of them and implore the Americans: "I've served

you loyally, you have to take me with you." So the Marine guards would smash these Vietnamese in the face, stomp on them, shouting, "Shut up, you gooks! Let the Americans escape!"

A similar scene took place at the CIA headquarters, the Hotel Duc, where hundreds of its Vietnamese agents assembled, expecting to be airlifted out. Fortunately, it was too late for that. So their American case officers said, "OK, guys, wait, be calm," while they snuck up to the roof and took off on helicopters, leaving their Vietnamese henchmen to revolutionary justice. There is a lesson here. It's better to be an enemy of the CIA than its agent. The collapse of the South Vietnamese puppet army, the so-called ARVN (Army of the Republic of Viet Nam), was so total and so sudden it surprised everyone, including the North Vietnamese, who had to keep moving up their timetable. Entire divisions, tens of thousands of men, deserted en masse. At one point when a North Vietnamese tank column was approaching the city of Hue at night, all of the ARVN defenders started to run away. The North Vietnamese just turned on the lights of their tanks so the fleeing soldiers could better see where they were going—bye, guys. An entire South Vietnamese army disappeared into the night, never to be seen again.

What was involved here was not only the legendary personal cowardice of the

Ngo Vinh Long Collection



Heroes of the Vietnamese Revolution: Ho Chi Minh (center) planning battle strategy with Pham Van Dong (second from left), Truong Chinh (second from right) and Commander Vo Nguyen Giap (far right).

venal officer corps. The ranks of the South Vietnamese puppet army consisted of conscripts, mainly teenagers, and they had nothing to fight for. In fact, on a personal, gut level many South Vietnamese soldiers probably hated the Americans more than did the North Vietnamese. They had seen the Americans turn their sisters into prostitutes, their kid brothers into pimps, their mothers into beggars and camp followers. And now they got a chance to get a little of their own back. The CIA sent one of its planes from Air America (better known as Air Opium) to get U.S. officials out of the major base at Da Nang. As soon as this plane landed ARVN soldiers climbed on board and put a gun to the pilot's head, saying, "The Americans don't go, we go." They then tried getting American officials out by helicopter. And this helicopter was shot down by South Vietnamese soldiers.

For revolutionaries, victories—especially victories of this magnitude and this long- and hard-deserved—are few and far between. So one wants to savor this historic moment, and I could quite happily spend the next hour recounting anecdotes about the last days of American South Vietnam. There's a good book by a leading CIA operative on the spot, Frank Snepp's *Decent Interval*. It's a fun read. However, there are other and more important political points to be made.

Yes, the Vietnamese Defeated American Imperialism

To appreciate the scale of American imperialism's defeat in Vietnam one has to understand the scale of its war effort. Here was the greatest military power on earth waging near-total war on a very economically backward country of 50 million people. When the American rulers—the Kennedy boys, the Bundy brothers, Robert McNamara, Lyndon Johnson—began escalating in the early 1960s, they were absolutely confident that they were going to win. When Bobby Kennedy, who later became a leading "dove," visited Saigon in 1962, he proclaimed: "We are going to win." This was to be the big win against Communist insurgency. After all, how could the United States of America possibly lose to a guerrilla force in South Vietnam and what Henry Kissinger later called "a fourth-rate

power," that is, North Vietnam?

At the height of the war the U.S. had half a million combat troops in Vietnam and another 300,000 in the surrounding region. Fully 60 percent of the entire U.S. infantry and Marines Corps were engaged in Vietnam. With the exception of nuclear weapons, every weapon in the Pentagon arsenal was used in Vietnam. The war was regarded as a testing ground for new weapons, everything from cluster bombs to chemical poisons, like Agent Orange. The U.S. dropped more bomb tonnage on Vietnam than the combined total dropped by all of the combatants in World War II.

A major weapon was the B-52, a big bomber originally designed to nuke the Soviet Union. It's the bomber in *Dr. Strangelove*. B-52s were used not only to bomb North Vietnam back into the stone age, in the words of former Air Force general Curtis LeMay, but also against the guerrilla forces in the south. Practically every day a fleet of B-52s would take off from Guam or Okinawa, heading toward the jungles along the Vietnam-Cambodia border. And they would bomb the hell out of the area, trying to destroy the headquarters of the National Liberation Front, better known as the Viet Cong. A former leader of the NLF describes what it was like:

"From half a mile away, the roar of explosions tore eardrums, leaving many jungle dwellers permanently deaf. The shock waves knocked their victims senseless. Any hit within a quarter of a mile would collapse the walls of an unreinforced bunker, burying alive the people cowering inside."

—New York Times Magazine, 31 March

These people faced this not once or twice but every day for years!

All told, the U.S. killed directly at least two million Vietnamese; maimed, wounded and made into homeless refugees countless millions more. Yet in the end the American ambassador had to flee from the roof of his own embassy. And that picture is seared into the memory of the American ruling class. It is a day they will never forget.

And in a way they cannot accept, cannot admit that they were actually beaten by the Vietnamese. In the past ten years a myth has developed and become more or less widespread, that the United States didn't lose in the jungles of Southeast Asia, they lost in the editorial offices of CBS and the lecture halls of Berkeley. This myth is perpetuated not only by the right in this country but also, from their own angle, by the liberals and most of the left. General William Westmoreland, the [American] commander during the height of the war, keeps saying to this day, "militarily we were successful... we didn't lose a single battle above com-

pany level" (quoted in Harrison E. Salisbury, ed., *Vietnam Reconsidered* [1984]). For Westmoreland and his ilk, it was the politicians in Washington who tied their hands; it was the media who turned the American people against the war by showing U.S. soldiers burning down the huts of Vietnamese villagers, by showing children scarred by napalm. The liberals and most so-called leftists agree with Westmoreland on this point. They say: "Yes, we did it. It was our vigils, our protests, our letters to Congressmen, our marches which forced the U.S. government to withdraw from the tragic blunder of the Vietnam War."

That is a self-serving lie. Contrary to both Westmoreland and the liberals, the United States was militarily defeated in Vietnam. This is not to say that the North Vietnamese army and Viet Cong forces overwhelmed the U.S. army with superior military force. That was not possible. However, in the course of this seven-year war the American army underwent a collapse in its own way as dramatic as that of the South Vietnam-

Young Spartacus



ese puppet forces in the spring of 1975. Especially after the January 1968 Tet Offensive the U.S. army ceased to be any kind of fighting force. This was a *beaten* army, whose soldiers wanted only to stay alive until they could get out.

Mutinies became so common the brass changed the name for it. They were called "combat refusals." According to official Pentagon statistics, 30 percent of U.S. soldiers were on hard drugs, opium or heroin, much of it supplied by the CIA and its local agents



UPI
April 1975: CIA flunkies scramble like rats on roof of U.S. embassy building to catch final flight from Saigon.

and friends. A soldier would go on watch, and in the morning his buddies would find him dead. No, it wasn't that some Viet Cong guerrilla had snuck up and cut his throat. He had O.D.'d. Everyone smoked pot all the time because the reality was just too grim to face without it. Vietnam gave the American military a new term: fragging. It was named after fragmentation bombs, the preferred way of doing it because they didn't leave fingerprints. An officer or an NCO who was too gung-ho, too likely to get his men killed usually got one warning. And if he kept it up, he was fragged. It is even conceivable, that in the last few years of the American presence, as many U.S. officers were killed by their own men as in combat with the Vietnamese "enemy."

Anti-Communist Crusade Buried in Swamps of Vietnam

What lay behind what one military writer aptly called the disintegration and decay of the United States army during the Vietnam era? It is not just that a lot of American soldiers were being killed and wounded. The casualty level in Vietnam was not higher than in World War II or the Korean War (which also became an unpopular war). It's what they were being killed *for* in Vietnam that made the difference.

The great Russian revolutionist Leon Trotsky, founder of the Red Army, once said that an army, especially a mass conscript army, expresses in a concentrated way the contradictions of the society which produces it. To understand what happened to the American army in Vietnam, you have to understand the society that produced that army. Most of the U.S. soldiers in the Vietnam War grew up in the so-called "American century," of the 1950s, that

is, during the height of the Cold War/McCarthyite/Red Scare period. Those of us who grew up then—and I was one of them—were constantly bombarded with the crudest anti-Communist propaganda and indoctrination.

I remember when I was eight or nine driving home one evening with my father and listening on the car radio to a dramatization of George Orwell's *1984*. This is a nightmare vision of a totalitarian dictatorship, obviously a projection of Stalin's Russia, in which someone is horribly tortured to make him say that three are actually two fingers, or something like that. When I first started to read newspapers, I read about the execution of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, allegedly for betraying the secret of the atomic bomb to the Russians. Supposedly, if it hadn't been for the Rosenbergs the Russians still wouldn't have the bomb. We were all taught, and more or less believed, that the Communists were out to conquer and subjugate the world, and when they did, we would all be dressed in grey, like in prison, and bow three times a day to Stalin's tomb in Moscow.

And this was the political consciousness of the generation that was drafted and sent to fight in Vietnam. In fact, Vietnam was to be the great anti-Communist crusade for this generation. Moreover, it was an anti-Communist crusade proclaimed, initiated and led *not* by rightists, like Barry Goldwater and the younger Ronald Reagan, but by the great *liberal* hero of the day, John F. Kennedy. In JFK's own words, the United States must stop "the onrushing tide of Communism from engulfing all Asia." South Vietnam was "the cornerstone of the Free World in Southeast Asia, the keystone to the arch, the finger in the dike." It's an odd image, when you

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From Kennedy to Reagan: "Free World" Terror



Wide World

The Horror of Napalm

The following is reprinted from Welsh photographer Philip Jones Griffiths' *Vietnam Inc.* (1971).

Scarcely 20 years after incinerating Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the U.S. war machine "developed and refined" the obscenity, napalm.

NAPALM. The most effective "anti-personnel" weapon, it is euphemistically described as "unfamiliar cooking fluid" by those apologists for American military methods who automatically attribute all napalm cases to domestic accidents caused by the people using gasoline instead of kerosene in their cooking stoves. Kerosene is far too expensive for the peasants, who actually use charcoal for cooking. The only "cooking fluid" they know is very "unfamiliar"—and is delivered through their roofs by U.S. planes.

Some of its finer selling points were explained to me by a pilot in 1966: "We sure are pleased with those backroom boys at Dow. The original product wasn't so hot—if the gooks were quick they could scrape it off. So the boys started adding polystyrene—now it sticks like shit to a blanket. But then if the gooks jumped under water it stopped burning, so they started adding Willie Peter [WP—white phosphorous] so's to make it burn better. It'll even burn under water now. And just one drop is enough, it'll keep on burning right down to the bone so they die anyway from phosphorous poisoning."



Time



War criminal Henry Kissinger (inset), responsible for raining death on millions of Vietnamese by U.S. B-52 bombers. At left, two of Kissinger's victims of napalm.

McElhinney/Newsweek

Vietnam...

(continued from page 7)

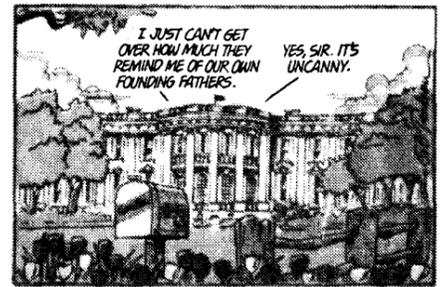
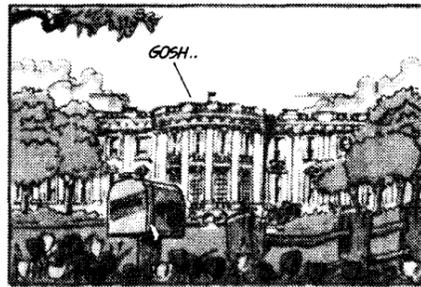
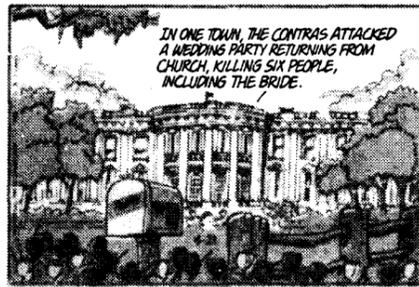
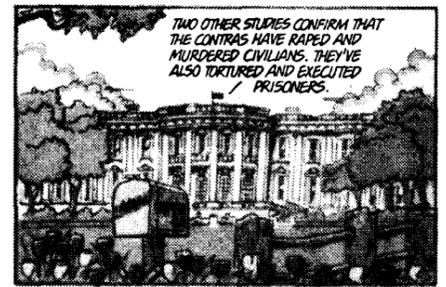
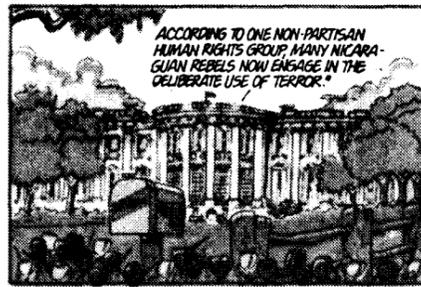
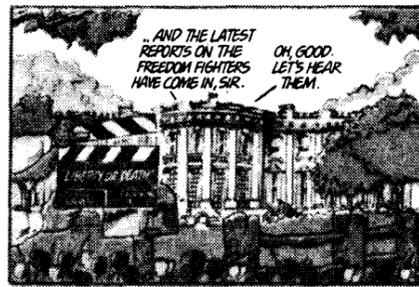
think about it. South Vietnam, Kennedy declared, was "a proving ground for democracy in Asia" and a "test of American responsibility and determination" (quoted in Stanley Karnow, *Vietnam: A History* [1984]). Sound familiar? Maybe Reagan's cribbing from JFK's old Vietnam speeches.

Most of the American soldiers who were first sent to Vietnam believed all this stuff. They were told that a handful of Communist guerrillas were terrorizing the peasantry. They expected to be welcomed as liberators and protectors by the Vietnamese. The confrontation between these American youth in uniform, steeped in anti-Communist ideology and mythology, and the reality of the Vietnamese Revolution was a shattering experience. It is an experience which continues to reverberate in American society to this day.

I'm going to read a long quote from a Vietnam vet because it says a lot more effectively and powerfully than I can what happened to the American army in a political sense:

"Word came through that the lead platoon had run into something as we filed through the village. A woman was screaming and cursing at us as we filed through. I do not know for sure what she was saying. It was not complimentary. Why is she yelling at me? I come ten thousand miles, march in the rain, monsoons, tropical sun, rice paddies, rivers, hip-deep in slime, tripping over vines, falling over dikes, being bitten by

Doonesbury G.B. TRUDEAU



can live without the fear that causes people to put locks on doors. And then after another thousand years, it will get to the point where even the doors won't be necessary. Think about that for a while, shitbird.' I did think about that, and two months later, during my seventh month of duty upcountry, I told them to shove it; they would have to win the war without me. I didn't care what they did; I was not going out there anymore. Burning people's houses down to save them from Communism does not make any sense" (reproduced in Salisbury, ed., *Vietnam Reconsidered*).

Workers Vanguard Photo



From outset of Vietnam War, SL called for military victory of NLF forces against U.S. imperialism, fought for labor strikes against the war.

uncounted species of bugs, carrying unknown sicknesses, always tired, getting diarrhea, being fucked with by the lifers, living on crap I wouldn't have given a dog I hated, getting shot at, ambushed, booby-trapped, hand-grenaded, my friends getting fucked up to save her sorry fucking ass—and she is going to stand there and spit and curse at me? A voice in the back of my head started speaking softly, very softly, because there was a lot of misguided patriotism in the way. Misguided patriotism makes it hard for sensible thoughts to linger for any amount of time. It was saying, 'Hey, man, this woman don't care how noble you are for coming all this way to save her from her neighbors; all she knows is that you or someone just like you just set her house on fire. You may call it a hooch and laugh because it doesn't have a door, but it is her house and it has just been torched, for whatever noble reasons. That's why this woman is cursing you and all your ancestors. Because you, and not her evil neighbor, just Zipped her home and destroyed all the things valuable in her life. As far as having no door goes, she is so far ahead of you, you will probably never know. She has a society that does not need a door, let alone a series of locks on the door, as opposed to the noble society you come from. That's right, asshole, you thought you were so civilized; you thought you were going to do so much for these poor, ignorant savages. Maybe in a thousand years, if your society lasts that long, it will have evolved to the point where it

One doesn't want to prettify the American soldiers in Vietnam. They were not all good guys. A lot of them hated the Vietnamese and wanted to kill them all. The My Lai massacre was just one of the biggest and best known of the atrocities committed by the American forces. But whether they sympathized with the Vietnamese or hated the Vietnamese, the American soldiers knew that they were fighting the mass of the Vietnamese people, a people inspired by the communist cause to feats of courage, discipline and self-sacrifice which the Americans found incredible. As one black Marine lieutenant put it:

"The enemy would do anything to win. You had to respect that. They believed in a cause. They had the support of the people. That's the key that we Americans don't understand yet. We can't do anything in the military ourselves unless we have the support of the people."

—reproduced in Wallaëe Ferry, ed., *Bloods: An Oral History of the Vietnam War by Black Veterans* (1984)

It was the Vietnam War which wore away the support of the American people for militarism. Shortly after the U.S. forces pulled out of Vietnam in 1973, they abolished the draft. It had become deeply unpopular because nobody wanted to be sent to another Vietnam. At the same time, the army was so demoralized the brass figured that they might improve it somewhat with a volunteer army. In other words, U.S. imperialism could no longer recruit its armed forces by appeals to popular patriotism and national duty, but only

by cold, hard cash. Look at the ads for the army on TV, they're all based on appeals to individual economic interest—"choose your career, learn a job skill, earn your college tuition."

For who in this country does army life look like a step up, look economically good? Mainly for poor black and Hispanic youth, who are even more disproportionately represented in the present army than in the conscript army that fought in Vietnam. So today the American army consists disproportionately of blacks and Hispanics who are by and large the least patriotic, the least anti-communist, the most alienated from the "American way of life." These are youth who hate and fear everything Ronald Reagan stands for. Well, this does not make for a very politically reliable army, especially when it comes to suppressing revolutions and national liberation struggles of dark-skinned peoples in Latin America, Africa and Asia. The American ruling class, and particularly the Pentagon brass, are very much aware of this contradiction, and that contradiction is a direct result of Vietnam.

A Global Tail Wind

The German Marxist historian Franz Mehring said that revolutions have a long tail wind. By this he meant that the effects of a revolution go far into the future in ways that are not predictable at the time that the revolution occurs. The Vietnamese Revolution has had a global tail wind because in defeating and weakening U.S. imperialism—the main force for counterrevolution in the world—it opened the road for progressive and revolutionary struggles from southern Africa to Central America.

Many of you are participating in the current anti-apartheid protests. And, especially if you're younger, you may think there is no particular connection between the black upsurge in South Africa and the Vietnam War. In fact, there is a direct connection which runs

through the Angolan war of 1975-76. In the early 1970s Angola and Mozambique in southern Africa were still Portuguese colonies, in which there was a decade-long and very bloody war of national liberation. The sight of the Vietnamese defeating the American army inspired the black nationalist guerrillas in southern Africa to fight harder. At the same time, the Portuguese imperialists became demoralized. In the spring of 1974 there was a left-wing military coup in Lisbon, which created a revolutionary situation in Portugal itself and led to the Portuguese withdrawing from southern Africa.

Of the various nationalist guerrilla forces in Angola, the MPLA, which was the best organized and had close ties to the Soviet bloc, especially Cuba, gained the ascendancy. At that point Henry Kissinger, who was running American foreign policy, wanted to make Angola a major showdown with the Soviet bloc. He was determined to destroy the MPLA and turn Angola into a U.S. neocolony run by "Free World" puppets. Kissinger turned to the South African government and said in effect, "You invade Angola, smash the MPLA, and Washington will back you up." The MPLA forces were, of course, no match for the mechanized, technologically advanced South African army, which was stopped only by the introduction of several thousand Cuban troops armed and backed by the Soviet Union. Kissinger now wanted to escalate, putting in U.S. military advisers, pouring in arms and money for Angolan puppets like Jonas Savimbi. But for the majority of the American ruling class, the experience of Vietnam was still too fresh. A *New York Times* editorial stated, "fear of being dragged into another Vietnam war is held by many." So Congress cut off the funds for Kissinger's Angolan adventure.

The South Africans had been promised and were expecting American backing. When this wasn't forthcoming,

TROTSKYISM vs. STALINISM: LEARN THE HISTORY!

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(This pamphlet, published originally in 1975, contains eight articles which appeared as a series in *Workers Vanguard*, Nos. 23-30, dated 22 June 1973 to 12 October 1973. *WV* is the newspaper of the Spartacist League.)

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they withdrew their forces from Angola. For South Africa's blacks, the sight of the white South African army retreating before the Cubans and black Angolan nationalists was inspiring. It was only six months after South Africa was defeated in Angola that you had the Soweto uprising in the summer of 1976. And it was the Soweto uprising which began a new period of black militancy and struggle in South Africa, the most important element being the emergence of an independent black and "coloured" [mixed race] union movement.

Let's look closer to home, in what Reagan has called America's "front yard," Central America. In the two decades following the 1959-60 Cuban Revolution, U.S. imperialism turned almost all of Latin America into a bloody, right-wing military dictatorship. Thousands of workers, peasants and radical intellectuals were killed in a continental-wide counterrevolutionary terror. Washington was determined that there would be no more Cubas.

In no area of the world has direct U.S. military intervention been more common than in the Caribbean and Central America. The Somoza dynasty in Nicaragua, which lasted half a century, was first imposed by the Marines when they occupied the country in the 1920s. Lyndon Johnson thought nothing of sending in the Marines to smash a popular insurrection in the Dominican Republic in 1965. That was just routine.

Yet in 1979 what the U.S. rulers feared most was happening in Nicaragua. A popular revolution, led by the radical nationalist Sandinistas, was toppling their man in Managua, "Tachito" Somoza—the guy had even graduated from West Point. Why didn't the Pentagon send in the Marines to save Somoza, like they had done countless times in the past in this region? Again,

Angola—Soviet-backed Cuban troops were key in defeat of South African invasion, 1975-76.



the spectre of another Vietnam. Thus, the liberation of Saigon helped open the road for the liberation of Managua four years later, creating a revolutionary situation in the very front yard of U.S. imperialism.

Someone might argue that unquestionably in the 1970s the so-called "Vietnam syndrome" acted to restrain U.S. militarism. But is this still true under Reagan? Here is a man who is an unreconstructed Vietnam hawk, who called the Vietnam War a "noble cause." Yet he was elected handily in 1980 and re-elected with an even bigger majority last year. And what about the invasion of Grenada? As one of the architects of the Vietnam War, McGeorge Bundy, put it, Grenada is to Nicaragua as a marshmallow is to a hand grenade.

It's true, for the present generation of American youth, Vietnam is not part of their living experience. It's history; moreover, a history they don't even know very well. Many of them no doubt think that Thieu and Ky are something

you order in a Vietnamese restaurant and that the Tet Offensive is the name of a punk-rock group. (Actually, it's a good name for a punk-rock group.) Nonetheless, even if many youth don't know what caused the Vietnam War and how it evolved, the experience of that long, dirty, losing colonial war has gone deep into the political consciousness of the American people. There is no stomach in this country for similar military adventures in which Americans, not their foreign hirelings like the Nicaraguan contras, get killed.

That's one of the reasons Reagan has to sell the contras so hard. He's run out of superlatives. After he calls these murderers and torturers "the moral equal of our Founding Fathers," what more is there he can say? I've got to read a Doonesbury cartoon on this [see page 8]. What's behind this is not just rhetorical overkill to get more money out of Congress. Reagan feels closer, is closer to the Nicaraguan contras than to the American people.

About six months ago, around the time of the elections, the Reaganites were glorying in all these polls showing that the present generation of student-youth, unlike those of the 1960s, were now right-wing. There was all this "new patriotism" baloney. But the campuses don't look like that today, do they? And what about the right-wing youth, like the *Berkeley Review* crowd here? How come they're not down in Honduras, fighting with their comrades-in-arms, "the moral equal of our Founding Fathers"? Or how come they're not joining the army? Where are all these rightist youth? They're all enrolled in Tax-Dodging 101. The only thing a Reaganite right-winger hates more than Communism is higher taxes. Not only don't these guys want to fight in an anti-Communist crusade, they don't even want to pay for it. There's an old anti-Zionist joke: What's the definition of a Zionist? Answer: a Jew who gets money from another Jew to send a third Jew to Palestine. What's the definition of a Reaganite anti-Communist? Answer: an American who borrows money from Japanese bankers to hire Nicaraguan gangsters to fight the "reds."

So the "Vietnam syndrome" is still very much alive in this country. One section of the ruling class feels it especially keenly, the military command. Most of these officers served in Vietnam and know what that war did to the U.S. army. They saw their fellow officers fragged. So you now get a number of Pentagon generals saying, if we send combat troops into Central America, we must have a "domestic consensus" behind it. What they mean is that they don't want U.S. officers shot in the back by their own troops, many of whom are black and Hispanic and have no love for Ronald Reagan's America.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

Cop Terror...

(continued from page 2)

student referendum on apartheid and participated in the action on that basis. (*YSp* readers may not be aware that the famous 1968 "Columbia Revolt" was sparked over the refusal to permit black community access to a proposed university gym in Morningside Park. Columbia is a notoriously racist slumlord and the NYPD patrols the border between Columbia and Harlem in the same spirit that South African security enforces the pass laws.) SYL comrades who participated in the Columbia blockade explained from the start that the administration and trustees of the university to whom the demands for corporate divestment are addressed are *on the other side*. The Democrats, posturing as the "friends" of blacks in South Africa, are in fact the architects of racist murder here and abroad. The courts, the cops, the university, the capitalist politicians are the avowed enemies of the oppressed and all who take up their cause.

The Democratic Party machine in New York is no slouch when it comes to co-option, and such was the fate of the "leadership" of the Mandela Hall sit-out. On the same day that Columbia got its court injunction against the block-

ade, the official end of the blockade was announced. When the last day of the sit-out came, a spirited rally beheld the spectacle of the students cutting the chains they had placed on Hamilton Hall themselves. Students were then marched through Harlem to a Baptist church where... Democrat C. Vernon Mason held a kick-off rally for his campaign for Manhattan District Attorney! Not surprisingly, several "blockaders" sported Mason for D.A. buttons at the June Harlem action. Now they're supposed to put their picket signs aside and take up their clipboards for the next "great liberal hope."

When we marched through Harlem after the Columbia blockade had ended, the SYL chanted "From Harlem to Soweto—same enemy, same fight, workers of the world unite!" It is to such a program for black liberation through workers revolution—in South Africa and especially here in the belly of the imperialist beast—that the SYL seeks to win young militants. There's every reason to believe that student protest will continue and broaden this fall. The SYL is fighting to win students who want to oppose apartheid away from the misleaders who herd them into a church with the Democratic Party hustlers. Youth who want to smash apartheid belong in the communist SYL. ■

Cornell's Crackdown...

(continued from page 2)

Democratic Party "anti-Reaganism" the tails of the Democrats on the left lose their niche. That's why the whole reformist cabal—the Communist Party, the Workers World Party, the Socialist Workers Party, *ad nauseam*—consciously organized a Philadelphia protest May 30 excluding any mention of MOVE and whitewashing Goode.

The impact of the students' statement of outrage over the Philly holocaust was, we suspect, not lost on the administration or its cops. In the face of Cornell's vendetta against the protesters, some of the students became "uncomfortable" with the MOVE bunker, which went beyond the permissible, liberal-supported outcry against racism in faraway South Africa and posed the uncomfortable question of murderous racism at home. Unfortunately their objections carried the day and after debate the bunker was ludicrously renamed the "LOVE bunker" in early June. Drop the charges against the Cornell anti-apartheid protesters!

Just as the powers that be gambled on sheer terror and a black mayor to

keep a lid on any outpouring of outrage in Philadelphia, so Jackson's frequent appearances at campus anti-apartheid rallies were designed to channel discontent into tame, electoral support to the Democrats. Those students who looked to Jackson as any sort of leader in the struggle against racism should recall his response to the Philadelphia holocaust. At a press conference in Philly, he called on Goode "to ensure that black contractors get a share of the work of rebuilding the 61 homes destroyed in the fire" (*Philadelphia Inquirer*, 5 June). For Jackson, it was just another chance to push a little "black capitalism."

The Spartacus Youth League has actively intervened into the campus anti-apartheid protests which exploded this spring in order to provide the perspective of militant anti-imperialist opposition to *all* wings of this racist ruling class and to "divest" students of illusions that these rulers can be pressured into aiding the just struggles of the oppressed—from Durban to Detroit. At Cornell as elsewhere, protest actions went beyond the liberal plea for "divestment" and began to confront the reality of this violent, racist capitalist system. It is our urgent task to win to revolutionary socialism the best of a new generation of student militants now learning that "it is right to rebel." ■

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Nicaragua...

(continued from page 5)

more important for people to work and increase production than to display enthusiasm. Nonetheless, there was a demonstration in Managua of about a thousand, largely women who were mothers of heroes and martyrs of the revolution and young children, who chanted, "How will we defend our country? By building socialism!" and "Fascists, thieves, buckle up your pants, because the working class is coming with all of its battalions."

The working-class battalions had better come, because Nicaragua is at a crucial juncture. They either have to expropriate that bourgeoisie and establish a workers and peasants government or they face a bloody counterrevolution. But the Nicaraguan economy is quite dispersed, the working class is minuscule, it is largely a diffuse peasant economy. The workers' battalions to defend that revolution lie in El Salvador, in the proletariat of Mexico and north of the Rio Grande, here in the United States, which is our task to mobilize. Simply to defend what they have already won means completing and extending that revolution. It simply confirms most graphically what Trotsky called his theory of permanent revolution. In these countries where there have not been bourgeois-democratic revolutions, the bourgeoisie is so backward and so small and so tied to imperialism, it is impossible for them to meet the minimum democratic demands of the peasantry and the working class. These demands can only be met through a victorious workers revolution. But in Nicaragua there is a real absence of communist leadership. What needs to be built there is a Trotskyist party that will fight for revolution throughout the region.

We have noted many times the similarities of Nicaragua with the Cuban Revolution. Both had petty-bourgeois leaderships, not committed at the outset to either private property or collectivized property. The embargo is also very similar. When the United States refused to refine Soviet oil for Cuba and sealed off Cuba, it led to the first expropriations and the nationalizations in Cuba. But there are important differences, too. In Cuba, the whole revolutionary process was carried out in the span of 18 months; in Nicaragua, it's been drawn out for almost six years already. Unlike Cuba, there was genuine mass participation in the 1979 uprising against



Salvadoran revolutionist Farabundo Martí, executed in 1932 as the leader of the first communist revolution in the Americas.

Somoza, and people have had a taste of power and want it. At demonstrations the chant that simply electrified the crowd is "¡Poder Popular!" [people's power]. They want to rule. It's also not an island like Cuba; those borders surrounding Nicaragua are drawn in blood and are not going to be left alone. It resembles much more Soviet Russia in 1918, facing imperialist intervention, but without a Bolshevik leadership.

For International Workers Solidarity!

Another critical difference between Cuba and Nicaragua is the question of Soviet aid. In the United States, we're subjected to a barrage of disinformation: "The MIGs are coming!" Unfortunately, that's hardly the case. Nicaragua badly needs helicopters and anti-aircraft guns. When Daniel Ortega went to Moscow he reportedly got a guarantee of continued oil deliveries. But the Kremlin communiqué pointedly limited Soviet aid to "economic development, and also political and diplomatic support"—i.e. *not military support*. Such is the narrow nationalist outlook of the Stalinists who do not see that failure to come to the aid of the Nicaraguan Revolution only emboldens the Yankee beast. What they really believe in is not international socialist revolution, which is the hallmark of Trotskyism, but they hope and pray for détente with the imperialists, which

means selling out revolution anywhere they can in order to buy a little more "peace" time.

But the problem is, détente with whom? It takes two to smoke a peace pipe. It is not simply Reagan who threatens a military invasion of Central America but the Democrats too; back in November the program of a quarantine was first put forward by Walter Mondale. In fact, the Republicans are simply following the Democrats' policy that was laid out last November. And as the *New York Times* noted, Ortega's trip to Moscow was *it* for the Democrats—all they needed to drop any pretense of opposition to Reagan's war drive on Central America. The Democrats have tried other methods like Contadora, which we've called "*Contra*"dora because it's the same policy of trying to maintain capitalist rule throughout the region by giving a breathing space to the bourgeoisie, to the forces of reaction, and sapping the energies of the proletariat, cutting off arms to leftist rebels in El Salvador.

The Sandinistas don't have a friend between the Democrats and the Republicans; they don't have much of one among the reformist left, either. The Communist Party, the Socialist Workers Party, the Workers World Party have all opposed any revolutionary solution to the problems in Central America. There were no protests that they organized over the mining of the harbors last fall, because they felt that that would detract from their campaigning for Walter Mondale. When the Spartacist League and the Spartacus Youth League have gone to participate in demonstrations, they have called the cops on us for carrying slogans like "Defense of Cuba/USSR Begins in Central America!" and "Military Victory to Salvadoran Leftists!" Their calling card has been "No More Vietnams," i.e., no more losing wars for U.S. imperialism, whereas we understood that war as a victory for the Vietnamese and a big defeat for U.S. imperialism. If the Yankee imperialists do invade, they must be made to pay, not only in Nicaragua but here at home through a mobilization of the working class and of youth in this country. Something that the bourgeois press does not talk about is that there are thousands of American youth in Nicaragua, and for many of them, hearing that Reagan hates it was a good enough reason to go there and see the revolution for themselves. This has led to a situation where, when we were in Nicaragua, we encountered no anti-Americanism at all. I expected to en-

counter some, given that the country has been under the heel of U.S. imperialism for so many years. But in fact there was a distinct level of sympathy for us, having to live under this government.

Fighting Reagan's and the Democrats' mobilization for war in Central America is fighting our own class battle here at home. I ask people to remember Bitburg and remember Philly. Ask yourselves, what will a government that firebombs its own cities and burns black babies alive—if they do that in their own city, what will they do to Nicaragua?

International solidarity and defense of the Nicaraguan Revolution has to be more than symbolic. It has to be concrete. And I want you to think what the effects of this embargo are on a country that has been under the heel of U.S. imperialism for a century. Every physical plant in that country and every piece of machinery is made in the U.S.A. Every tractor on every farm is International Harvester or an American equivalent. What this embargo means is that as soon as a part breaks, production comes to a grinding halt; they cannot produce wheat to make bread to feed the cities. They need dollars badly; they need dollars now. Back in November when there was all this hullabaloo with the American spy planes making sonic booms over Managua, we went on a mini-campaign to raise what we in the SYL National Office called "MIG money" for Nicaragua. The result of our efforts was extremely modest; we received something on the order of a hundred dollars and forwarded that to Nicaragua for defense of the revolution. However, even something as modest as that was recognized in Nicaragua. When I went to talk to somebody from the *Barricada* press, they knew about it. The word had gotten out. They said, "Are you with the SWP?" and we said, "Oh, no, they expelled us 20 years ago; we're the revolutionaries" and they said, "Oh, you're the group that sent us the money for arms!" So I said I was really sorry it wasn't more money, it was just a gesture of our intent. But they said, "No, no, it's very nice." So now we are on a campaign to raise a lot more money, to give the Nicaraguans the assistance they need to defend their country against U.S. military aggression, which is our fight here at home against Reagan, both for labor and for youth. And it is not charity. This is not helping some poor impoverished person; this is a fight against the Reagan government, and it's concrete. Because Nicaragua needs this money now to help defeat U.S. imperialism. ■

Defend Nicaragua...

(continued from page 12)

collecting *hard cash* to send down there."

While Congress votes millions in "humanitarian aid" to the "contra" terrorists and the Pentagon keeps Nicaragua in a state of alert, the far right has

also mobilized to fund counterrevolution. Dragon Lady Jeane Kirkpatrick has joined the sinister Sun Myung Moon's *Washington Times* in an effort to raise millions for her contra pals. Race-terrorist Klansmen have also embraced the contra "freedom fighters" and are recruiting like-minded scum to fight in Nicaragua. San Francisco columnist Art Hoppe caught the spirit of the Reaganite doublespeak; an American family discusses how to help

what Reagan ludicrously calls "the moral equal of our Founding Fathers":

"And our a capella choir's having a car wash, Dad.... We hope to collect enough to run this ad in the *Holsum High Magazine*. Do you like it? It shows a Nicaraguan peasant in a circle with a line through it. And the caption says, 'You can help our Contras neutralize this Nicaraguan coffee picker or you can turn the page.'"

—*San Francisco Examiner*,
12 May

The SYL campaign is no charity drive. A contribution to the defense of Nicaragua furthers the necessary class battle against Reagan reaction at home. Particularly youth, targeted to be the cannon fodder in Central America, have every interest in stopping the imperialist warmakers. From Berkeley, a supporter active in the campaign reported:

"Before I had a chance to ask my friend M.F. to donate...he grabbed me and told me how happy he was that the SL [and SYL] was raising money.... Even though the guy is basically broke, he pledged some money from his next paycheck. The vote in Congress... seemed to bother the guy to no end. He had been active over the past several years with CISPES [Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador] and the Nicaraguan Information Center, had helped them raise money for their Congress-lobbying efforts, and had written letters to various Democrats himself."

He swore that he would never write

another letter to Congress so long as he lived.

Among those who contributed were a number of refugees from death squad "democracy" in Central America. One woman, from El Salvador, told us, "I've lost most of my family. My brother—all we found was his head; my cousin—we never found him." Her oldest daughter had returned to El Salvador and joined the leftist insurgents there. "Even though I don't know if she's dead or alive, and I have no way of hearing from her, I'm still proud of what she's doing," the woman explained, donating what she could.

Every penny collected goes directly to Nicaragua; the SYL has assumed all administrative costs. *Young Spartacus* thanks our readers and friends who have contributed generously. If you haven't made your "anti-contra" bution—do it now. Make checks payable to the Student Committee to Defend Nicaragua; mail to: SYL National Office, Box 3118 Church St. Station, New York, N.Y. 10008. ■

Spartacist Forums

Philly Inferno: Racist Murder! MOVE Massacred by Reagan, Cops, Black Mayor— They're the Terrorists!

Speaker: **Ed Kartsen**
Spartacist League Central Committee
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Former MOVE member
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NEW YORK CITY

Eyewitness Report— Defend Nicaragua! Smash U.S. War Moves! Complete, Extend the Revolution!

Speaker: **John Kenney**
SL member
just returned
from Nicaragua

Friday, July 12, 7:30 p.m.
People's College of Law
660 S. Bonnie Brae Avenue
For more information: (213) 384-9716

LOS ANGELES

NOTICE

The next issue of
Young Spartacus will be
dated **September 1985**.

FSLN YOUTH STATEMENT OF SOLIDARITY WITH GUILLERMO BERMUDEZ

Young Spartacus is pleased to print below a translation of a letter from the Sandinista youth organization, the Juventud Sandinista 19 de Julio, in solidarity with Spartacus Youth League member Guillermo Bermúdez in his struggle against a vicious police frame-up at the University of California at Berkeley. In a recent visit to Nicaragua, SYL representatives discussed the nature of student struggle in the United States with members of the FSLN youth group. We pointed to our leading role in campus protests against CIA and military recruiters. The Nicaraguan youth leaders expressed particular interest in comrade Guillermo's case, extending their "special recognition" to him as a staunch opponent of Yankee imperialist aggression victimized for expressing his views.

A 22-year-old student at UC Berkeley, Guillermo led an SYL-initiated protest against Marine recruiters at Berkeley. The Marines were in fact forced to decamp. For this act of anti-imperialist determination, Guillermo was nearly choked to death by the campus cops and had his arm broken while in the grip of one of their infamous "pain control" restraints. Now he faces nearly three years in jail on trumped-up charges, including the ludicrous one of "battery" on the 6'3" cop who grabbed the 5'5" SYLer in a potentially lethal choke hold!

As we stated from the outset, the attempted frame-up of Guillermo Bermúdez is part of a broader campaign to stifle student dissent at Berkeley through brazen police terror. From December through the spring semester, the UC cops have staged full-scale riots against students protesting apartheid South Africa and U.S. war moves in Nicaragua. Choke holds, billy-club beatings, ramming demonstrators with prowler cars, leveling maximal criminal charges and throwing students into maximum security cells for the "crime" of political activism: such has become the standard operating procedure of the UC cops. So widespread and scandalous had this mini-Gestapo's brutality become that the Berkeley City Council spent hours this spring hearing public testimony from victims, witnesses and opponents of the UCPD's tactics.

Urgently required is a united-front defense effort, based on the good old American labor slogan "An injury to one is an injury to all!" Serious felony charges have been brought against three participants in the Sproul Hall (renamed Stephen Biko Hall) sit-out. All told, over 1,000 protesters have been arrested since the cop rampage began. The cases are interlinked as was clear in the recent trial of 10 students arrested on April 16 in a cop "sweep" of Biko Plaza. (Another 22 will

stand trial and another 109 have had the charges against them dropped.) A *Young Spartacus* reporter covering the trial noted that the UCPD "in the person of Sergeant Phil Finger, admitted to having files on the SL/SYL (including the Guillermo Bermúdez Defense Committee), the Livermore Action Group and others. Previously it had come out that Finger had two binders full of material on the Campaign Against Apartheid.... During the discovery process in Guillermo's case, the UCPD repeatedly denied having files on the SYL." Finger is the cop who broke Guillermo's arm.

While leftist students face beating, jailing, surveillance and lengthy jail terms for their political beliefs, the cops' student finks are treated with kid gloves. Leo C. Lin—an informant for the UCPD who "attended meetings of the Campaign Against Apartheid and gave verbal reports... to the UC police" (*Daily Californian*, 28 June)—is a case in point. Convicted on felony burglary charges and of carrying a concealed, unlicensed firearm on the campus, Lin is getting three years probation, a fine and possibly some community service as a sentence. Of course, the university has not taken disciplinary action against Lin.

1985: FOR PEACE,
EVERYONE AGAINST AGGRESSION

Managua, 20 May
Free Nicaragua

Compañeros students
University of Berkeley
California, USA

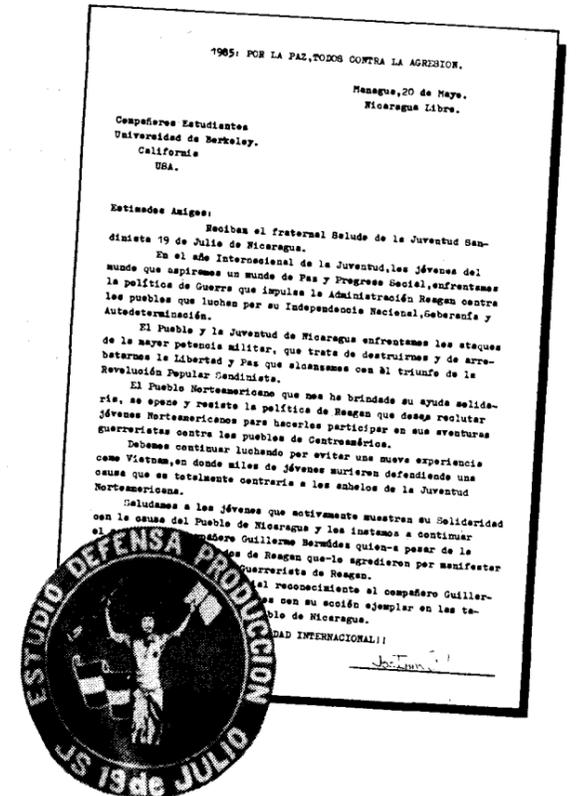
Dear friends:

Receive the fraternal greetings of the Juventud Sandinista 19 de Julio of Nicaragua.

In this International Year of Youth, we youths of the world who aspire to a world of peace and social progress confront the war policies pushed by the Reagan administration against the peoples who fight for their national independence, sovereignty and self-determination.

We, the people and youth of Nicaragua, confront attacks by the greatest military power, which is attempting to destroy us and to take away the freedom and peace which we won with the victory of the Popular Sandinista Revolution.

The American people which has offered us its solidarity and aid opposes and is resisting Reagan's policies which seek to recruit American youth and force them to participate in war adventures against the



peoples of Central America.

We must continue to struggle to avoid a new experience like Vietnam, where thousands of youth died defending a cause which is totally opposed to the desires of the American youth.

We greet the young people who are actively showing solidarity with the cause of the people of Nicaragua and we encourage them to follow the example of compañero Guillermo Bermúdez who in spite of the repression by Reagan's agents who attacked him for demonstrating his rejection of the war policies of Reagan.

We send our special recognition to compañero Guillermo Bermúdez and solidarize with his exemplary action in the tasks of solidarity with the people of Nicaragua.

LONG LIVE
INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY!!

Jose Iran C.

YSp readers are urged to make a much-needed contribution to Guillermo's defense. Make checks payable to the Guillermo Bermúdez Defense Fund. Mail to: Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 5555, San Francisco, CA 94101. Drop the charges against Guillermo and all victims of Berkeley cop rampage! ■

Vote Spartacist!...

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them anything and there aren't any jobs. In New York City, over 50 percent of black youth are unemployed and the high school dropout rate for minorities is worse—70 percent. The Spartacist candidates demand free, quality education for all as well as full employment. Against the bosses who seek to make the workers and poor pay for their decaying system, Stamberg and Kartsen call "for the socialist reindustrialization of America!"

As revolutionary internationalists, Stamberg and Kartsen call on labor to

fight imperialist war with class war. As Reagan and the Democrats ready their machinery for war against the workers and peasants of Nicaragua we in the United States must take a side: For political strikes against Reagan's war moves! Defend, complete, extend the Nicaraguan Revolution! Defense of Cuba, USSR begins in Central America! No "divestment" illusions in imperialism—the power of the international labor movement must be brought to bear against the vicious apartheid regime in South Africa. A vote for Spartacist is a vote for workers power—from Durban to New York City!

* * * * *

Marjorie Stamberg was the Spartacist Party candidate for New York state assembly in 1978, calling for a union-led

fight against the cutbacks and take-aways during the bank-engineered "fiscal crisis." The campaign fought for united action against racist cop brutality, and against the vicious ethnic vigilantism which had erupted in Crown Heights after the cop killing of a prominent black community leader. During the 1960s, Stamberg was an activist in SDS, the civil rights and anti-Vietnam War movement, and a staff writer for the New Left *Guardian*. A leader of Oakland Women's Liberation, Marjorie spent nine years as a telephone worker, active in the Militant Action Caucus of CWA. A member of the editorial board of the Spartacist League's newspaper, *Workers Vanguard*, she is active in the Spartacus Youth League campaign to raise desperately needed dollars to defend Nicaragua against the U.S. imperialist siege.

Edward Kartsen, a signal maintainer in the New York subways until recently, was the oppositional candidate for Transport Workers Union Local 100 president in 1983. Ed and the Committee for a Fighting TWU campaigned for the union to act in solidarity with key strikes, like PATCO in 1981. When black TWUer Willie Turks was beaten to death by a racist mob as he was leaving his job in the Coney Island shop, Kartsen said the union's 33,000 members should demonstrate on flat-bed trucks in the Gravesend, Brooklyn area in a forceful display of labor's power to stop racist terror. In 1982, Kartsen chaired the Labor/Black Mobilization to Stop the Klan in Washington on November 27, when the Spartacist League and black unionists led the

thousands who militantly faced down the KKK, dealing a stinging political defeat to Reagan and the cops in the streets of the nation's capital.

Get involved! Please send your contributions* to: Spartacist Party Campaign Committee, c/o Box 444, Canal St. Sta., NY, NY 10013. Stop in at our campaign headquarters at 41 Warren St. in lower Manhattan (Monday through Thursday, 5-8 p.m.; Saturday, 1-5 p.m.) or call (212) 267-1025.

*Election law requires reporting names of contributors of more than \$99. We will not disclose individual names and therefore will not accept individual contributions of over \$99. Organizations, trade unions, etc. are more than welcome to donate larger amounts.

CORRECTION

Several factual errors appeared in our article "Defend Guillermo!" (*YSp* No. 127, May 1985). All of the charges filed against SYL supporter and UC Berkeley student Guillermo Bermúdez are misdemeanors—including that of "battery" on a police officer. The article incorrectly referred to felony charges. Of the four protesters arrested during the April 26 police riot at Berkeley, only Michael Donnelly is charged with grand theft (of a cop baton). In addition to the felony charges listed in the article, Donnelly, José Carrasco and Stephen Doig also face misdemeanor charges of "participating in a riot." The fourth, Evan Cutler, was initially released on bail but arrested again the next day as a juvenile runaway. He was held for 35 days in Alameda County Juvenile Hall before the charges against him were dropped.

Spartacus Youth League Class Series

GET AN EDUCATION IN MARXISM THIS SUMMER

BAY AREA

Trotskyism:
Revolutionary Marxism Today
Alternate Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m.
July 17, 31; August 7
Dwinelle Hall 146, UC Berkeley
For more information: (415) 835-1535

BOSTON

Class Against Class
Alternate Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m.
July 10, 24; August 7, 14
Strauss Hall, Common Room
Harvard University
For more information: (617) 492-3928

CHICAGO

Trotskyism:
Revolutionary Marxism Today
Saturdays, 1:30 p.m.
July 13, 20; August 3, 17, 24
161 W. Harrison, 10th Floor
For more information: (312) 663-0715

NEW YORK CITY

Summer Class Series
Saturdays, 4:00 p.m.
July 20; August 10
41 Warren Street, one block south of Chambers, Manhattan
For more information: (212) 267-1025

Young Spartacus

New York City: For the Working People!



Marjorie Stamberg with striking NYC hotel workers, June 1985. New York City, 20 July 1983: Ed Kartsen addressing rally of transit workers and others protesting the racist beating death of union brother Willie Turks.

Workers Vanguard Photos

Stamberg for Mayor and Kartsen for Manhattan Borough President— VOTE SPARTACIST!



New York City's working people, youth, racial and national minorities have someone to vote for this fall. Spartacist spokesmen Marjorie Stamberg and Edward Kartsen are running for mayor and Manhattan borough president. As revolutionary socialist candidates they will make their campaign a vehicle for telling the truth about this rotting system and what can be done to change it. New York is on the razor's edge as Mayor Koch's racist cops terrorize the city with their wanton killings. Real estate robber barons drive thousands out of their homes and onto the streets; unemployment skyrockets;

the union movement is under vicious attack. Spartacist candidates Stamberg and Kartsen say:

"New York can't run without black transit workers, Hispanic hotel workers, hospital workers—the whole powerful integrated city union movement. From this election platform we raise our revolutionary program: not only in New York but throughout the nation, the situation cries out for a workers party to defend the interests of labor, the poor, minorities and the hard pressed middle classes against Reagan, Koch, and the

capitalist class they represent. We need a labor and minority-led fight for a workers government which will seize all major industry without compensation and institute a planned socialist economy."

While arch racist Koch "divests" city funds from South Africa, his cops continue their racist killing spree. The victims of summary cop "justice" keep mounting: Bronx grandmother Eleanor Bumpurs, behind in her rent, was blown away by the NYPD. Harlem honors

student Edmund Perry, walking on the "wrong side" of the Harlem/Columbia University border, was shot to death by the cops. Stamberg/Kartsen demand: "Avenge victims of the racist cops!... Mobilize labor and minorities to stop racist attacks! For integrated armed workers defense guards, drawn from responsible union men and women!"

Meanwhile, the only "job" open to youth these days is as cannon fodder in the U.S. imperialist forces. Not only in New York, but throughout the country, an entire generation is being thrown on the scrap heap. The schools don't teach

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SYL Fund Drive

Take a Side! Defend Nicaragua!

The Spartacus Youth League undertook a fund-raising campaign for embattled Nicaragua, begun in late May. Our appeal to "Donate Dollars—Crush the Contras!" struck a sympathetic chord throughout the country: transit workers in New York City, Salvadoran refugees in Los Angeles, students in Cambridge, a black GI in Chicago, church-goers active in the "sanctuary movement" all gave. While the Reaganites pontificate about invading Nicaragua being as easy as "falling off a log" there is plenty of opposition to the U.S. war threats among the people of this country. Our fund drive provided one way for them to express it, concretely.

When Reagan announced the U.S. embargo against Sandinista Nicaragua—a clear act of war—the Spartacus

Youth League stated:

"An invasion may be the next step. The Nicaraguan masses have courageously vowed that if the U.S. does invade, they will fight to the last man, woman and child. Here in the United States we have a special responsibility to take a side in defense of the Nicaraguan Revolution. And that means with material aid as well as anti-imperialist protests."

Under the guns of Yankee imperialism, with U.S. troops poised for an invasion, Nicaragua desperately needs hard currency for everything from arms to medicine to spare parts. For us, the campaign to send dollars to Nicaragua was an elementary act of anti-imperialist solidarity and military defense of the Nicaraguan Revolution. As one Bay Area contributor told us: "I'm so glad that somebody is actually

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Young Spartacus Photo



GET YOURS NOW! Wear your partisanship where it can be seen: up front! "Crush the Contra" buttons, \$2 each (from your local SYL branch or SYL National Office—make checks payable to Student Committee to Defend Nicaragua). All proceeds to defense of Nicaragua.