



# REVOLUTIONARY WORKER

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**U.S., Iran Bourgeoisie vs. Iran Masses**

## Another Battle Over Hostages

As we go to press, a new round of behind-the-scenes intrigue is unfolding as both the U.S. imperialists and Iran's bourgeois forces try once again to find some way to throw a fast ball past the watchful eyes of the Iranian people. Both parties are desperately trying to find some steps they can take to get the

"hostage crisis" behind them without unleashing a new storm of revolutionary struggle. Continued on page 20

Mass rally in Tehran, April 1st. In attendance (from left to right): The Shah, Sadat, Begin, and Jimmy Carter.



## Class Struggle Rages Over Button Day

March 27 was button day nationwide. From the Revolutionary Communist Party and the National May Day Committee, the call went out to wear a May Day button that day, to wear it in defense of Bob Avakian, the Chairman of the RCP and, as the leaflet said, the most consistent, determined and far-sighted revolutionary leader in the country today. That day, the appeals court in Washington, D.C. was reconsidering his case involving up to 241 years in jail. It was also a call to defy all the reactionary attacks on May Day and the May Day Brigades, including 200 arrests nationwide so far. This day was openly declared to be a test for

May 1st itself. 30,000 buttons in four days was the goal.

Button Day was a tremendous battle. By the time the dust had cleared on Thursday night, 10,000 buttons had been sold, and many were worn on that day. This was itself a significant gain; as was said last week in the *RW*, it represented a class-conscious force emerging in this country. But at the same time it was clearly only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the numbers of "those who hate this shit," and it was well short of the 30,000 goal.

Why did this happen? What was behind this result? It was certainly not the objective situation in this country today

that somehow put a limit of 10,000 on button sales—the experience of Button Day itself showed this. No, it was definitely a class struggle with the enemy to sell these buttons, to reach

and mobilize in this way a force of people, but the determining class struggle in this case was one raging within the ranks of those who are the core of ac-

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*"We must overcome two different kinds of ideological obstacles in building for May 1st: There are those people who don't clearly see the connection between the battle for May 1st and for revolution and are therefore held back from action; there is also the problem of some people who do see the connection and oppose May Day."*

*"Our purpose is welding all those who hate this shit into a class-conscious force. But there are some people who not only do not hate this shit themselves, but are afraid of those who hate it."*

*"Those who represent the backward may be more arrogant, but those who demand change are more determined and have history on their side."*

Bob Avakian  
Chairman of the Central Committee  
of the Revolutionary Communist Party

**New Book Analyzes  
Imperialism's Greatest Crisis  
America in Decline**

Chapter serialized in the Revolutionary Worker. p.13

# Afghanistan Revolutionary Supports May Day in U.S.

Dear Comrades:

I came to the U.S. already hating the oppression of my people in Afghanistan by imperialism. I came looking for answers, looking to unite with and learn from others here who were already involved in fighting imperialism, especially from Iran and Afghanistan.

As I had already read about capitalism before coming to the U.S. the illusion of U.S. heaven on the earth was not working on me. From the skyscrapers of New York to the advanced war industry I saw the accumulation of sweat and blood of our people. The more I experienced life in America the more I saw the social relations of commodity production, social degradation, pornography and corruption.

In my eyes, everything seemed different than what I was told to expect. What was called civilization, I saw as plunder and oppression. I could see millions involved in producing social necessities, but all monopolized in the hands of capitalist elites owning giant corporations.

I was seeing the living picture of capitalist corruption. On the other hand the huge U.S. working class amazed me. In my country the working class is very small. I was thinking of proletarian revolution in the U.S. and its tremendous impact in pushing the world revolution. I met different political groups and individuals who knew something about revolution but not enough to work seriously for it.

## The Data Rat-Race: Letter to the RW

Dear comrades in struggle,

Hi, I'm just another goddamned, fucking, shitty computer programmer in your eyes. But really I never graduated from college and I hoped I could try to sort things out politically and all that other garbage by taking the easy way out and getting this job. I'm really getting sick of it not just because of how bourgeois it is, but mainly because it's such a fucking sterile environment. 1984 is here for these misplaced accountants and other assorted capitalist fuckoffs. I mean they're all sedated and closely scrutinized by their sports-betting managers.

I've got a definition for some of these worms I want you to know:

Capitalists call these brown-nosers geniuses.

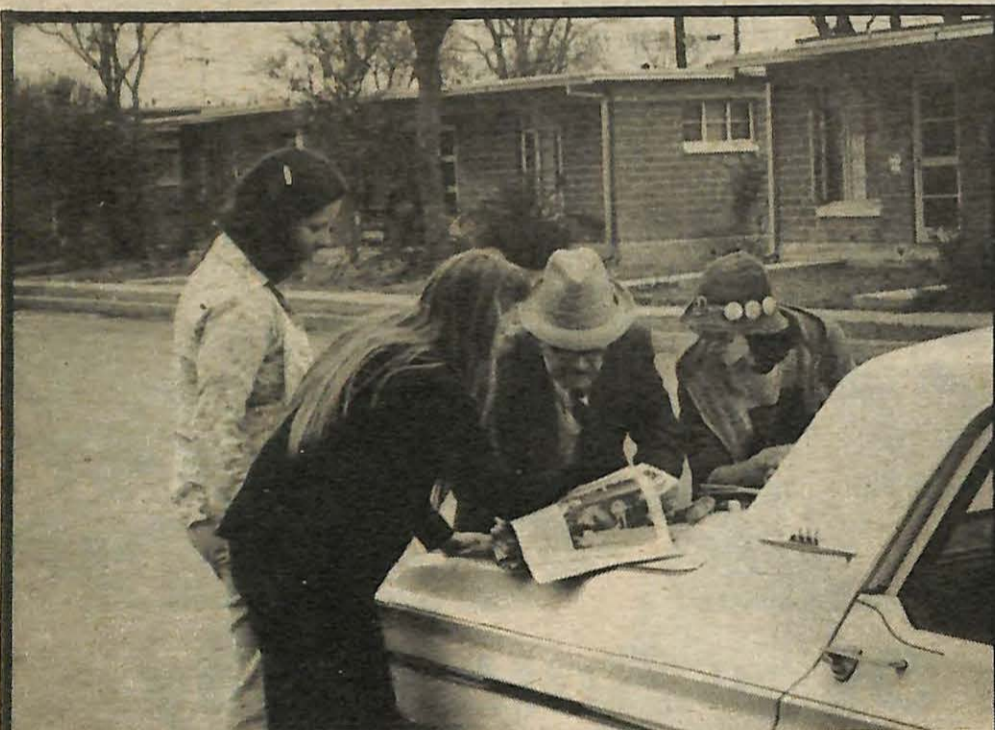
A genius as I see it is a privileged, born and bred capitalist exposed to an abundance of information in any aspects of life contributing to his or her monopolizing of such information.

I see it in a million ways in this information factory. We all have to pass 12-minute IQ tests with upper crust scores. Minorities aren't even allowed to try. We all turn on our terminals at 8 a.m. and absorb information at the same rate, programming as we go. The fact is, all of us perform at about the same level at any given length of employment. "Geniuses" work a lot of free overtime and/or have a lot of previous programming experience to let them work a little faster.

I'm using my time at home to read *Revolutionary Workers* and books like *Red Star Over China*. I'm dying for more. Please send me the tape, "This System is Doomed, Let's Finish It Off" for my donation. It's only a matter of time til I join you on the street.

P.C.

RW editor's note: There's no time like May 1st.



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It was May Day several years ago I got some literature from the RCP. Reading the RCP's line and seeing its firm determination for revolution seemed my dream come true. I saw the broad prospects of the work of the RCP among the American people as the only answer for revolution in this country. I found myself in full agreement with the RCP's position on the international movement against imperialism, especially its support to the Iranian revolution. The correct line of the Party in relation to the present revolution in Afghanistan is greatly encouraging to the Afghan working class and freedom loving people of Afghanistan.

As May Day '80 marks the first battle of the American working class in the stormy decade of the 80's I strongly support the RCP's preparation for this battle. I believe May Day '80 is a spark to light up the flames of 80's revolution in the U.S.A. which will push forward revolution all around the world.

**LONG LIVE THE ARMED STRUGGLE OF THE AFGHAN PEOPLE  
DEATH TO U.S. AND SOVIET IMPERIALISM  
LONG LIVE THE SOLIDARITY OF THE INTERNATIONAL WORKING CLASS  
ON TO MAY DAY 1980**

a member of the Afghan Support Committee

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## On To Revolutionary May Day, 1980

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# MAY 1ST TALKS ON THE BORDER

"You people have got to understand your government is using you, putting ideas in your head. Telling you that you have to fight the Mexicans because they are trying to take your good life away. But your government rips the Mexicans off. They starve. They die. You better start thinking about revolution."

"All you have to do is look through that wire fence. The face of imperialism is very vivid in Mexico. It is so important that people in this country are seen by others as concerned and interested in politics. Now part of the working class here will be marching on May Day."

These are some of the messages we were asked to take back to the workers in the U.S. As we stood on the Tijuana/San Ysidro border talking to Mexican farmworkers waiting for the American labor contractors to arrive with the day's jobs, or as we met with the Mexicans and Chicanos in their houses, the message was clear: "We are not against the American people. But against the system? Yes—it is 100% oppressive."

"The most visible of U.S. oppression is the Maquilladoras, the sweatshops on the border," says Ramon, who is in his late 40s and has a news show on a Tijuana radio station. "The papers run all these big ads for them. A big factor in our country's economy, they say. It's a lie. They come only to exploit the cheap labor. No capital stays behind and the machinery is unadaptable for other uses." Ramon grew up in Puebla, near Mexico City. He grew up in an area where there is a lot of foreign owned heavy industry. He grew up under the shadow of imperialism—a shadow that has increasingly cast itself larger across the face of Mexico. "There were always the auto factories—Ford, Chrysler, VW. But in the last years it has really grown. I remember there were small Mexican capitalists producing clothing. But they were driven out and the whole region absorbed by imperialists. Now there is Sears, Woolworth's and all of them," Ramon says bitterly. In Mexico, 73% of the population is under 30 years old. And 65% of the youth, facing no schooling, no medical care and no future in the rural areas, head for the cities—brutal exploitation in menial jobs, drug addiction and alcoholism. "The cities become belts of misery," Ramon says shaking his head. "There is a terrible insecurity in Mexico, especially in the countryside. The bank loans are not to help the people. They are given only if you grow crops for export or to feed the farm animals. People are forced off the land all the time."

Imperialism is gut-wrenching and mind-bending. It has its subtleties, like a slashing razor—it cuts deep, but the blood takes time to show. "I hated my life. I hated my accent. I studied all the big words. I went to the extremes to get away from the fields," Carlos explains. He is 23 and his mother has worked in the canneries up in Stockton and Lodi, California for 18 years. She is away at least 6 months a year. Carlos came into the U.S. when he was 5 years old as an "illegal". His grandmother would coach him to say he was from New Mexico if he was asked where he was from. But even at that young age there was a spirit of defiance because he would proudly answer



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them—"I am Mexican." But when faced with going into the fields he bought the idea that if he could erase his "Mexicanness" he would be fine. He even got ready to join the Marines. "I look back and see that I lost much of my life. I have contempt. Not for the field workers anymore but for the cause—working for profit. I wish I could have been on the Alamo when they raised the red flag," he said smiling.

Or just go into some of these border towns—these freaks of imperialism. Take a look at the cultural oppression as discos with strobe lights spring up like weeds. Or the image of the siesta/fiesta "Frito Bandito" that's plastered up in all the tourist shops. It's all there. From the bare-footed kids selling chiclets to the cigarette smugglers that crowd the bridges going from El Paso to Juarez; to the pornography and the degrading sex shows with donkeys in clubs like The Cave. Just look through that wire fence.

"Revolution is long overdue in Mexico," the driver of a van full of farmworkers told us. "Capitalism is a monster. It does not allow us to take one little step," added another, who called himself Zapata, "I'll be in L.A. I'll march for sure. This U.S. government has to be overthrown. It's possible but we have to unite all the people," said still another. A chill wind whipped around the parking lot as we spoke to

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(Above) May Day Brigade holds rally at the "International Bridge" which spans the Rio Grande from El Paso, Texas to Juarez, Mexico. Construction workers from across the street brought their own "red flag" (a fluorescent orange warning flag) and joined the rally.

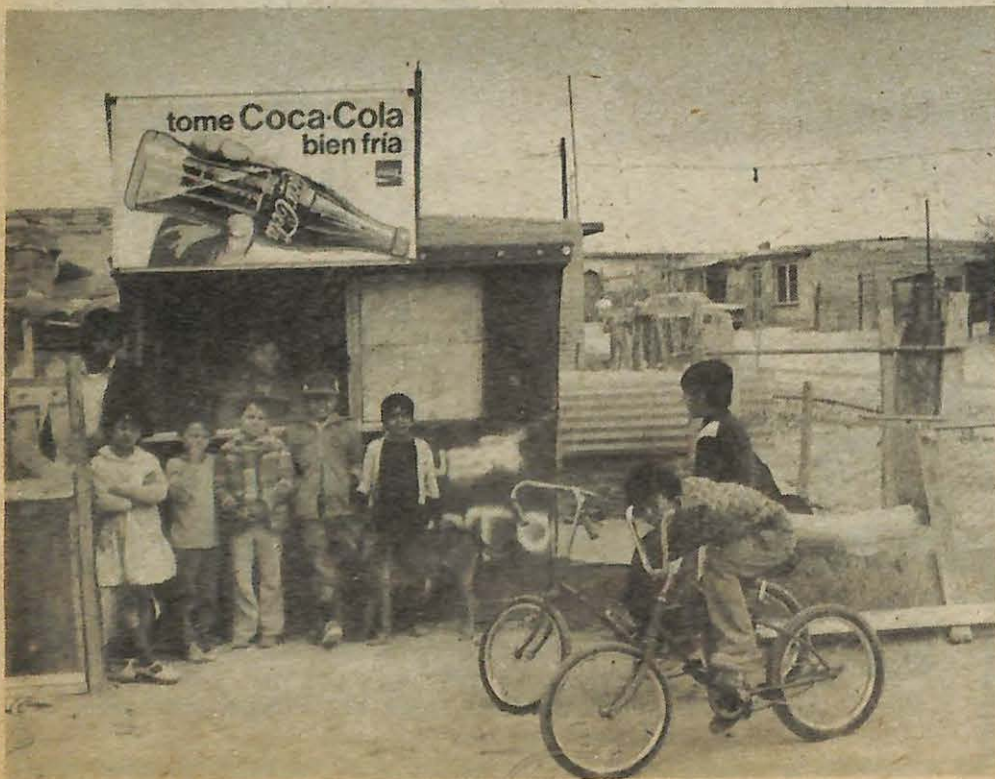
(Below) U.S.-owned manufacturing plants dot the border area, surrounded by impoverished shanty towns ("colonias"). Here is a house made from discarded cardboard boxes, just a short walk from the ASARCO copper and lead smelting plant.

(Bottom left) Coca-Cola, a common sight wherever U.S. imperialism has sunk its claws. Pictured here, the "colonia" just outside the Juarez Industrial Park.

(Bottom right) Children from poor families wash your windows at the border for "change."



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# 1980 BODY COUNT

"We must, from time to time, take stock of ourselves as a people if our nation is to meet successfully the many national and local challenges we face." So goes the opening message from the director of the Census Bureau in his personal little letter—a letter to everyone living in the U.S. explaining why they must cooperate with the census-taker and fill out those forms.

Some obviously unenlightened "experts" have suggested that its billion dollar cost, as well as the public controversy and outright opposition from countless people, make the census a bad move at this time. They claim that the government could just as easily use demographic projections based on taking a small sample of the population. But the government says, "No way." The truth is, they need a vastly more detailed picture of individual neighborhoods, down to what kind of people live on which block and who lives in what house.

"Answer the census," go the ads, "we're counting on you!" And you bet they are, but not because of any intrinsic desire on the government's part to keep their computer programmers occupied. No, the foremost challenges "our nation faces"—and thus the need for an historically unprecedented campaign to convince people to "stand up and be counted" (in more than one way, as we shall see)—are the crisis and upheavals of the masses of people our rulers envision in the coming years.

The bourgeoisie is well aware of the powderkeg that will be the '80s. The prospect of world war with their Soviet rivals, and along with this that of massive rebellions by ever increasing numbers of people, is at the heart of the 1980 census. They need to know where things are likely to break and thus the potential areas in which the forces of the state will need to be concentrated. They have issued a call for draft registration, and given the obvious fact that many will not cooperate, they will need to know what doors to come knocking on. And further, under conditions of war, accurate statistics which document *who lives where* are necessary for them. Studies have already been commissioned by the Pentagon which examine the best records of winning a nuclear exchange with the Soviet Union. "Social scientists" have worked out scenarios for trade-offs of one city for another and mass evacuations of the cities to be used as bargaining chips against the other side. In light of all this, they are, indeed, "counting on you."

Since when has anybody made such a big deal about the census? Since when has there been so much effort to "educate the public" about the census with TV and radio commercials, billboards, pamphlets and leaflets? In fact, the main reason the total cost of the 1980 census is over 4 times larger than the previous one 10 years ago, is that they need to go so all-out to win everyone's cooperation with the program.

Of course, for those that can't be convinced to answer the questions, even after repeated visits and warnings from Census Bureau supervisors, the threat of federal prosecution and a possible fine of \$100 exists, a fact which the media has started to make some pointed statements about. The penalties for giving fraudulent answers are stiffer, up to a

\$500 fine. According to the ACLU, those under surveillance by the political police, might be particularly liable for prosecution on this score.

So it's clear that things are different this time around, and the government's ambitious accounting makes this the most detailed and painstaking census ever. Two weeks after census day (April 6) "enumerators" (as the census takers are called) will begin phone calls and personal visits to each address that either didn't return the completed census form or that officials feel may have supplied incomplete or inaccurate information. If these visits don't produce the desired results, the "enumerators" will question landlords and neighbors, even possibly threatening them with prosecution if they refuse to snitch. Cross-checking of various government records such as driver's license applications, social security records, etc., will be done to match the information on the census form with other information the government has. If the two don't match up, further visits from the census taker will be made. Then, about six weeks after census day, "enumerators" will visit pool halls, unemployment offices, street corners, and any other places in large cities where people hang out, attempting to make sure that nobody slips by unchecked.

Of course, even the best plan can run into snags in practice as more than a few census takers have discovered in the past. In particular, the ghettos and barrios, areas that are clearly the most volatile, are the areas which have cooperated the least with the census historically. Ten years ago, the government estimated that it missed out on over 5 million people (probably a low estimate), most of whom were minorities. In some of the inner-city areas, such as Harlem and Atlanta, less than half the people mailed in the forms, and most of those refused to talk when the census takers came around afterwards. There were widespread reports of census takers getting threatened and beaten up. "Curbstoning," the process of the enumerators refusing to go to people's houses and just filling out the forms themselves, became a common method of work for the census bureau employees.

Such obstinacy won't cut it this time around, so the government has spared no effort to convince the oppressed nationalities that the census is in their interest. Numerous "community leaders" have been hired to convince the people that they should fill out the forms (the apparent contradiction of recently announced federal budget slashing evidently escaped them.) Particular attention has been paid to getting these wolves to fight each other in public over which minority nationality would get the most money, with each one telling "his" people that they had better cooperate with the census lest the other group get all the non-existent crumbs. And of course, the media has played an important role in all this. *Newsweek* magazine predicted, for example, that the Latino population would climb to over 25 million in the new census, surpassing the number of Black people and thereby shifting government money from the ghetto to the barrio.

The government is aware of the fact that this campaign is not achieving the necessary results. It has been very difficult for them to convince people who every day face government thugs, whether the police or the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) or both, that the information on the census forms won't be used to better enable the authorities to track them down. This has been particularly difficult with respect to the undocumented workers, the so-called "illegal aliens." This year, a special question was added to the census form—"Is this person of Spanish/Hispanic descent?" Attempts have been made to enlist anyone possible in the Chicano and Mexicano communities to help out. The chairman of the Chicano Studies Department at Cal State University at Los Angeles told the *RW* that his department had been approached by the Census Bureau to help corral "illegals" for the census. "The reaction was very negative. The students are very suspicious of the government, they just don't believe them when they

say they won't deport those who fill out the forms. We refuse to work with the census."

The desperation of the ruling class to "enumerate" undocumented workers has been growing. Recently a group of cavemen congressmen and racist overpopulation freaks filed a lawsuit demanding that "illegals" be excluded from the census, because the areas which they live in would supposedly get more federal money than areas with "real citizens." The suit has been met with horrified opposition from every major newspaper and magazine in the country. Government policy was clearly outlined when that great upholder of the rights of the undocumented, Benjamin Civiletti, the head of the Justice Department which runs the INS, announced that he was suspending all INS raids on residential and industrial areas until July 1, specifically to encourage undocumented workers to file their census forms. In a manner reminiscent of Adolph Eichmann telling the Jews they were just being sent to take showers, Civiletti promised that the information would never be used for deportation. Needless to say, this is not expected to get over—in fact, the same poverty pimps and politicians that have been urging undocumented workers to turn in their census forms are now, for their own purposes, demanding an "adjustment" in the census figures to account for all those who refuse to "be counted."

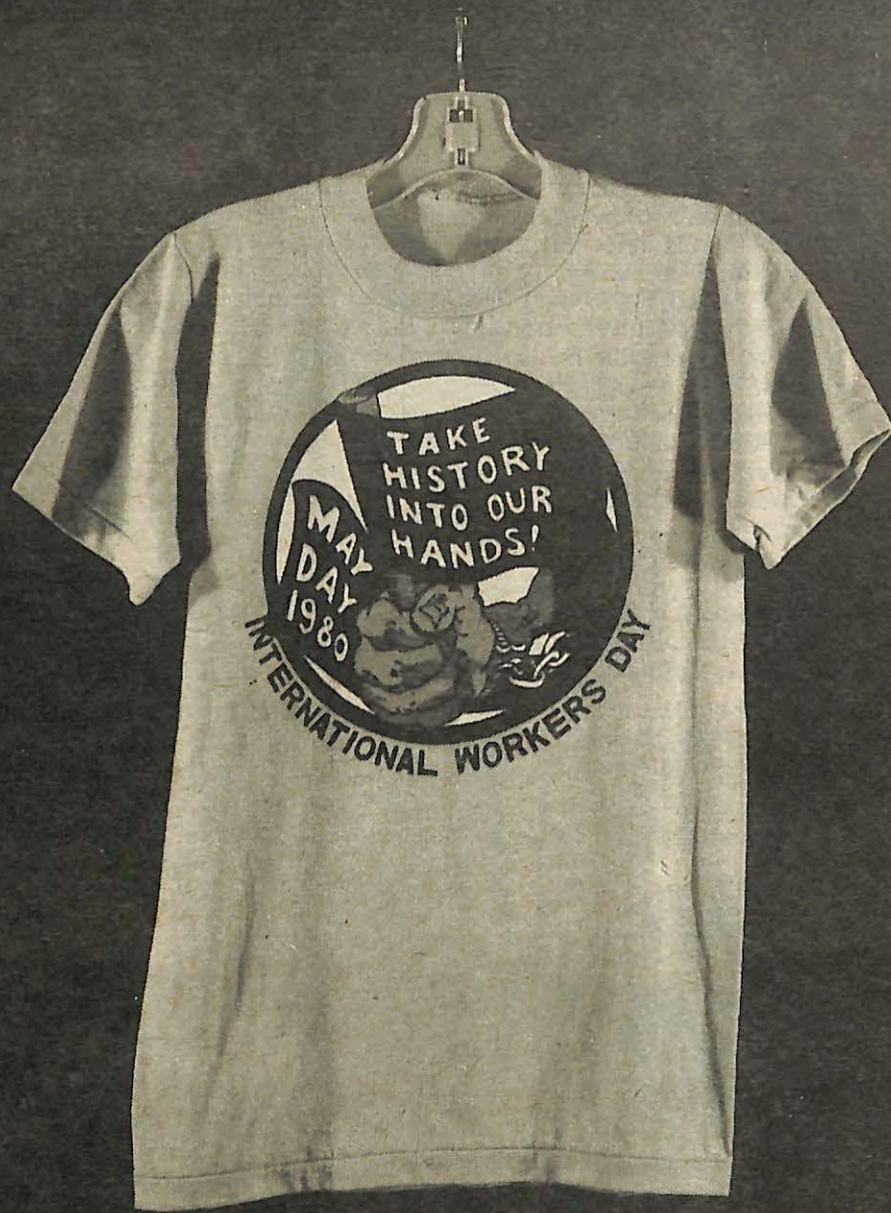
It's not only minorities but other large sections of the population as well that are expressing a deep distrust of the government census plans. The '70s—Vietnam, Watergate—have left their mark on the credibility of the U.S. government. The L.A. chapter of the

ACLU told the *RW* they had received a lot of calls from people asking if they had to fill out the forms. People expressed more than a little skepticism about the government's intentions. Even people in the mainly middle-class, mainly white San Fernando Valley near Los Angeles have expressed a great deal of opposition.

Contrary to what our rulers like to think, the people aren't a bunch of fools, and while most may not see exactly what's up, they have a pretty good idea that one way or another, the census will be used against them. Consequently, in addition to more open threats of prosecution, officials have lately taken to mouthing assurances of "complete confidentiality" of census information, going so far as to "guarantee" the masses that the FBI and IRS won't be able to get near this data until the year 2052, all the while claiming that there had been no breaches of confidentiality in the past 50 years. Of course, they neglect to mention that Census Bureau information helped the Justice Department find and round up Japanese Americans for concentration camp imprisonment during World War 2.

As our rulers' massive efforts in the 1980 body count grow to a close, it is perhaps worth recalling that the Shah of Iran must also have strived for relatively accurate demographic statistics. In fact, you can almost hear the faint cry from his hide-out in Egypt, "We figured Tehran would give us trouble..." Counting didn't save the Shah, and it won't save our rulers either. The real prospects for the '80s—a situation for which they are now feverishly preparing—strongly indicate that this may be the last census they take. □

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# Why There Was No Revolution in the '60s and Why There May Be in the '80s

## Part 2: The Black Panthers

### Bob Avakian Speech in Cleveland

*This is the conclusion of a series of excerpts from Chairman Bob Avakian's speech in Cleveland during his national speaking tour last summer. The first part of this article, "Why There Was No Revolution in the '60s and Why There May Be in the '80s," appeared in last week's issue of the RW, March 28, 1980.*

First of all, now that the Black Panther Party no longer exists as a revolutionary organization and barely exists at all, except as a pitiful reformist and petty gangster sect, it is tempting to discard, to negate and to wipe out all its tremendous achievements and all that it contributed to this decisive, earth-shaking period of the 1960s and early 1970s and the development toward revolution in this country. But that is a great mistake. It is a great mistake to think that the millions of people in this country who tasted the taste of what freedom would be like, and of what abolishing capitalism might be like, have forgotten about that. There are still millions out there, and some of them are even coming to the meetings on this speaking tour, who have not forgotten, who see the need once again to step forward, and many of them will come forward and be a most important force in this period ahead. It is also a serious mistake to think that all the work of revolutionaries and all that they fought for and even laid down their lives for was wasted or worth nothing and was all in vain in that period.

You see, the Black Panther Party in this country, despite weaknesses in its understanding and political program, turned thousands, even tens of thousands, perhaps even hundreds of thousands of people toward revolution in this country. Thousands and thousands of young people in particular—Black, white, Chicano, Puerto Rican and others—were turned toward revolution and even some toward Marxism by the work, by the political activity, and by the propaganda and the agitation carried out by the Black Panther Party. Speaking for myself personally, I know that I was turned on to Mao Tsetung by Eldridge Cleaver. Now we know where Eldridge Cleaver has ended up—striving for the *Guinness World Record* for belly crawling. Coming back here, acting a fool and being dangled to the public by the rulers of this country, spouting this madness about how he saw Jesus in the moon and all the rest of it, when all he saw (probably loaded at the time) was a chance to crawl back on his belly and keep his raggedy ass out of jail.

And I know today when I go talk to people I knew who were in the Panthers back in 1966, at the very beginning, and stayed there until they were either driven out or gave up when they saw it destroyed as a revolutionary organization—when I go talk to them, the first thing that many of them want to say, the only thing they want to argue about for hours when we're talking about revolution, the thing they have a hard time seeing and getting beyond, is how are we gonna kill Eldridge Cleaver and Huey Newton? Now I can understand this and I can sympathize with it, but it's not the way we're gonna make revolution, it's not the question we have to be addressing. We have to understand what the contributions of people like that were and why they were finally turned around, so the same thing doesn't happen again.

As I said, it was Eldridge Cleaver who turned me on to Mao Tsetung. One day, I went over to Eldridge Cleaver's apartment, I was working with the Black Panther Party—this was 1967—and I was for revolution and I respected the Black Panther Party and the militant stand it took, and I respected the work they were doing. And I saw the need to work as closely with them as possible and to build for a common party that wouldn't just be Black, or another one that would just be white, but would unite people of all races and nationalities who were serious about revolution. And as I walked into his apartment, here on the wall was a great big poster of Mao Tsetung, made in China. And I was



like many of you probably, the first time when you ran into something like this. I was torn up. I was scared. I didn't know what to make out of it, and I didn't say anything at the time. It took me two weeks to work up my nerve to finally ask Eldridge Cleaver why he had that poster in his house, and then I did it over the telephone at the end of a conversation. I cleared my throat, and I said, "Listen, by the way, why have you got that great big poster of Mao Tsetung up there on your wall?" I'll never forget what he said; if he never said or did another good thing in his life, this was a very good one. It came back over the telephone—he said, "We've got that picture of Mao Tsetung up on the wall because Mao Tsetung is the baddest motherfucker on the planet Earth!"

Now I said to myself, "Hey, I've got to check this out!" Cause I respected the Black Panther Party and I saw how serious they were, I thought they were pretty heavy, and if Eldridge Cleaver was saying this was the baddest motherfucker on the planet Earth, I better go look into it! And I did. I read the *Red Book*; many of you did, but I went further, too. I read Mao's other writings. And I saw that it was true, that Mao Tsetung was the baddest motherfucker around. But not because he was larger than life or whatever you want to say—superman or the idealized Bruce Lee. Not that he knew kung fu, karate and all this other stuff—which don't stop no bullets anyway. It wasn't that he personally could whip up on the heads of a whole bunch

of imperialists and oppressors and get rid of them all by himself. The reason that he was so heavy and so bad was because he understood what was the way out of this madness. He, like many others of us, searched for a way out of this—a way out of the living hell that not only the Chinese people were subjected to but people around the world, as he began to see the world more broadly. He looked for a way out of it, and he tested and tried out many different things, and he came to see that the only theory, the only understanding that could lead not just the Chinese people but the people of the whole world to completely uproot and finally abolish every form of degradation, oppression, exploitation, the only understanding that really could do that was the Marxist-Leninist theory. And any other theory that claimed to be revolutionary might take you part of the way but not all the way, might take you to a certain stage and then simply find one group of exploiters or oppressors replacing another, and the whole thing turned back.

And this is what it was that enabled Mao Tsetung to make such a contribution and play such a role, not only in China but in the whole world. Because he took that science of Marxism-Leninism and concretely applied it to the revolution in China over decades, and he played a tremendous role inspiring and leading and providing an example for people throughout the world for half a century. Because what that theory, that

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# Showdown Coming in El Salvador



Revolutionary Worker

Exposing the Salvadoran junta at recent march in San Francisco where 500 marched in solidarity with the Salvadoran people against U.S. intervention.

In the wake of the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero and the subsequent government attack on a demonstration of 30,000 at his funeral, the struggle in El Salvador is sharpening up and is headed for a showdown. There is increasing talk in U.S. circles of some form of military intervention to put down the continued resistance of the Salvadoran people to the U.S.-backed junta that has ruled since the U.S. stage-managed coup which ousted the pro-U.S. president Humberto Romero. Most likely this military intervention would not be in the form of a direct U.S. invasion but would use troops of other countries, for example, from Guatemala or Honduras or perhaps an OAS "peace-keeping force." The U.S. has three bases inside El Salvador and has Marines stationed on two islands off the coast. U.S. military advisors have been observed training El Salvadoran National Guard troops as well as training Honduran and Guatemalan troops at various bases.

In the U.S. the public opinion makers have already sprung into action. A recent business magazine, for example, ran an article which quoted a Salvadoran businessman as saying, "There are people here willing to fight. We have a chance of winning this thing. But the U.S. is the leader. Either you are the

leader or you are nothing." Like prior to the invasion of the Dominican Republic in 1965, the U.S. is trying to create an image of a well-intentioned, moderate reform government (a recent *L.A. Times* article called the junta "noble men"), forced by guerrillas and urban chaos to be repressive, and facing externally (Cuban) supported subversion, that needs U.S. help. More and more talk of "Cuban gun-running" is finding its way into the press, all with the clear intention of painting this picture of outside intervention in the affairs of El Salvador. While there may indeed be some Cuban aid to the anti-junta forces in the country, this is being exaggerated, and in fact the most significant pro-Soviet influence in El Salvador has not been mentioned in the U.S. press—that of the pro-Soviet revisionist Salvadoran "Communist" Party (P"C"S).

The assassination of Romero was clearly U.S.-inspired, in spite of the crocodile tears shed by everyone from the junta to Pope John Paul II. The junta's Assistant Minister of Defense put out the "contract" on Romero when he issued a well-publicized statement that the archbishop had "committed a crime" by urging the soldiers to refuse to carry out the junta's reign of terror against the people. The next day,

hired gunmen killed Romero while he was giving a mass for the mother of a well known newspaper publisher whose paper is a voice of anti-junta elements of the Salvadoran national bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie. Romero himself had more or less been a spokesman for these strata, and his shift from initially supporting the junta to opposing it paralleled the growing disaffection of many "middle forces" in El Salvador. Even leading members of the pro-U.S. Christian Democratic Party have deserted the junta as the Party split, with large numbers of its members leaving. This growing desertion of formerly pro-junta elements is due to the increasing inability of the junta to deal with the surging struggle of the Salvadoran masses and has left it and the U.S. more and more isolated and desperate every day.

This desperation was displayed in the government attack on the demonstration at Romero's funeral. 41 people were killed and 200 wounded after a bomb was set off followed by automatic weapons fire. Armed guerrillas in the crowd returned fire in defense. Immediately, the U.S. Ambassador White and the junta held a press conference at which they cynically attempted to blame the slaughter (which they themselves had perpetrated) on revolutionary elements. It is widely known that the U.S. is lying through its teeth. In fact, a Mexican journalist reported seeing government snipers located in the national palace and in office buildings surrounding the plaza where the massacre occurred.

Pretty clearly, the U.S. has given up hope of the junta being able to "stabilize" things without large-scale military assistance in order to crush the struggle of the masses. Massive repression has been continuing and escalating. Entire villages in the countryside have been massacred. Napalm has been used, house to house search and destroy missions are being carried out, and selective terror tactics are being employed in the cities. Escalating attacks are being met by escalating resistance. While reports are sketchy, it is known that tens of thousands have taken to the streets in open defiance of the junta's declaration of a state of siege. An 8-day general strike has virtually shut down the country, and there are reports of land seizures by the peasants in the countryside.

In the midst of all this ferment,

various forces, including the Salvadoran "Communist" Party have jumped in, attempting to put themselves at the head of the mass movement now raging and turn it to their own ends. With this purpose, the P"C"S abandoned its support of the junta recently and joined with the leading popular organizations to form the Revolutionary Coordinator of the Masses (CRM). The P"C"S is not without influence among the national bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie, as witnessed by the tremendous growth in the mass demonstrations after the P"C"S made its switch. The first demonstration called by the CRM brought out 300,000 people.

These pro-Soviet revisionists of the P"C"S are up to no good. While they have seemingly broken with their past policy of seeking to gain influence in the established government by making various deals and alliances, even calling for "armed struggle" against the junta, they have not changed their objectives one bit. They have only changed tactics, sensing that it was not too safe to stand with a junta that was rapidly falling. Even now, they are calling for unity with reactionary forces in the government, including "progressive" young army officers. They are out to establish a pro-Soviet state capitalist government in El Salvador by any means necessary, even siding with the mass struggle if they can turn it to their advantage. They are not at all opposed to armed struggle against the junta if it puts them in power or at least a more favorable position to take power.

The role of the P"C"S in El Salvador today is not at all to be taken lightly. Without determined struggle against them, they will certainly gain influence and get themselves in a better position to turn around whatever gains the Salvadoran people make through the sacrifice and bloodshed that they are now making to rid their country of the foul stench of U.S. imperialism.

El Salvador today is a country in great turmoil and upheaval—the upheaval caused by the thunderous struggle of the masses of people who are determined to end the misery and oppression heaped on them by U.S. imperialism. A showdown will be coming soon. It is our fondest dream that the U.S. and its lackeys will be completely trounced by the people of El Salvador, who are determined to free their country once and for all from all imperialist domination. □

## Palestinian Fights Extradition

Chicago. On March 28 Judge Frank McGarr abruptly announced without a hearing that he would uphold the U.S. government's decision to extradite Ziad Abu Ein, a young Palestinian, to Israel by denying his appeal. Israeli authorities have accused Ziad of planting a bomb in the marketplace in Tiberias, Israel—and after a frameup hearing last December, based almost solely on the confession of one witness who later recanted his testimony, the government found there was "probable cause" to extradite him. A second appeal is planned to stop Ziad from being returned to Israel where he would surely be tortured and killed.

"Free, Free Ziad! Down with U.S. Imperialism!" cried more than a hundred demonstrators on the following Monday morning, dashing Judge McGarr's hopes of trying to conduct this railroad in the dark. The frameup of Ziad is one more hot coal of anger fueling the determination of the Palestinian people to continue the fight to regain their homeland, stolen from them by the imperialist backed Zionists. "The Palestinian people are opening their eyes from little to big now—they want freedom," said a mother with her kids marching on the picket line. Her two brothers had been tortured by the Israeli government—a common experience for Palestinians. "In 1948, many were asleep. Now they're opening their eyes, they want to be free. We will not let them take Ziad."

The fact that the decision has been made twice now to extradite Ziad, despite the almost total lack of evidence against him, underscores the U.S. government's hard-core support of Israel even while they have begun to throw out a few

feelers to the Palestine Liberation Organization in the course of the current talks on Palestinian "autonomy." Part of the Camp David Agreement reached by the U.S., Israel and Egypt was to "peacefully solve" the Palestinian "problem" through implementing some sort of phony "self-rule" or "autonomy" for Palestinians living in Israel. The Palestinians are not even included in the talks because the U.S. and Israel refuse to even acknowledge their existence as a nation. This is the same preposterous stand the government stuck to in their prosecution of Ziad, labelling the Palestinians "common criminals" and "terrorists" and, on this basis, actually denying that there is a political and armed conflict in the Middle East between the state of Israel and the Palestinian people.

While the U.S. mouthed a few words about the "legitimate rights of the Palestinian people" and holds out the carrot of "autonomy" in one hand, in the other is the stick of violent suppression as exemplified by their brutal treatment of Ziad, delivering him up to the jaws of his Israeli torturers on the flimsiest pretext. If the sugar-coated bullets of "autonomy" don't succeed in stopping the struggle of the Palestinians, they will definitely bring out the real bullets, the tanks, the F-16 jet fighter planes and the cluster bombs, as they have in the past, to do the job. "These talks are a knife in the back of the Palestinian people," said Ziad's brother-in-law, sentiments that were echoed over and over again by the marchers who shouted "Down with Begin, Down with Sadat!" "I believe it will be rejected by the people," he continued. "Autonomy is like an infant born dead at

birth. There is no way that we will lay down our arms. That's the only way we will win."

The Arab community in Chicago has risen to defend Ziad, recognizing that the decision to extradite him is an attack on the struggle of the Palestinian people. Following the demonstration about 20 people held a 24 hour hunger strike and sit-down demonstration in the Arab Information Center to expose the outrageous railroad. Ziad himself declared his determination to fight the government's decision with the following

statement: "I am a man without a country. My home has been a jail cell in Chicago. In the name of humanity, in the name of simple human rights, I declare to the world that if I am not released by April 30, 1980 I will begin my resistance the only way that I can. A hunger strike until death."

Ziad began his hunger strike sooner than he announced, on March 28, the day the appeal came down, and it continues as we go to press in spite of numerous threats of punishment from the jailers. □



Revolutionary Worker

# 100% Resisters On the Stage



Red Flag Theater, a young revolutionary troupe from the San Francisco Bay Area, has just finished an 8 city tour of Bertolt Brecht's *The Mother*, a play which brings to life the story of a working class mother who becomes a revolutionary in the storms of the Russian Revolution. For Red Flag which has mainly done political satire in the streets and parks, this was a whole new thing. With three short weeks of rehearsal, the troupe hit the road, from San Francisco to Washington D.C., in the midst of the battle raging for May 1st 1980. Revolutionary workers, progressive artists and others eager to see it and help bring this art to the people made this tour possible. Over 1400 people saw the play and gave it an enthusiastic response.

The Revolutionary Worker talked with A. Pine, a member of the Revolutionary Communist Party who worked closely with the Red Flag Theater in adapting the play and preparing the tour:

**RW:** The portrayal of *The Mother* by the Red Flag Theater is really different from other portrayals I've seen on college campuses and so on. What accounts for that difference?

**A:** We discussed a lot the question of how to portray the character of the Mother going into the production. And we agreed that we didn't want to have this typical portrayal of working class people that we see on the T.V. all the

time, like your Skag, or your Archie Bunkers and stuff like that. And so we tried to get into the question of what Brecht intended and what these people are like, what revolutionary workers are like. Just in general we all agreed that we wanted this character to be optimistic, vigorous, and down to earth, and very conscious and very determined. We didn't want the kind of stuff you see in some of these 1930s songs that are supposedly the workers' songs, "Oh, it's really terrible, things are really terrible, everything's really hard" and all that. We wanted the optimism that we've seen when people struggle against their oppression. We wanted to put that on stage. We thought that Brecht wrote the play so that the Mother was very humorous, and not in just sort of an abstract, way but, because of her deep understanding of the necessity for revolution, she could really see the contradictions in the ideological or political questions that came up, and in the actions of the state. And she would ruthlessly expose this stuff. The main thing is that we wanted her to be optimistic. That was the bottom line. And I think that's what came across.

**RW:** Does your orientation on the character of the Mother have anything to do with Chiang Ching and the cultural works that were produced dur-

ing the Cultural Revolution in China?

**A:** Yeah, I think very much so.

**RW:** In what way?

**A:** The plays and the films that we and a lot of other people saw from China basically made the heroes of these plays the workers, and the revolutionary workers and peasants at that. The people who had been oppressed in the old society took the center stage in art. The question of how to portray these heroes was a big question. This was something that there was actual struggle over, between the revolutionaries led by Mao's line and in particular on this front led by Chiang Ching, and the revisionists. We tried to study this to some extent; we have to do a lot more study about it. One thing is for sure: we wanted to portray the Mother and the other revolutionaries as 100% resisters. We think that people need to see these characters on the stage—the masses of people, and especially the working class and oppressed people, the Black people and people of oppressed nationalities—need to see characters on the stage who represent their aspirations and their desire to struggle against oppression and to resist oppression. So we definitely wanted 100% resisters on the stage.

**RW:** Have there been any characters on the stage or on T.V. or in the movies here that you'd consider 100% resisters that people can identify with?

**A:** This very rarely happens, but sometimes stuff comes through. I think an example of this is the characters in the first section of *Roots* that was on T.V. The characters of Kunta Kinte and Kizzy were definitely 100% resisters. They resisted their oppression. And the masses of people it was like nobody was on the streets when this stuff was on T.V.! If that doesn't prove that people want to see such things, I don't know what does. Furthermore, there was all this stuff in the press about how people were naming their babies Kizzy and Kunta Kinte. This was true of different classes of people, the middle class people, everybody was home watching *Roots*. As far as that goes it wasn't true of the second *Roots* series which wasn't the same thing at all.

**RW:** Some people have been offended by some of the characters portrayed in the revolutionary Chinese operas and plays, and say that they are "100% pure" and "humorless characters". From what investigation you've done into this question, could you give us some examples about these characters, what makes them tick?

**A:** I think there are people who read some stuff that came out of China and they don't really get into it or take the responsibility to maybe go watch the plays, or go read something that the actors wrote about their struggle to perform these characters. Then they wank off about what was going down. The fact is that the characters that were on the stage in all these model operas and plays were people who had to face contradictions and try to resolve them. Sure they were 100% revolutionaries in the sense that they were not vacillating over whether they were against oppression, whether they were going to struggle. In one of the first model ballets *The Red Detachment of Women*, the heroine goes through a lot of changes. In particular, she has to confront the question of whether or not she's just going to go out for individual revenge against her immediate oppressor, which is this one landlord, or whether she's really going to take up conscious struggle against the system of exploitation and oppression. This is the major theme of the ballet. She actually blows it pretty bad, gets some of her comrades killed. Then with the leadership of the Party she sees the error she's making, and big advances are made. In all the models it's different situations, different questions are addressed but all the people go through tremendous changes and face contradictions that the people are facing. If people want to go look at this stuff, they can look and see for themselves.

This came up in the production of *The Mother*. Should we show her with

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N.Y. actor writes:

## Red Flag Theatre— A Cultural Weapon

To The Revolutionary Worker:

I must admit I did not begin to realize the importance of Red Flag Theater's tour of Bertolt Brecht's *The Mother* until four days prior to their arrival in New York City. I had recently moved to New York from Cleveland in an effort to advance my acting career by climbing up a rung or two on the ladder of bourgeois success. I'd heard about the production through a friend and I volunteered for what turned out to be a full-time job which seemed to fit neatly into the 44 hour work week I was already enjoying. I was one of seven who had been working ferociously for three weeks to promote and unite people around supporting the tour.

My own career was at a standstill due to a lack of theatrical auditions which I could attend. I happened to read about an audition for a cable television special and I decided to take time out from the rigorous involvement with *The Mother* to attend the audition. The television special was to star Ethel Merman, Mary Martin and Sandy Duncan, just to name a few of the thoroughbred horses of the bourgeois cultural machine. The audition was simple. We were herded in like cattle, 25 at a time, all of us 5'11" with brown hair, brown eyes, brown skin and our pictures and resumés held high. The producer asked a few questions concerning our singing, dancing and acting abilities. And then she zeroed in on the most disgustingly important question of all, "How many of us would be opposed to performing in the nude?" Well, there it was, my first encounter with the scum of the bourgeois culture machine—a machine that constantly saturates the media at all levels with sex for sale and sex as the decisive ingredient for good entertainment. Returning home to lose myself in a mindless game show or two, I was appalled to see Carroll O'Connor, alias Archie Bunker—the "working man's man," endorsing Senator Kennedy in the New York primary election. I began to realize and really consider the mind-boggling effect the media has on the masses of working people in this country alone. Hundreds of thousands of people would be following ol' Archie's steps to cast a vote for the "Knight of the

Living Dead," as Kennedy was accurately dubbed on the cover of a current volume of *Revolution*. Fucking bullshit!

Red Flag Theater finally arrived in New York. Their performances were politically sharp if somewhat artistically uneven due to the strength and weaknesses of the individual members of the company. And the impact of the performances and the success of their stay in New York was shown in the rich and lively discussions that followed the performances. Many questions were raised, specifically, "Why 'The Mother'?" To me it is an important work because not only does it parallel many of the oppressive conditions felt worldwide today, it also pinpoints the way forward through sharpening the line and proudly raising the red flag. I think there is a great need and hunger for revolutionary artists like Red Flag Theater who present proletarian heroes like the Mother who step out of the confusion of the everyday scuffle and stride into the raging battle to overthrow the system that perpetuates turmoil, oppression and class position. The members of Red Flag Theater also recognize the need for contemporary works that will sharply run up against the bourgeois stereotypes like Skag, a less comic Archie Bunker type who struggles through a 40 hour work week in pursuit of an "Aviance Night," and also those femme fatales like Charlie's Angels who blow plastic pipe dreams through the pant legs and twitching asses of their OohLaLa Sassoon jeans.

Revolutionary culture in America is still in the embryonic stage. I believe that Red Flag Theater is an outstanding example and perhaps even a model of the role that the advanced revolutionary cultural workers can play today. I say this not because of perfect performances and standing ovations but more importantly because of their constant struggle to sharpen the correct political line and polish the craft in every aspect of their work. They boldly seek the opinions and criticisms of their audiences as well as engaging in stiff self-criticism.

Revolutionary culture alone will not cause a raging revolution. But I believe that it is a valuable weapon in its ability to educate, inspire and impel the masses into overthrowing the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Working with Red Flag Theater has definitely sent my world into a tailspin. Their visit has made one thing perfectly clear in my mind, I know that I'll be marching on the streets of New York City on May 1st in support of International Workers Day and I'm struggling even now to unite other artists in New York City to do the same. The road is clear when we begin to realize that everything has political content.

"If you still live, never say: NEVER! . . . Who can restrain the man who sees his situation? The victims of today will be the victors of tomorrow and never is changed into today." *The Mother*.

D. Hill—An Actor Who's Taking Up The Struggle

## Bob Avakian Speech in Cleveland

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understanding enabled him to see was that it wasn't a handful of heroes that determined the shape of society and the development of history, but it was the struggle of classes going back to the first primitive forms of society and the first development of classes out of those primitive forms. That throughout history it had been the struggle of one class rising up, overthrowing another and replacing one system by a higher one, that had brought society to the threshold of communism, where, through the unprecedented revolution of the working class—not a class of exploiters and oppressors, but a class of exploited and oppressed rising up—that finally all forms and any basis for exploitation and oppression could be abolished once and for all. And this is what I found by reading Mao, and by taking up the Marxist-Leninist theory that he based himself on and further developed and enriched.

But the Panthers, you see, much as they upheld Mao in spirit, and much as they respected him for being bad, also only wanted to go part way with Mao. And they had to a certain degree a misunderstanding of what his role was and what he was all about. Because they used to say, "Listen, Mao is not really a communist, he's actually just a revolutionary nationalist, and that's what we should be." But this was turning Mao upside down. The reason that they said this is because in China, as opposed to a country like the U.S., the first necessary phase of the struggle was to kick out the foreigners and to liberate China as a nation, as a country, from foreign domination, and from the rule of the lackeys of imperialism. So the struggle was at first a struggle of national liberation against foreign domination.

Mao saw, however, because he was a communist and not a nationalist, that national liberation itself wasn't far enough; that unless you took the struggle further ahead and mobilized the people to carry it forward, you'd get rid of foreign exploiters only to have a homegrown variety rise up in your midst and take over, and then even sell you back out to the foreigners, which is exactly what's happening now. That in fact, the only way a revolution could be led all the way through and not be turned back—or if it was temporarily turned back, the only way the basis could be laid for once again surging forward—was if that revolution was based on the communist philosophy, and in particular grasping the role, the central and decisive role, the working class had to play in that revolution. And though China was mainly a peasant country, and though its first stage was a struggle for national liberation, Mao fought for, upheld and applied the understanding that the revolution had to base itself on the leading role of the working class, which is the only class in society that has no interests in any form of exploitation or oppression of the people and could carry the struggle all the way through.

But the Panthers wanted to go part way and not all the way. They fell into a disease, or several related diseases that have plagued the communist movement and the revolutionary forces in this country going back a ways. They fell into what we call eclectics. Eclectics is a Greek word, or a word of Greek origin. It basically means something like a smorgasbord. You take a little of this and a little of that and even try to combine things that are actually antagonistically opposed to each other and push them together into one stew—which in fact won't stay down.

Now a main part of the eclectics the Panthers fell into was that they said, "We'll take a little bit of internationalism and a little bit of nationalism and try to combine them together." So when they tried to see about building the unity of people beyond just one race or nationality, they still fell into nationalism. What was their slogan? "Black Power for Black people, Brown Power for Brown people, Yellow Power for Yellow people, Red Power for Red people, and even White Power for White people!" Well, that's not the way you have to go. There's no such thing as Brown Power, Black Power, Yellow Power, Red Power and White Power, for Brown, Black, Yellow, Red and White people. There's a question of political power for one class or another—united, of all races and nationalities! That's fundamentally the way the capitalists do it and that's the way the working class has to do it. And especially the working class, because the capitalists, even within their own ranks, will practice some discrimination, but the working class can't tolerate any form of inequality or division by race or nationality.

So the Panthers tried to combine a little bit of internationalism and a little bit of nationalism. But Mao and all communists were and have to be internationalists. We can't be nationalists. As soon as you say, my race, my nationality, my people first and above everything else, that's just another way of saying *me* first and above all else. And everybody else comes second. If you're any less concerned about the struggle of people in Iran, Nicaragua, Africa, Europe, the Middle East or anywhere else to end exploitation and oppression and the imperialist system which gives rise to and maintains it, if you're any less concerned about that than you are about the fight here, then you cannot in fact get rid of oppression and exploitation here, and you can't make any real or lasting contribution to doing it in the rest of the world. If you're not equally concerned about, and aren't ready to equally sacrifice for and contribute to the liberation of people

throughout the world fighting against this oppression, then there's no way that you, or we or anyone is going to be liberated and emancipated in this country either. You've got to be all the way internationalist. You've got to look at this as a world struggle, that the people of the world gotta rise up and take the whole world and the future of the whole human race into our hands and not be divided up—my race, my nationality, my people first. Because as soon as we fall into that, we fall into the trap of the enemy, we fall into the ideology of the capitalists, because that's their ideology: America first, white first, man first, before woman, or what have you—it always comes down in the final analysis to another version of *me* first. You cannot be partway internationalist and then stop and say the rest is gonna be nationalist. You've got to be all the way internationalist. If you're white and you don't fight against the exploitation and oppression of people of color in this country or other countries around the world, then you cannot fight and you cannot really contribute to the emancipation of anybody in the world, including yourself. And the same goes if you're Black, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Asian, Native American, Hawaiian or any other nationality.

### Pragmatism

But it's only by basing yourself on the outlook of the working class that you can see the common interests that we have as a class and see beyond the divisions and inequalities and the dog-eat-dog contests that they whip us up to and plant among our ranks. But the Panthers fell into the disease that's even more fundamental and serious than eclectics: the main disease that has plagued the communist movement in this country, the old Communist Party and the revolutionary movement going back a long way, and that disease is pragmatism. Now many of you may not have heard of pragmatism as such, but you've heard of it described or formulated in other ways. And what pragmatism says is basically this: just rely on what's immediately before you, whatever your direct and immediate experience tells you is true or good, that's all you need to know, don't ask the question why, don't try to discover what's going on with it, don't try to see it in its relationship with anything else, just accept it and do it. Another way of expressing pragmatism is this: if it feels good, do it. Now almost all of you have heard that before. This is pragmatic—if it feels good to fuck over somebody else, do it! So what? If it feels good to cheat on your old lady or your old man, do it—never mind what it does to your personal relationships or your family relationships, never mind the way it screws up your mind, go ahead and do it, if it feels good, do it! If it brings you immediate, temporary and partial results of gratification, that's all you need to know—that makes it good, that makes it true, don't question anymore, don't think any more broadly, don't look more fundamentally or in any more long-term way, just do it. If it feels good, do it.

And at most, pragmatism tells us to rely on common sense. Now you know what common sense is—common sense tells you that whatever your direct and immediate experience teaches you, that's all you need to know and that's the truth. And that's O.K. up to a certain point. But you know, Engels, who along with Marx founded the communist philosophy, had something important to say about common sense: he said common sense, fine fellow that he is, does very well as long as he stays within his own four narrow walls, but as soon as he goes out to the world at large, he runs into all kinds of trouble. Think about it. It's common sense that if a fire is flaring up in front of you, you run and put water on it and that will put it out. Well and good. But what if it's a fire that's fueled by gasoline? Then it flares up and burns you, unnecessarily. Common sense may not tell you that—only studying the properties of fire and the different materials that burn in different kinds of fire, is gonna enable you to understand that. You're gonna have to look more broadly, you're gonna have to study it scientifically. Now it is difficult, I know, when you're fighting a fire and smoke and inhalation of fumes and everything else is dragging you down, it is difficult to pull out a book and study the properties of fire right then. We're still gonna have to learn how to do that—in other words, we'll have to learn how to fight with a gun in one hand and a book in the other when it gets to that point. But it is difficult to do it right in the midst of battle, and that's all the more reason why you better study *before* and *afterwards*, so you won't get burned unnecessarily and suffer unnecessary sacrifice. You see, common sense will not take you far enough. Common sense doesn't tell you that there are germs out there. You can't see them but you can catch them. Only with the microscope can you really see them, magnify them and understand them. Common sense doesn't tell you what I referred to earlier, that the light from the stars that you see out there actually left them a long time ago, maybe millions of years ago, that in fact, some of the stars whose light you're seeing just now may have actually been extinguished long ago, and you're just now seeing their light. Common sense won't tell you that, but a telescope and studying the laws of astronomy can tell you that. That's what Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought is—it is a telescope and a microscope, to enable us to magnify everyday events and see the broadest and furthest horizons and understand the events in the world in their interconnections.

But the Panthers ignored this to a great degree, not completely but in the main. And they fell into this

disease of pragmatism. They turned away from the fundamental understanding that the working class must be, can be and will be the decisive revolutionary force in this and every other country. They looked around and they believed the lies that George Meany truly represents the working class, that Archie Bunker is a typical representative of the working class. They even said that the Black workers, not only the white workers but the Black workers, are and always will be all bought-off, conservative, bourgeois flunkies for the system, and the working class in this country will never be revolutionary. They didn't look at Marxism-Leninism thoroughly, they didn't look at it in its all-round application, they didn't look back in history, they didn't look at other countries, they looked right at what was before them and said, "Right now, today, the working class is not revolutionary in America, therefore it never will be." Now it was true that especially the Black and other minority youth, large numbers of whom were and are unemployed, and even many white youth, were then acting in a more radical way than the working class in general, and it was very correct and a great advance for the Panthers to give revolutionary leadership to this. But to conclude from this that the working class would never be radicalized, and especially that it would never act as the leading force of the revolution, was very short-sighted, just plain pragmatic. This is pragmatism—whatever is immediately right in front of your face and what is the most narrow and immediate results, that's all you need to know, that is good, that is true, don't question any broader or any farther.

### Panthers Turn Against Marxism

So despite the revolutionary heroism and determination and the many great contributions of the Panther Party, they more and more turned away from revolution toward reform. I remember in 1969, sitting in David Hilliard's house—David Hilliard, Bobby Seale, Masai Hewitt (another leader of the Panthers), Kathleen Cleaver and a number of others—we were carrying on a very sharp argument, them on one side, me on the other, about what was the decisive force for revolution in this country. They were all arguing that the working class would never be revolutionary and that we couldn't be thoroughgoing with Marxism-Leninism, we should only take part and leave the rest alone, especially the part about the working class being the main and leading force for revolution. They said, "Look at the old Communist Party. That's Marxism-Leninism, therefore we don't need it—you can see they're not revolutionary." "True enough," I said, "but that's also *not* Marxism-Leninism. Because there's nothing more all the way revolutionary than real Marxism-Leninism. We can't look at the outward appearances or what seems to be true, we gotta look more deeply and see that in fact they've betrayed Marxism-Leninism, and that's why they're not revolutionary." And they said, "No. Marxism-Leninism, we can take some of it but not all of it. It doesn't fit the immediate conditions around us, so we use the part that seems to be good, and let the rest go. The working class is not and never will be revolutionary in this country."

They insisted it was what they called the lumpen-proletariat that had to be the vanguard—the desperados, the people in gangs out here, the people who live by ripping off and are forced into conditions of living by criminal means. And they tried to import that into the Panther Party. That ideology and that form of organization. And it made it easier for the FBI to infiltrate and to set up cliques within the Panther Party, carrying out a gang-like mentality to go after each other and to shoot down and to isolate and destroy the genuine revolutionaries fighting for a Marxist-Leninist line, fighting for an understanding of the role of the working class in revolution. And there were forces fighting for this within the Panther Party; but these people, unfortunately, were defeated, isolated, crushed, and even killed within the Panther Party. Of course, we can't talk about the destruction of the Black Panther Party as a revolutionary organization without talking about the vicious repression that was brought down, not only Fred Hampton and along with him Mark Clark being murdered in cold blood on his bed ten years ago, but more than 25 other members of the Black Panther Party, murdered either openly by police or by FBI infiltrators and instigators. But in the final analysis, the reason for the destruction of the Black Panther Party as a revolutionary organization did not lie outside of it but inside of it. It lay not in the policies and the vicious acts of repression that the government carried out—murder, harassment, jailing, hounding people out of the country—not in all that, though that played a crucial role, a vicious, crippling role, but fundamentally in the misunderstanding and the limitations in understanding of the ideology and philosophy of the Black Panther Party, which ultimately determined how they responded to not only that repression but how they responded to events in society as a whole.

### CPUSA Revisionists

I remember, two days after this meeting at David Hilliard's house, I went to another meeting at a storefront where the Panthers were calling for a United Front Against Fascism Conference—an idea and program that the very Communist Party that we both agreed was not revolutionary had sold to them.

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# 1980s Two Doors

Two scenes, strikingly similar—yet radically different. On the left, a picture snapped by a *Tacoma News Tribune* photographer, accompanying soldiers on war maneuvers in the army's "German town" in the state of Washington. On the right, the now-familiar poster for May 1st 1980. (We received this clipping just two days after the poster had gone to the printers.) A coincidence? Hardly!

The words of the new RCP Draft Programme ring true: "The future, in this country and around the world, is coming up for grabs."

Two scenes. Two visions of the future. But only one calls on people to take the future into our hands.



# MAY 1<sup>st</sup> INTERNATIONAL WORKERS DAY

Take history into  
our hands!

## Hostage Battle

Continued from page 1

After the collapse of their earlier efforts to win the release of the hostages to the U.N. Commission, and the flight of the Shah to Egypt, the U.S. imperialists are playing out their latest round of diplomacy with little prospect of quickly winning the release of their CIA and State Department operatives and other assorted embassy personnel or, more importantly, of rebuilding their influence in Iran.

At the same time, their continued inability to exert their "mighty" power has led to a serious undercutting of their credibility with their allies. (What kind of "leadership" will there be in the upcoming world war if the U.S. government cannot even control its embassy in a "third-rate power"—we can hear the West European capitalists begin to ask themselves.) It has also led to an erosion of the reactionary public opinion among the American people which they had so carefully cultivated and which is equally crucial to their war preparations.

Early this week it was announced that a tough new stance was being adopted. Carter sent President Bani-Sadr "an ultimatum," announcing that unless the Iranian government fulfilled its promise to prevail upon the student militants to place the hostages under direct government supervision, the U.S. would escalate its political and economic presence against Iran, including an embargo on all trade with Iran and pressuring their allies to follow suit, as well as reducing the size of the Iranian diplomatic mission in the U.S. "I think he has decided in his own mind that Tuesday is it," Senator Packwood said on Carter's new "firmness." At the same time this new tough stance was a clear political message to the Iranian government to get things under control.

While split on the tactics which are most suited to capitulation, and still fighting among themselves to determine who will emerge on top, the bourgeois forces on Iran's Revolutionary Council are united around one thing: the need to consolidate a new government lest they lose it all. The rapid growth of

the anti-imperialist and communist forces in recent months, on the one hand, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan on the other, have only fueled that desire. An essential component of that stability would be to resolve the hostage crisis and develop a new "business-like relationship" with U.S. imperialism and the other Western powers that is crucial to their plans for capitalist development in Iran—though under an "Islamic" and even "anti-imperialist" cover, of course.

This new round of pressure immediately sent these vacillators scrambling for solutions. The Revolutionary Council met for four hours and shortly thereafter Bani-Sadr personally had extensive meetings with leaders of the Moslem students holding the embassy. Clearly a new plan to give in was in the works, but the students would only offer "no comment" about what was going on.

There has been a great deal of internal struggle among the students all along, and some of the most uncompromising and staunchly anti-imperialist forces have been expelled over the past month or two. The Revolutionary Council is clearly using carrot-and-stick tactics with them and is especially invoking the vision of new revolutionary upheavals, led by the Left, if the "crisis" is allowed to continue much longer. As demonstrated by their offer to hand over the hostages to the Revolutionary Council when the U.N. Commission was in Iran several weeks ago (and which was only reversed after huge demonstrations at the embassy protested such a move and forced Khomeini to speak out), the students have increasingly lagged behind the feelings of broad sections of the Iranian people, who are not willing to compromise the demand for the return of the Shah and his billions of dollars in plundered wealth. And if the Revolutionary Council does in fact officially take over control of the hostages, this will be viewed by millions in Iran as an attempt to pry the hostages loose from the people, and as a major step towards striking up a deal with the imperialists.

At the same time, Khomeini—having waited more than a week to take a reading on the mood of the masses—finally issued a statement on Tuesday, lashing out at the U.S. for continuing its efforts to deceive the Iranian people and support the Shah, calling recent U.S. maneuvers a "new trick," an attempt to "pull the wool over our eyes by expressions of moderation and flattery." But he left the door open for compromise by staying silent on the question of transferring the hostages, and once again ended his statement by holding out the promise that the situation could be resolved with the election of the Iranian parliament.

When it was announced that on Tuesday Bani-Sadr would be making an important speech, Carter and the rest of the ruling class were anticipating "progress." But alas, the wild card in the deck, that force that defies the civilized code and rules of the more "refined" elements of society, rumbled to life once again! When Bani-Sadr gave his speech to a gathering of over 200,000 in Tehran, he carefully avoided any mention of the hostages and focused the first 1-1/2 hours on internal politics. He couldn't put off the real news forever, and when he finally did announce his plan for transferring the hostages, he was greeted by "angry shouts and boos" that forced him to immediately retreat into a long dissertation on U.S.-Iranian relations (to prove he hadn't made any deals, of course), and to say flat out that "I emphasize to you that the hostages will not be freed until the Shah is extradited."

A frantic back-and-forth ensued when Carter at first refused to meet any of Bani-Sadr's face-saving conditions, namely an assurance that the U.S. would refrain from any anti-Iranian propaganda or from instigating any provocations. At the same time as Carter backed down on the threatened economic sanctions, he bellowed to a reactionary convention of trade-union bureaucrats that "No one in the government of the U.S. has apologized to anyone in the government of Iran because we have nothing for which to apologize." At one point Bani-Sadr was forced to say that the deal was off, complaining, "He doesn't understand our revolution."

However, as revealed in the publication of Carter's "confidential" notes to Khomeini over the past weeks, in which he pointed out that "we have tried to keep Mr. Bani-Sadr's position in mind," Carter and the imperialists understand the Iranian revolution *all too well*, and they in particular understand Bani-Sadr's difficulty in selling a bill of goods to millions of people who hate U.S. imperialism and all that it stands for. It is just for this reason, as "secret" notes continue to fly back and forth, that the State Department has asked the U.S. press to "cool it."

This latest spiral of struggle highlights both the imperialists' growing necessity and at the same time their dwindling freedom. "Carter is gambling on the Bani-Sadr government," was the appraisal from bourgeois commentators, summing up the spot the U.S. would be in if that government's hold on the masses was further weakened. At the same time, the imperialists are forced to maintain a somewhat bellicose stance and refuse to make any "apologies." After all, a "great" imperialist power preparing to hurl hundreds of millions of people around the world into war doesn't do it by apologizing to other countries, or by exposing its past crimes to the masses in its own country and worldwide.

After the imperialists have drawn millions into political debate over Iran, including those who lusted for a quick and crushing victory over the "uppity" Iranian people, material reality has smacked them in the face and shattered many illusions about both U.S. might and U.S. intentions. Millions are becoming more cynical about the whole deal. In a recent poll, over 47% said the U.S. should not oppose Iranian efforts to extradite the Shah.

And Iran's bourgeois forces are also confronted by a mass movement that they can't control. The anti-imperialist understanding of the people is continuing to deepen, and there's been a strong shift to the left in public opinion. Exposure of the role of noted political figures like Ayatollah Shariat-Madari as having collaborated with the Shah's regime during the revolutionary upsurge in 1978, and the publication of

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## New Zimbabwe Government

# Opportunists Throw Holy Water on Capitulation

In 1940, in the middle of China's war to drive out the Japanese imperialists who occupied much of the country, Mao Tsetung wrote an article analyzing the stages in the revolutionary struggles in China and the colonial and semi-colonial countries generally as they took place in the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution. He described two stages. The first was aimed at driving out the foreign imperialists and defeating their feudal and capitalist lackeys inside China. In this stage, he described the task of uniting all the forces opposed to imperialism, including sections of the national bourgeoisie. This revolution, he said, "actually serves the purpose of clearing a still wider path for the development of socialism," the second stage of the revolutionary struggle. "Such a revolution," he said, "attacks imperialism at its very roots, and is therefore not tolerated but opposed by imperialism." (Mao, "On New Democracy," *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 344)

For almost a decade the people of Zimbabwe have waged a bitter and heroic war to defeat the white settler rule that has kept them in virtual slavery and to drive out the U.S. and British imperialists who for decades have plundered the land and exploited the people. But surprisingly, now that this struggle has supposedly reached a victorious climax with the British-orchestrated internal settlement and the election triumph of Robert Mugabe and ZANU (Zimbabwe African National Union), the main political and fighting force in the war against the Smith regime, the U.S. and British imperialists are not only "tolerating" it, they are downright pleased. In fact, they are crowing about how well things have turned out. "Rhodesia—the clearest outcome and the best" proclaimed the British imperialist newspaper the *Manchester Guardian* after the elections. The *New York Times*, in the finest imperialist "good show, old boy" style, congratulated the British for having "brought an honorable end to another chapter in England's imperial history." "At long last," emoted the *Times*, as if its editors had been fighting in the jungles with the guerrillas these many years, "Rhodesia has been reborn as Zimbabwe. Most important, it has been born free." Now right from the get-go you have got to be suspicious when the imperialists so warmly hail developments in a revolutionary struggle that was largely aimed at themselves. In fact, they see more than a little analogy between what's happened in Zimbabwe and the taming of Elsa the lion made famous a few years ago in the movie "Born Free."

Also interesting is the fact that the U.S. and British imperialists are joined in their enthusiasm over the settlement of the guerrilla war and the course Robert Mugabe has charted as new Prime Minister, by a whole chorus of revisionist and so-called communist groups in the U.S. and around the world, from the Socialist Workers Party and the "Communist" Party USA to the "Communist" Party (M-L) and the "Communist" Workers Party (Workers Viewpoint Organization).

Nothing better typifies the reaction of these groups than an hysterical article in the newspaper of the "Communist" Workers Party, *Workers Viewpoint*, attacking the RCP for daring to raise sharp questions and criticisms of the whole British-engineered "settlement" and for exposing the "Fool's Gold Victory in the Zimbabwe Election" (see *RW*, March 7). As we stated in the *RW*: "This whole election process, or more to the point, the whole 'internal settlement' has in fact resulted in a serious setback for the struggle of the people of Zimbabwe. And to think for a minute that this election of Mugabe has brought the country closer to real independence instead of actually

farther away is indeed an extremely dangerous illusion."

The imperialists certainly do not like to hear this, because they very much want to foster illusions about their neo-colonial grip on Zimbabwe, which Mugabe has given no indication he intends to break—or even challenge. Groups like the Communist Workers Party do not like to hear it because, fundamentally, they do not think it really possible to break with imperialism. In fact, the bottom line in their analysis of developments in Zimbabwe, as with their analysis of Iran, China and so on, is to argue for and justify capitulation to U.S. imperialism.

The *Workers Viewpoint*, like the *Guardian* (U.S. weekly) and other reformist groups, attacks the RCP for "not believing that a third world country can fight off imperialism." Like their defense of what ZANU and Mugabe have done in Zimbabwe, they turn reality on its head. It is not some question in the abstract of whether "ZANU is capable of leading a national democratic revolution against imperialism and taking up the tasks ahead," as *Workers Viewpoint* puts it. It is a question of whether they are doing it or not, and if not, why not. It is not a question in the abstract of whether Mugabe and ZANU will inevitably capitulate to imperialism. It is a very real question of whether they have, and why. It is not a question in the abstract of whether Mugabe and ZANU "have to become either sell-outs to the U.S. imperialists or to the Soviet social-imperialists" as *Workers Viewpoint* falsely claims we say. It is a question of whether their outlook and political line has led or will lead them to do so. These are real questions, questions that the masses of people in the U.S. and revolutionary-minded people of all nationalities all over the world want to know the answer to. They won't thank these pseudo-revolution-

aries one bit for their shuck and jive antics in trying to obscure what is going down in Zimbabwe, any more than, in the long run, they will be taken in by the schemes and "settlements" of the imperialists.

While it was absolutely correct and imperative for revolutionaries in the U.S. and around the world to give wholehearted and active support to the armed struggle of the Zimbabwean people against the U.S. and British imperialists and the racist Smith regime, because it was dealing blows to imperialism, for the same reason, revolutionaries must concretely analyze the direction in which this struggle has been led and criticize and expose Mugabe and ZANU's capitulation to imperialism and the chains of neo-colonial domination in which they are entangling the people of Zimbabwe.

The starting point and fundamental question in analyzing the situation in Zimbabwe today is who, what classes, have political power. Does the election triumph of ZANU and Mugabe represent the seizure of political power by the masses of black people, the urban working class and the rural peasantry and farm laborers? As Mao Tsetung pointed out quite realistically, "Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun," and as the *RW* stated a couple of weeks ago, "The answer to the question of who has political power in Zimbabwe today is the same as the answer to the question of who controls the military—who commands the guns. And decidedly, it is not the masses of people of Zimbabwe." According to the *Workers Viewpoint*, this is a lie. "Today," they say, "the Zimbabwean masses are still armed!" They dismiss as shrewd tactics Mugabe's decision to make the white Rhodesian military commander—who led the white settler efforts to militarily defeat the liberation struggle, the man responsible for the murder of more than 10,000 freedom fighters—head of the military of the

new "national front government." This, they claim, "shows the mature political level of the ZANU central committee... this is a better condition to disintegrate it (the white army) even further. Even more, this is the best condition to try to control them and at the same time build up ZANU's independent military forces by furnishing it with newer and better weapons."

Unfortunately for this "rose-colored glasses" view, Mugabe himself has taken the opposite stand on arming the masses. Yes, black Zimbabweans may still have weapons, but only because he hasn't had time to collect them all yet. As he said in an interview printed in *Time* magazine, "There must be disarmament of everybody, not only the whites. There are many guns around and we want to remove them. We want this to be achieved in as short a time as possible. The people now have the power, so I don't see any reason why they should have these individual firearms. If we want them to be armed, we will arm them properly." That, of course, is very unlikely. "There can never be a return to the state of armed conflict," Mugabe told a television audience. "It is time to beat our swords into plowshares so that we can attend to the problems of developing our economy and society."

The fact of the matter is that the military power of the white settler regime, much less its economic power and the political power of the imperialists, has not been broken. And Mugabe's plan to allow the main military force of the settler regime, the Rhodesian army, to stay intact, while integrating his guerrilla army into it—under the command of the former leader of that reactionary military force—and disarming the black masses, hardly proves that the popular forces control the gun and political power in Zimbabwe. It argues the opposite. Unable to deny that the military power

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Revolutionary Worker

This drawing was recently received by the RW. It was inspired by an article about an RW network in a factory where workers passed the paper around by leaving copies in a drawer for the next shift to find.



# America in Decline

## New Book Analyzes Imperialism's Greatest Crisis

### Part 3

The following is the last of three articles serializing a chapter from an extraordinary new book, AMERICA IN DECLINE—Imperialism's Greatest Crisis: An Analysis of the Developments Toward War and Revolution in the U.S. and Worldwide in the 1980s—to be published soon by Banner Press. This is a pathbreaking effort, written by a writing group under the leadership of the RCP Central Committee and its Chairman, Bob Avakian.

Do you want to really understand why Bob Avakian said "the imperialists are in a lot of trouble... you may not think that revolution is a serious possibility, but the rulers of this country think that it is a real possibility..."? ("Opening Remarks" at the recent RCP Central Committee meeting) This book analyzes why this is so. When you read it, including this chapter, the possibility of revolution, the urgent necessity—and basis—for preparation now like May Day 1980 jumps off the pages at you.

This particular chapter deals with the present condition of the masses in the U.S., its relation to their political mood, and how this objective situation will develop in the future. It is being serialized in the RW and appears in its entirety in the current issue of the Party's magazine, Revolution. Subheads are ours.

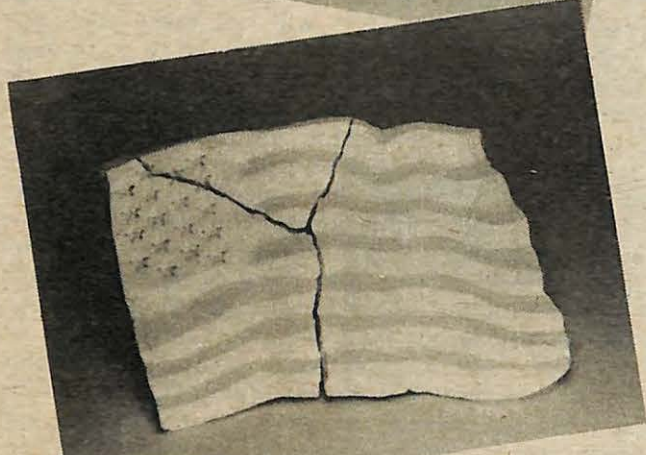
### What Kind of War?

What kind of war are we talking about? Nuclear war? Perhaps, and most likely at some point in the course of this war. The presence of foreign troops on U.S. soil and the actual seizure of territory by them? A very real possibility. During World War 2 the general population in the U.S. was able, for the most part, to conduct their lives in an ordinary and routine manner. They were shielded from the war's destruction. But let's get back to some of these Pentagon studies. Here is one possible scenario that is envisioned:

"Suppose the USSR invaded Western Europe, and that the U.S. conventional and tactical nuclear forces cannot stop them. At that point we should be prepared to use a strategic Limited Nuclear Option (LNO) by evacuating our cities. Hopefully the Soviets would be deterred by this action; but if they are not, the relocation would have made us ready to execute the LNO."<sup>27</sup>

With an equanimity that is as amazing as it is spooky, these planners are matter-of-factly talking about blowing away several Soviet cities. And in this scenario millions of people in this country would be gathered up and dispatched to this or that hide-out, for who knows how long, in order to strengthen the bargaining and logistical position of the U.S. imperialists—they could care less about people's lives. It is the old shell game. Come see if you can find us! Instead of taking your enemy's populace as hostage you turn large chunks of your own civilian population into poker chips. The other side can't kill enough of them to make it worthwhile; in the meantime the nuclear warheads are being readied. The Soviets have their own variations on the same theme: their "civil defense" system is more highly developed. How quickly cities can be evacuated and whether it is even feasible is not the point—what is, is the means that will be employed to protect and reinforce systems of exploitation in the United States and the Soviet Union. No technology and no fall-back plan is beyond adoption to win such a war. But all of this is couched in terms of protecting the country; in other words, cities are "protected" by anti-ballistic missile systems, a "counter-force strategy" (in which your adversary's potential to strike back is knocked out) is developed to "protect" against a lethal attack.

Now the actual effects of a nuclear war have been documented (Hiroshima and Nagasaki) and anticipated by the systems-planners. There are the prompt effects—blast damage and fire storms—and the delayed effects of radiation, disease, the despoliation of water, air, and soil.<sup>28</sup> But the imperialists have never predicated their thinking on the absolute end of the world. The Pentagon has commissioned the think tanks to "think through" possible nuclear exchanges. Two recent studies have considered targeting strategies which would be aimed at wiping out the Soviet leadership group and unleashing secessionist movements in the Soviet Union to effectively dismember the country. Said one Defense of-



ficial in reference to these studies (and preparations), "We are trying to see in the ultimate nuclear exchange what should we be trying to do other than just flatten their industry." A consultant chimed in, "It's thinking the unthinkable. We don't want to bomb them into the stone age. We should have real objectives that make sense."<sup>29</sup>

The new technology of war does not override the decisiveness of the human factor; even the imperialists recognize this. They need people in their armies and occupation hordes, they need their fac-

ories staffed. This would be a war to determine in the final analysis which of the great powers will enjoy the lion's share of territories, raw materials, markets—and labor power. Other systems-planners are busy at work figuring out what percentage of the industrial capacity will be destroyed, how quickly it can be rebuilt or salvaged—for the holy cause of profit, it goes without saying. In their worst-case prognostications, some 75 million Americans might die; how they approach all this is illustrated in their notion of "city-trading" with the other side—upping the ante in terms of retaliation for destroying this or that city. With the urban areas largely destroyed and the industrial base shattered (in both the United States and the Soviet Union production of key commodities is concentrated in a relatively limited number of facilities), the planners foresee a shift of the population to the countryside—as agricultural production will necessarily absorb a larger share of social labor, given the destruction of agricultural equipment and the factories that produce it along with support industries like fertilizer. And so the experts blithely conclude society will begin to recover starting at a level of development that approximates what existed in maybe 1890.

There is one basic element that is conveniently omitted from these calculations—the masses of people who have to endure all of this. Yes, there are the illusions that "things will eventually get better" and it is quite conceivable that some lift will be given the economy by expanded military expenditures—though even this possibility should not be exaggerated, because of the level from which things are starting, i.e. a persistent inflation and monetary instability. Doubtless, many will be swept up by the initial war hysteria, the specter of Russian hordes taking over, and standards of living going down the drain. But the fever and emotion, the flag-waving and demagoguery cannot change the nature of imperialist war and the enormous suffering that it will lead to. The perorations about the American standard of living are going to wear thin with the economy lurching through crisis, even grinding to a standstill, with physical destruction being inflicted extensively.

Consider how some of this might play itself out. Following the destruction of key military and industrial centers in both countries, Soviet forces seize portions of the West Coast, Alaska and maybe parts of California. The U.S. imperialists retaliate and launch an invasion of Lithuania or Latvia (though the order of this entire chain of events could just as well be the reverse). But, whether you live in "occupied" Alaska or "free" New York, life is hell. In fact, those from "free" New York will be press-ganged to even the score—by invading Lithuania. Everywhere, people fed into the meat grinder, everywhere the equivalent of martial law, whether it be under Soviet or U.S. imperialist bayonets. The misery engendered by war will increase and with this a growing sense of unrest among the masses and an increasing capacity to put the blame where it belongs. The U.S. imperialists strike Moscow and level it to the ground. In response New York is reduced to rubble. Whose fault is it? The imperialists never cared about the ghettos and slums before—they created them, and they created the situation in which humanity is tossed into an incinerator.

While conventional armies will mainly be locking horns in other parts of the world, and even if the U.S. is not invaded (though there is scant possibility that the United States will be spared extensive material destruction), the lives of millions in this country are going to be completely and totally disrupted. There will be no "individual solutions," not when whole cities are being evacuated or decimated. (Canada's actions in smuggling a few U.S. spies and flunkies out of Iran during the embassy crisis is a forewarning of this, as is the Canadian government's recent announcement that the country is "off limits" to would-be draft dodgers.) What will such a war do? Some, it is true, will be demoralized and ground down by the unprecedented horrors and misery. But millions of others will be roused to act, to put an end to this barbarity as a result of these intense experiences. Even one of these logistical experts must acknowledge the possibility:

"My concern is over the disruption to U.S. society and possible adverse impact on our government's decision making process... crisis relocation would cause a tremendous, serious domestic upheaval."<sup>30</sup>

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# Decline

Continued from page 13

That is just the point. Such a war, even if not immediately, will lead to a situation of unprecedented social chaos and tremendous upheaval, exactly because it will cause a sharp turn in the daily existence of the masses. The fact of the matter is that the economic crisis so far has not broken habit and routine, has not fundamentally left people with no choice but to act, not out of blind desperation, but out of the recognition that only the overthrow of the system can resolve the suffering and contradictions of their lives. The possibility exists that with crisis deepening and the outbreak of war, the social ferment and a changing mood of the masses brought on by this carnage may well occur in conjunction with a severe weakening of the bourgeoisie's ability to rule and maintain order. It spells trouble for the capitalist class and opportunity for the working class.

On a small scale the experience of war and the impact that it can have on people was highlighted in Vietnam. People's eyes were opened. Hundreds of thousands who had swallowed the American dream and the glory of the stars and stripes coughed it up and threw it up on the battlefields in Vietnam and at home. Not only was there a process of a rude awakening—a lifetime of lies and deceit exploding in people's faces—there was a wholesale disintegration of the U.S. armed forces in Vietnam. Instances of fragging, attacks on officers, of refusal to go into the field and even consorting with "the enemy" grew. The most modern weapons could not stop it. This was a rage which was propelled by and transported back to burgeoning anger and protest in the U.S.

The kind of rapid changes that have been described and what this does to the consciousness of the broad masses, how their sentiments can just as rapidly and radically change—these are lessons of history which have been emphasized by Bob Avakian in his writings, building on the legacy of Lenin. As he wrote as early as 1976:

"... the development of the situation must not be viewed simply in quantitative terms—a series of small changes, added together over time, will somehow lead to a revolutionary mood among the masses. At a certain point, there must be and will be a qualitative leap, in the objective situation, in the mood, and—if we do our work right—in the consciousness of the masses. We cannot say now what will cause a similar qualitative leap in the development of our situation, whether a "crash" and major depression like the '30s, the outbreak of WW3, or a combination of severe economic crisis and war—a war which, over time at least, would add to the strains and hardships on the masses. Nor can we say when this will happen. But we do know just as surely as there is not now a revolutionary situation, one will just as certainly develop in the future."<sup>1</sup>

Is it possible that the same masses who would so eagerly give their blood for their imperialist masters would suddenly demand blood instead, would demand an end to the rule of a class of parasites? Again the lessons of history are relevant. In a short span of time during World War 1 large sections of the Russian workers, peasants and soldiers of all nationalities who had been swept up by chauvinist war fever turned against the war and the ruling governments. In the Czarist and German armies rebellious and mutinous troops inspired and ignited by the mass movement in society, particularly among the workers, in turn played a leading role in revolutionary upsurges. These were qualitative developments brought on by the agony of the first world war. In the case of Russia, the Bolshevik Party was able to influence these sentiments and organize these outpourings of resistance and hatred into a successful revolutionary assault on state power.

There was a period of intense political turmoil in this country in the 1960s; it provided a glimpse of the social ferment that can grip millions. There was a period in the immediate wake of the 1974-75 downturn when sections of the more stably employed workers found the rug pulled out from under their previous conditions and illusions. The period we are entering into will much more dramatically affect people's lives. The system is much weaker economically, bordering on collapse, and a war of almost unimaginable proportions threatens to engulf the globe—unless it is prevented by revolution. Where today the question is still one of "getting by," tomorrow it will be survival. The bourgeoisie will initially pose this question in terms of kill or be killed—fight the Russians or be overrun by them. But the question that will ultimately be posed to the masses will be—how to escape this madness—and the answer can only be one of collective struggle against the forces responsible. There will be no successful strategy of individual survival under these circumstances, because to live and to die will have become very immediately and directly social questions. This, of course, is always true in so far as people live within a society with specific social relations, but now the question of how people are living and have been living (since war and its at-

tendant suffering are but the concentration of existence under regimes of exploitation) and what is worth dying for—to perpetuate the rule and dead hand of capital or get rid of it—comes into sharp relief. Revolution becomes no longer a perhaps attractive, but dangerous and impractical, alternative to gritting your teeth and living with exploitation. It becomes a practical necessity.

"It can't happen here." It is a sentiment of many, including many who wish it could happen here. But one does not have to search too far for the ingredients of a revolutionary challenge, for the potential fracturing of a society which has by and large been stable for 30+ years. There is the economic crisis which will continue to propel sections of people into motion—from diverse quarters: small farmers, truckers, those cooped up in the ghettos and living right now under the gun (Soviet occupying troops will not make things all that much worse for those facing the onslaught of killer cops and the National Guard). Social movements erupt: in a matter of weeks hundreds of thousands take to the streets in protest of nuclear power. The same kinds of bolts of outrage to the draft. Even where the bourgeoisie can get over with a "hate Iran" crusade for a time, it is certainly not without its contradictions. Millions are dragged into political life and discussion, the atmosphere is more highly charged, as world events and people's futures are now topics for consideration. Yes, these social movements are still dominated by ideologies which are not revolutionary and yes, there are reactionary currents among the masses, but the turbulence in society is growing—of which all this is a reflection—and it can only force a more profound questioning and awakening among millions. Nothing the bourgeoisie and its agents can say or do can reverse the trend of deeper crisis; their bellowings about Soviet aggressors will not make their war plans and what people will be forced to go through any less gruesome. And, in escalating fashion, the monstrous developments towards war will fill more with hatred for the system and a burning desire to act. The increasing hardships, along with a deeper understanding of what the imperialists have in store for people, will put the question before millions: why wait to do something about the situation until after they have launched such a war of destruction and terror? Only revolution can prevent the imperialists from carrying out their war plans, and it is by no means a settled issue that a revolution can only await the outbreak of World War 3. The imperialists will not have an easy time preparing for this war, and their preparations may very well precipitate, in con-

junction with the economic crisis, a deep-going political and social crisis in this country which opens up opportunities to challenge their rule decisively.

Beneath the surface of calm lies this underlying instability. It is like a geological fault which in its imperceptible movement eventually jars things loose. This is not the 1960s. The struggle is not on as high a level. But these rivulets of struggle, these pockets of resistance, exist within a different context. And just as the tempo of world events leading to war is rapidly accelerating, so too will there be rapid shifts in the mood of the masses and the scope of their activity. Where there is oppression there is resistance. This is a basic law of history. But history does not mechanically repeat itself. For example, as a major component of this mass struggle in the period ahead, there will continue to be major struggles by Black people and other oppressed minorities against their national oppression, and no doubt they will intensify. But these and other struggles will not assume the same forms and pass through the same stages of development as they did in the 1950s and 1960s. Yes, many of the same lessons will have to be learned over again, but it will not be a replay, i.e., first a stage of civil rights and then breaking beyond these bounds. Experiences have been accumulated, the ruling class cannot make the same kind of concessions, and things have gotten worse for people.

The period ahead will be punctuated by outbursts and surges of resistance. These will still be largely scattered, but they will at once meet with more repression and exert more influence over others, exactly because the stakes are higher for both the ruling class and the masses. And what of the working class? When will it enter the fray? Actually, in the annals of revolution it is more the rule than the exception that the working class, particularly its better paid and socialized sections, tends to move later rather than sooner. The Iranian revolution stands as testimony to this. It was the youth, the intelligentsia and sections of the petty bourgeoisie that were engaged in the early and pitched battles with the Shah's regime. That one of the Shah's last desperation maneuvers was to offer striking oil workers a 100% wage increase was an indication of the fear the ruling class had of the working class entering the struggle as a political force and also the fact that up until then sections of the working class were mainly preoccupied with more narrow concerns. But the workers threw this bribe back in the Shah's face, they struck and paralyzed the oil fields in support of the revolutionary demands of the struggle and in doing

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# The Day the Workers Pulled the Switch

Detroit. Late July 1973. The workers at Chrysler's Jefferson Avenue assembly plant had plenty on their minds. Chrysler, already the smallest of the big 3, was beginning to hit the skids. Its plants, concentrated in Detroit's inner-city, were the oldest and most dangerous in the industry—and employed the largest number of Black workers. In the streets outside, Detroit police had recently shot down 2 Black youths in cold blood, for a total of 15 police murders in 2 years. Watergate was in the news, and before long the last U.S. soldiers in Vietnam would be scrambling for a helicopter ride out of Saigon. Already, hundreds of thousands of Vietnam vets had returned, many to back-breaking jobs in plants like Jefferson Avenue. Business was as usual with UAW officials consumed in contract negotiations. The '74 recession, which would throw thousands of auto workers and others out on the streets, was yet to hit.

One of the most recent outrages in the Jefferson Avenue plant was the actions of a newly hired Chrysler slave-driver—supervisor Tom Woolsey. Woolsey especially delighted in making racist taunts in the metal shop, where 280 of 300 workers were Black. Two weeks before, a number of workers had gotten together a petition to have Woolsey fired. The union officials had refused to turn it in. Now the plant was filled with an air of tension. Some muttered that "it wouldn't have done any good anyway"; others felt that it was the last straw. Two workers in particular, who had been strongly influenced by the revolutionary upsurge of the 60s and early 70s were determined to take the opportunity to break out of the daily worsening grind. After work one night, they planned out what they would do. Early the next morning they talked to 2 other workers, who began to spread the word to those who could be trusted.

At 6:00 a.m. on July 24, Isaac Shorter and Larry Carter left their work stations on the Jefferson Avenue plant assembly line. They walked into the plant power cage, secured the door behind them, pulled the main power switch and shut down the entire plant. Immediately several workers surrounded the cage. Others began picking up cables, clamps and chains to secure the cage better.

Plant protection guards came to the scene, took one look at the supporters, and turned tail toward the office. Meanwhile, a shop steward began to

plead and whine, "You'll get fired."

The company brought in arc welders to cut the cable. As they forced their way through the crowd, Shorter put his hands around the cable. There was a moment of hesitation, then a shout came from the crowd—"Torch his hands and we'll torch you!" The welder backed off.

All kinds of supervisors were sent in to try to make the workers leave from around the cage, but they refused to budge. UAW officials arrived and scurried behind closed doors to "negotiate a settlement with management." Hours later the international rep emerged to announce to the workers that their demand that Woolsey be fired had been agreed to. The workers didn't buy it. "Black, you're a company man," shot back one worker. "And we're hip to the International."

For 13 hours the struggle raged and the plant remained at a standstill. Only after a Chrysler official was forced to timidly approach the crowd of angry workers with a written agreement in his hand to fire Woolsey and make no reprisals did the workers begin to unfasten the cables and clamps. When the

cage was finally opened, Chrysler's wage slaves triumphantly streamed out of the plant, Carter and Shorter on their shoulders.

At the time of this action and in recalling it in the years since, there are some people who called this an isolated act, individualistic, adventurist and other such stuff. But the whole story in fact proves the opposite. In the first place, there was advance planning and discussion, as has been pointed out. But that is not even the main point. The action of the two men in taking over the power cage *galvanized the sentiments of the masses* and aroused the masses themselves to act in a way that they had not done or maybe even thought possible before. The fact that one of the two put his hands around the cable first in defiance of the company's torch objectively demonstrated that they had confidence that in one way or another, the masses would support this move, would defend it because the workers grasped the stakes involved and it gave them an opportunity to step forward around their class interests. And while, in this case, the action was around a very specific demand, it represented some-

thing much broader to the masses of people and in fact inspired others far beyond the confines of the Jefferson Avenue Assembly Plant.

The takeover had an electrifying effect on the city of Detroit. It was the talk of the town. At two other Chrysler plants in the city, workers were unquestionably inspired by the action and took some action of their own. Two weeks later at Detroit forge, after a worker had his arm crushed in a conveyor, workers wildcatted for two days. At the Mack Avenue stamping plant, a two-day plant sit-down strike was followed by a wildcat. The strike was broken only when a "flying squadron" of 1000 UAW officials armed with clubs was sent in to put it down.

The impact of Carter's and Shorter's action was felt and remembered around the country as well. Several months later at a cafeteria table in Cincinnati, in the heat of an argument between an older Black woman and another worker over whether or not people would ever rise up and fight, the Black woman reached into her wallet and pulled out a folded-up newspaper clipping. She opened the article headlined "Two Angry Workers Shut Chrysler Plant" and waved it in the other's face, shouting, "And you think Black people are too stupid to do anything." Scenes of this sort were undoubtedly repeated in many other cities, factory after factory.



On the inside: Detention hall at Senn High School in Chicago. Students helped an RW photographer sneak into the school, and these two asked to have their picture taken like this.

## Hostage Battle

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the names of thousands of SAVAK agents, many of whom still hold important positions in the government and economy, have confirmed to the masses their view that the revolution is far from over. It has consistently been the revolutionary Left that has refused to compromise on such basic issues, and Bani-Sadr knows full well that if he drops the banner of struggle against U.S. imperialism and its past and present agents in Iran, the Left will be the only force there to lead the way forward.

While it's not yet clear what the immediate outcome of these latest maneuvers will be, it is clear that the U.S. ruling class and the Iranian bourgeoisie are continuing to find the going tough. Not only have the students not publicly agreed to anything yet, but even if they do, the thundering voice of the Iranian people will boom out at the sign of any serious sell-out. Even holding out the hope of a new parliament solving things is more a pipedream than a reality. There have been elections in Iran over the past year for an expert assembly, to ratify a constitution, and to elect a president; each time Iran's bourgeois forces hoped that this would

finally put the seal of legitimacy on the government, and they could go ahead with their plans to halt the continuing revolutionary struggle of the masses cold in its tracks. None of these past efforts proved successful, and there's no sign that the next one will prove any more successful either. □

**4** weeks  
until  
**MAY DAY**

## Wisconsin Steel Closes

### Brigade Hits the Streets

"You're out of a job, slave." This was the word passed from Wisconsin Steel, a mill on Chicago's southeast side, to 3,500 workers on Friday, March 28. Some heard about it later, on the radio. The 105-year-old mill had been dumped like an aging racehorse after International Harvester, Wisconsin Steel's former parent company, foreclosed on a \$50 million loan.

"I worked there for 25 years and now I'm supposed to hand in my I.D. card and pick up that last paycheck," said one man. "I'm not afraid of getting busted tonight..."

Monday night, three days after the closing. Shattering the stillness of night, the Revolutionary May Day Brigade and supporters marched in a torchlight demonstration into the heart of South Deering, a working class neighborhood that lies in the shadow of the shuttered hulk of Wisconsin Steel.

"What is it—Halloween?"

"It's not Halloween—it's revolu-

tionaries! Come on!" Entire families hung out their windows and sprang from their doors to see what all the excitement was about. "No work! No school! Let's put an end to the rich man's rule! May Day 1980!" came the chant from the march. One young guy stood on the sidewalk watching the march and the cops keeping a close eye on it. Sensing his uncertainty, a laid-off Chicano steelworker who had left 30 years of his life in the mill said, "Look what they did to me. What are you afraid of? This is your generation coming up. This is your movement."

At a rally ending the march, a young woman told a marcher, "Ya know, we oughtta take it over." The marcher replied, "It's not enough just to take over the factory—" the woman interrupted, "I'm not talking about the factory." By the end of the march literally half the red flags had passed from the hands of the marchers to the hands of the residents. □

# Resisters

Continued from page 7

any real problems? Where do these problems come from? Are they just in her mind or are there real contradictions and problems and questions that have to be resolved? Those problems have to be out there. But I think what a lot of art does is sort of leave it at that, and these problems don't get resolved. We were determined that that wasn't going to be the case. Real changes were going to go on, because what is necessary in making revolution is to change things and to understand things in the real world so that you can change them. And that's what the Mother does.

**RW:** What's been the response to the people who've seen the performance of *The Mother*?

**A:** I think the most encouraging response has been from the workers. Some of these workers, particularly the revolutionary workers who have come forward around May 1st, International Workers Day, gave a lot of encouragement to the theater. And I think they probably inspired even revolutionary-minded artists who are around, because their initial response was always, "That's us up on the stage." They would even break it down, like people had various things that stood out the most. For example, in one case somebody said "Yeah, the struggle that was going on between the Mother and her son in the beginning—that's like my mother, man. And I'm gonna struggle with my mother." People said things like that they were never interested in theater before because of what they'd heard, or what they saw—it's esoteric, and you've got to understand—I don't know what the hell, you've got to understand—Freud or something—to understand what's up there on stage. Very esoteric, your avant garde stuff that doesn't have anything to do with the lives of the people. A number of people said that they'd never been to a theater before but this wasn't what they thought it was and they thought that this sort of thing should be taken *everywhere*, taken out to the masses of people.

**RW:** You mentioned the characters in *Roots* like Kunta Kinte, as being 100% resisters. When you talked at first about the character of the Mother, you said you wanted her to be a humorous character. Some of the other characters you've talked about were not humorous. Why did you want her to be a humorous character?

**A:** In the first place, because Brecht wrote her that way. The political agitation that she did, the way she exposed the oppression, the state and so on, was often utilizing humor. I think that aside from this particular play even, that this is something that the masses really love. They like to see their oppressors ridiculed. You can even look very broadly out there at what's goin' on, even on the T.V. or in the established theater, and see that in fact the most popular stuff among the masses that has been allowed any place on the stage at all has often been political comedy. In the '60s, for example, you had "That Was The Week That Was," which got shut down because it was getting too heavy. You had "The Smothers Brothers Show" which was stopped—there was this big, open scandal about it, if you remember. Even Johnny Carson (he's tremendously popular). Most of his monologues, when he opens his show, are about the politicians. And the people love it. Another much better example of this is Richard Pryor, who's done quite a lot of political comedy. We think that there's tremendous potential there, for revolutionary artists and comedians to realize this, take it up and deal with it, and not think that the masses don't want to see it or hear it.

**RW:** I've heard some people say that Archie Bunker is a humorous character. What is the difference between the humor of Archie Bunker and the humor of *The Mother*?

**A:** I think the humor of Archie Bunker extolls the *backwardness* that exists in the working class whereas the humor of *The Mother*, and even some of these other people that I've mentioned, ridicules the *backwardness* of the bourgeoisie, if you want to put it that

way you know it ridicules the *idiocy* of the bourgeoisie which is an idiotic class—it's really got to be done away with. The way I see it, there's everything in the world to be optimistic about. This really is a ridiculous situation and if you think about it, and if you shine a light on that, people are going to see that. And I don't think that extolling the backwardness that exists—it's not like Archie Bunker doesn't represent nothing you know, he does. But we don't want to extoll that backwardness, we want to take our stand with the advanced in the working class. And I think that a lot of people that are maybe vacillating about the question of revolution, the question of is it necessary to make some fundamental changes, are threatened a little bit by the vigor and optimism of the revolutionary-minded people. So we're going to go up against that and we're not afraid of going up against that. I think that what we've done with *The Mother* and even more than that, some of the things I mentioned before, prove what people want beyond even a shadow of a doubt. I don't think you have to be tremendously intellectual to understand that.

**RW:** I've seen other troupes' performances of *The Mother* where the character of the professor actually came off as the hero of the show. This is quite different from the Red Flag's portrayal of the professor which I saw. What is your attitude and the attitude of the Mother in the play towards characters like the professor?

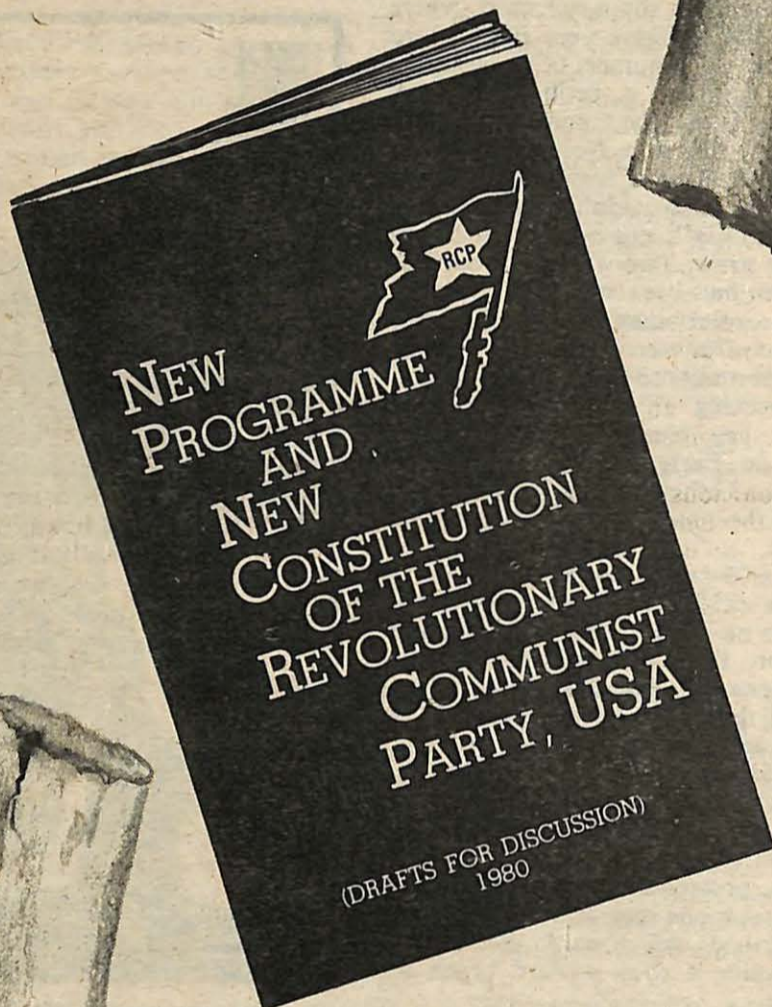
**A:** Well, the first thing is that's a difficult contradiction because the professor is a sympathetic character but he's not the hero of the play. I know what you're talking about—every other production I've ever seen he winds up being the character you really remember when you leave the theater. You remember him basically right up there with her, or even more than her. But the main point about this character is that he represents the way the petty bourgeoisie, or the middle class, is in its attitude to the revolution, and particularly the intelligentsia. And I think grasping that and understanding that, and understanding that vis-a-vis the Mother who represents the working class and its attitude and its struggle for revolution, is the key thing. If you don't grasp that, you're going to perform him differently than what Brecht intended, and than what reality really is. If you understand that, you understand that he is both a sympathetic character—not someone to be completely ridiculed or put in the camp of the bourgeoisie—and he is also really what he is. He has these vacillations and they can be dealt with. The working class can deal with them, the revolutionary working class can bring these people forward to understand what's really going on. What's very powerful about it is that this comes about in the play because of the activity of the working class. And by dealing with these contradictions, by facing them rather than pretending that they don't exist. I think what you see a lot is covering these contradictions up, or thinking that they're absolutely fine. It's like what Bob Avakian said in a radio interview. He was talking about the Black United Front and the desire of the Revolutionary Communist Party to unite with such forces in common struggles against the enemy. He said they were forces of the petty bourgeoisie and the interviewer said, "Don't be insulting." He said something like "I'm sorry, but I'm not being insulting, I'm being scientific." We seek unity with these people to the degree and on the basis that they stand with the masses of oppressed so we have to understand what we're talking about. I think that's the bottom line of what the professor is about, and there are a lot of other questions that come up for the artists in how to do it, how to put it across on stage. What's involved is really whether or not you want revolution and whether you're willing to undertake the struggle for it, and the struggle to transform the thinking, which is real and which has a material basis, that's out there. I think the theater grasping that is why this character was not performed as the hero but was performed sympathetically. A similar thing is the way that one of the working class women who still believes

## A Call to Battle A Challenge to Dare

In a situation which is developing as rapidly as today's, the actions taken by the advanced section of the proletariat are of decisive importance. They will in no small part determine how far along we are and whether we are able to break through all the way when the conditions fully ripen and the opportunity for revolution is there to seize. These moments, particularly in a country such as this, are rare in history and their outcome has a profound influence on history for years, even decades, to come. Those who do understand what is going on and choose not to act are contributing to the prolonging of this destructive and decadent rule of imperialism. This program is a declaration of war, and at the same time a call to action and a battle plan for destroying the old and creating the new. It must be taken up.

Today the words of Mao Tsetung ring out with full force:

"Seize the Day, Seize the Hour."



(DRAFTS FOR DISCUSSION)  
1980

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in god is portrayed.

**RW:** Has there been much controversy? Most people have never seen characters like this performed on the stage in this country, and I would imagine that some people would find it somewhat shocking.

**A:** I don't think it's true that they've never seen anything like such characters on the stage. I think some people conveniently forget about the characters which at least *approached* the Mother. I think I talked about that before. There is a difference, though, because the Mother is a communist and she's conscious, and she's consciously trying to change the world, to do away with exploitation of man by man. I don't think you could say that Kunta Kinte was into that, you know? That's what's different. You'll never see communists in a

positive light on the stage unless we put it there, unless the revolutionary working class puts it there now, and it can only thoroughly do that once it has state power. I think that's pretty controversial! And depending on your attitude, whether you want to do away with this situation or not—whether you think this situation is intolerable, or it's tolerable, or it's fine—it's going to determine your attitude toward such a play or such a character as the Mother. I think it's tremendous that so many people took this thing up, wanted it to be there, got changed by it, and want to see this sort of thing really develop. It shows that the potential is there and that the necessity is there for revolutionary artists to get it on, to decide who are they going to serve, the working class or the bourgeoisie? □



## Bob Avakian Speech in Cleveland

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don't have this community control of police, we will not be able to curtail civil war in America." Now you see, we don't want to curtail civil war in America, we need and can't have anything less than revolutionary civil war in this country: it's the only way we can move forward and abolish these conditions of police murder, exploitation, oppression, discrimination and every kind of degradation. We cannot try to avoid, we cannot try to curtail it, we have to agitate, we have to educate people to, we have to unite people for, we have to prepare people for, and we have to lead them in carrying out revolutionary civil war to overthrow capitalism and abolish all the madness we have to go through, establish socialism and move on toward a whole new world!

But because the Panthers turned away more and more from Marxist-Leninist ideology, they went more and more to reformism, and finally they ended up in the position where many of their initial members still today don't see beyond the point of simply wanting to kill Eldridge Cleaver and Huey Newton. But we have something much deeper and more fundamental to learn. The most fundamental thing we have to learn and to build on, while we're building on and learning from the inspiration, dedication, determination, heroism and self-sacrifice of thousands of Panther members and supporters, most fundamentally, we have to learn the basic lesson from their negative experience—that we have to base ourselves thoroughly, wholly, completely and uncompromisingly on the only revolutionary theory and ideology that can lead us to see beyond and to move beyond the temporary divisions and backwardness that exist out here, to bring to the forefront right now and in greater and greater numbers as the conditions sharpen up, the one force in society that, when united around its common interests, can lead all the oppressed to rise up and make revolution... and that's the class-conscious working class.

### Our Party Today

That is why, with this understanding, our Party goes out every day to carry out revolutionary work among the workers. And that is why, in particular while we also work among all the oppressed in this country, all those who are seeking to fight back against this system—it is particularly why, looking forward to the coming year and the storms and the upheavals in the period ahead, we have called for a revolutionary May Day demonstration next year on May 1st, 1980, a day that is celebrated as a revolutionary holiday by class-conscious working class people and oppressed people throughout the world in their millions and hundreds of millions. In 1980 our Party will be joining with others and calling on workers throughout this country to wake up, become politically aware, and to join with and step on the stage of history together with millions of others of their fellow workers and other oppressed people around the world. Not to go to work on that day and slave for the capitalists, just to increase their power and control over us, but to leave work and join with other workers and oppressed people—thousands and thousands strong—to go into the streets to raise up the banner of revolution, to shatter the lies and the deception that's put on us every day by the capitalist system, to say straight up to thousands and ultimately millions of other people who hate this country and this system and the way it forces us to live, to say to them: Look, forget about all the lies about George Meany, Goddamn Archie Bunker. In fact put an axe in the middle of George Meany's head. Here's where the working class stands—for revolution and uniting around the banner of leading the fight against all oppression and the system which gives rise to it and leading the people forward towards the goal of revolution to uproot all this.

This is going to be an extremely significant event. The most significant event in this country in years and even decades. And this is going to be a big battle, it's a battle we can and must fight through and win. You all know very well that these capitalists out here are not going to give anybody time off, with or without pay, to go to a revolutionary demonstration preparing for their overthrow and abolition. They are going to harass people in this so-called land of freedom and democracy; we've had over a half a dozen people fired, and maybe there's more that I don't even know of, just this year, for standing up in the cafeteria at lunchtime, telling other workers about the struggle in Houston, Texas to Free the Moody Park 3, or the struggle in Iran. And they're going to intensify this. They're going to come down hard, they're going to try to crush us. Because they know the tremendous potential that resides in the working class. They know where their system is heading. They know, and Carter said openly when he came down from Mt. David, tablets in hand, and whined and moaned and called on people, "Whatever you do, wherever you go, say something good about your country." And all the rest of that pitiful bullshit. He had to admit it, people are losing confidence in this system and those who preside over it. They're worried about people getting angry in gas lines, being laid off from work and kicked out the door, being shot down by police. And he said straight up—people know the next 5 years are going to be worse than the past 5 years. Now when he's saying that, you know goddamn well what they're preparing to put us through. And you know they're worried, and

that's why they're trying to rally us around their pitiful, blood-soaked red, white and blue rag—because when the real deal comes down, there's only one way they can try to get out of this, and that's world war.

So we've got to have our answer. We can't let this shit go unanswered. We can't let the situation sharpen up and not act. We can't let millions of peoples' lives be on the line and the only answer is the reactionary message of the bourgeoisie—"We are here to stay forever, rally around our flag, you working class people are all dumb, stupid, ignorant, incapable of understanding anything more than where your next meal is coming from, so caught up in all this dog-eat-dog madness that you can never see beyond it and unite." No! The working class has to give its answer. Today in thousands but those thousands, as I said, will stand for and begin to act on the potential and represent the future of millions. And they will in fact represent the potential leaders of millions and millions in the period ahead, when as the capitalists know, and we must understand, things sharpen up, as the economic crisis deepens and as we are hurled towards world war. Millions of people are going to be in motion looking for answers. Now tending to go this way, now that way, but looking for leadership and guidance and needing the firm, clear banner held aloft by thousands and thousands of class conscious workers to show them the revolutionary, proletarian way forward out of all this.

And that's the importance of this May Day. This has got to become the major political question in this country. It's got to be debated at every factory, neighborhood, jail, ghetto, barrio, hospital, and school. And all the bars. There've got to be those conversations, going on among all the workers—"Hey you gonna go out and march with those commies?" "Maybe I am... something's gotta be done in this country, maybe they do have the only answer." There's gotta be debate, there's gotta be struggle. Hundreds of thousands of people gotta know about it, even millions gotta know about it and argue over it. We want it to be a dividing line and a crucial test, and we're gonna fight and it will be a crucial test, it will be a dividing line. People are gonna be called on and they're gonna have to put their jobs and themselves on the line if we're gonna move forward out of this and that's what's going to be represented on that May Day.

We have confidence that this will happen. Not because of some polyanna, goody-goody, wishy-washy shit, but because we have a scientific understanding, because we dare to go openly among our fellow workers, put the truth out to them, call on them to rise up, to recognize the truth, take it in their hands, grasp their own interests and struggle for them. We have confidence that through tremendous work and struggle this battle can be won. We want it to be and we know it will be that the rulers of this country—who, after all, as ignorant, reactionary and death bound as they are, can add and divide, if it doesn't get too complicated—they will be out there counting every pair of feet and dividing by two to see how many people are out there on that day. And the working class banner and its answer to this crisis and this whole system has got to be clear; they've got to count thousands and thousands, so that even when they divide by two it still comes out thousands and thousands of workers, joined by thousands of other oppressed people, who are fed up and sick with this whole thing, who are determined to rise up and lead people in doing something about it and showing a way forward to millions of people who are growing more and more sick and tired of being sick and tired of living under this mess. And this is what we're gonna be doing and what we've got to do on May Day.

### Knocking on Your Door

It's gonna be a battle, it's gonna be a struggle, it's gonna be a leap, and we can, we must and we will make it. Because, you see, the times are sharpening up. Like I said at the beginning, people are going to be knocking on your door for one class or another, on one side or another, and calling on and confronting you with a choice to stand one way or the other. We're not going to be able to run from it and we're not going to be able to escape from it, we're not going to be able to hide from it and we're not going to be able to take dope, or alcohol or anything else to make it misty and forget about it. We don't want to and we don't need to, we don't have to hide from the future because the future belongs to us if we dare to rise up, put ourselves out there, fight consciously, rally others and take it into our hands and the hands of millions and shape it in our interests.

Many people, they ask this question, they say, "Listen I really agree with a lot of what you're saying but how do we know that like others before you, your Party won't also sell this thing down the river? How do we know that you won't sell out and try to get a soft thing for yourself. Either before this revolution comes about or even after, how do we know that you just won't turn it into your own thing, put yourself on top and keep us in the same position? How can we prevent that and how do we know that it won't happen?" Well I can say this personally, and also speak for our Party, I've been fighting this system myself politically for 15 years, I've been a revolutionary for 12 and have been a conscious communist for more than 10, and I ain't got no intention of being anything else, or doing anything else, as long as I'm alive—and I'm gonna fight to stay alive, too, because we got a revolution to make and, like Marx and Engels said, a world to win. We ain't got no intention in this Party about devoting ourselves

to anything other than struggling and carrying through the fight for making revolution and moving society forward, together with the people of the world, to a whole new stage. That's the stand of our Party and that's the stand of everyone in it, or else they don't get in, or they don't stay in it. But it's not just our desires, it's also the fact that we fought in the past, we continue to fight and we must fight in the future to arm ourselves ever more deeply with the grasp of this revolutionary science of Marxism and with our ability to apply it and bring forward thousands and ultimately millions of people to take it up. But more than that, I'm gonna put it back to you, and I'm gonna put it out to people on this speaking tour throughout this country just like yourselves—and the question's gotta be put to many more people out here—the fundamental question comes down to this: do you want to live on your knees, at most begging for some kneepads, or do you want to stand up and fight and stay on your feet and fight to finally make that leap that mankind has to make to completely move beyond animal-like existence. Do you want to be emancipated, do you want to stand up tall and proud and take the world into our hands and storm the heavens, or do you want to be forced back on your knees and learn to live on your knees and worse than that learn to like it.

That's the fundamental question, and if you want to be emancipated, if you want to get out from underneath this, you're going to have to do what we have to do—and that's give up this idea that they always try to promote among us, of looking for salvation from some savior coming down from heaven or coming down from the Kennedy mansion in Massachusetts or wherever. And there ain't gonna be no salvation in any other world, it's this world and nobody else is and nothing else is gonna do it. We're going to have to do it ourselves. You want to be emancipated, you're going to have to become part of this struggle and fight to emancipate yourself, and not just yourself but all of the exploited and oppressed people in the whole world. If you want to get free from this and stand up and not be on your knees, you're gonna have to fight to make it happen. If you want this Party to deepen its grasp of this theory and maintain itself on the revolutionary path and continue toward the revolutionary goal, you're going to have to step forward, work with, and become part of this effort and join with and join this Party, struggle to grasp this theory, to grasp this line and apply it, and fight to keep this Party on the correct road with the correct theory, the correct line, the correct orientation and the correct movement forward toward revolution.

If you want to be emancipated, you're going to have to fight for your emancipation. If we want to be free, we're gonna have to free ourselves, and nobody else can do it for us. That's the only way it can be done, that's the way we're gonna do it. That's the question before us. And now—in the face of everything before us, everything this system has in store for us but more than that the rare opportunities to advance through storms and upheavals, including very possibly the opportunity to actually make revolution in the period ahead—*now* is the time for those who see the need, to step forward and act with the boldness and determination of the advanced force of our class, the class that must and will forge the future through our own revolutionary struggle. □

### The Loss in China and The Revolutionary Legacy Of Mao Tsetung



Speech by Bob Avakian, Chairman  
of the Central Committee of the  
Revolutionary Communist Party, USA  
at the MAO TSETUNG  
MEMORIAL MEETINGS 1978

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One Week Before May 1st

# Red Flag—Internationale Day

The Internationale  
Anthem of the  
International Working Class

Arise, ye prisoners of starvation!  
Arise, ye wretched of the earth,  
For justice thunders condemnation,  
A better world's in birth.  
No more tradition's chains  
shall bind us,  
Arise, ye slaves; no more in thrall!  
The earth shall rise on  
new foundations,  
We have been naught, we shall be all.

Refrain:  
Tis the final conflict,  
Let each stand in his place.  
The international working class  
Shall be the human race.

We want no condescending saviors,  
To rule us from a judgment hall;  
We workers ask not for their favors;  
Let us consult for all.  
To make the thief disgorge his booty,  
To free the spirit from its cell,  
We must ourselves decide our duty,  
We must decide and do it well.

La Internacional

¡Arriba, parías de la tierra!  
¡En pié, famelica legión!  
Atruena la razón en marcha,  
Es el fin de la opresión  
El pasado hay que hacer anicos,  
¡Legión esclava, en pié, a vencer!  
El mundo va a cambiar de base,  
Los nada de hoy han de ser.

Ni en dioses, reyes ni tribunos  
Está el supremo salvador.  
Nosotros mismos realizemos  
El esfuerzo redentor.  
Para hacer que el tirano caiga  
Y el mundo siervo liberar,  
Soplemos la potente fragua  
Que al hombre libre ha de forjar.

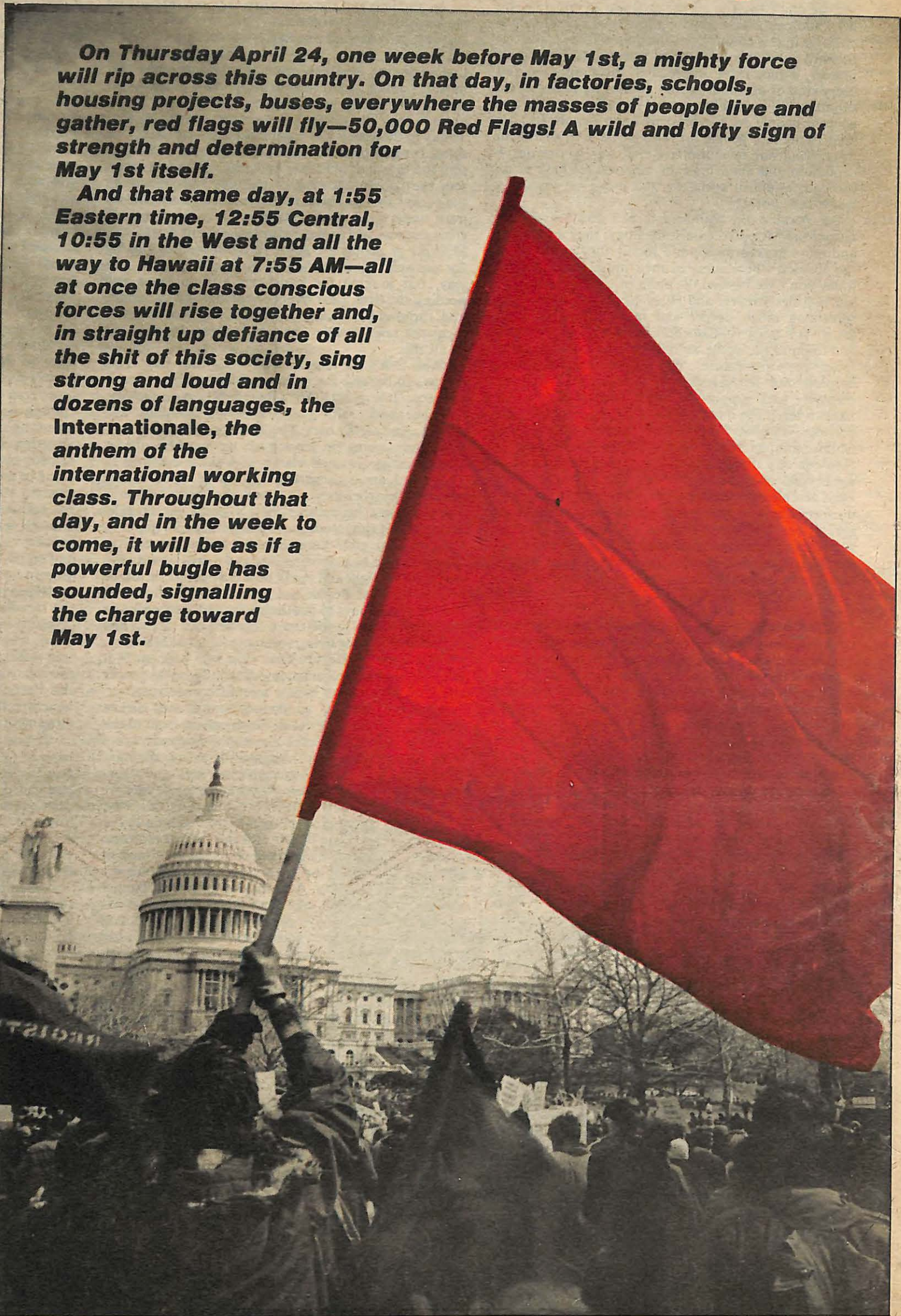
Refrain:  
Agrupemonos todos  
En la lucha final,  
El genero Humano  
Es la Internacional.

## Button Day

Continued from page 1

tive organizers for May 1st, especially within the Party itself.

Even before Button Day, that was clear. America is in decline and headed toward war—world war. Any reasonable analysis of the conditions—the objective situation in this country today—means that certainly 2% or 3% of the industrial proletariat alone (the workers in basic industry, numbering 21 million) are revolutionary-minded—not fully class-conscious proletarian fighters, but those with basic revolutionary hatred for whom the message of May 1st is no stranger but instead a voice for their inner feelings. And we are talking about mobilizing a small percentage of that small percentage into the streets on May 1st. We are going to do it. The Party is firm on this, as is the new wave of revolutionary fighters stepping forward around the Party. The objective situation is ripe, the key is the subjective fac-



On Thursday April 24, one week before May 1st, a mighty force will rip across this country. On that day, in factories, schools, housing projects, buses, everywhere the masses of people live and gather, red flags will fly—50,000 Red Flags! A wild and lofty sign of strength and determination for May 1st itself.

And that same day, at 1:55 Eastern time, 12:55 Central, 10:55 in the West and all the way to Hawaii at 7:55 AM—all at once the class conscious forces will rise together and, in straight up defiance of all the shit of this society, sing strong and loud and in dozens of languages, the Internationale, the anthem of the international working class. Throughout that day, and in the week to come, it will be as if a powerful bugle has sounded, signalling the charge toward May 1st.

tor—that is the Party's firm grasp on the revolutionary line on May 1st. This was made very clear by the results of Button Day.

Even—and especially—in the face of reactionary attacks, the revolutionary-minded people among the masses stepped forward when given a chance and Button Day spread. Inside one plant in Atlanta, backward fools made a fire out of some copies of the leaflet announcing the 27th. In response to this and on the spot, a revolutionary on the

inside of the plant sold 27 buttons. It was all she had on her. Workers were buying the buttons in any language they could—whether they understood it or not. It didn't matter, they had to take a stand.

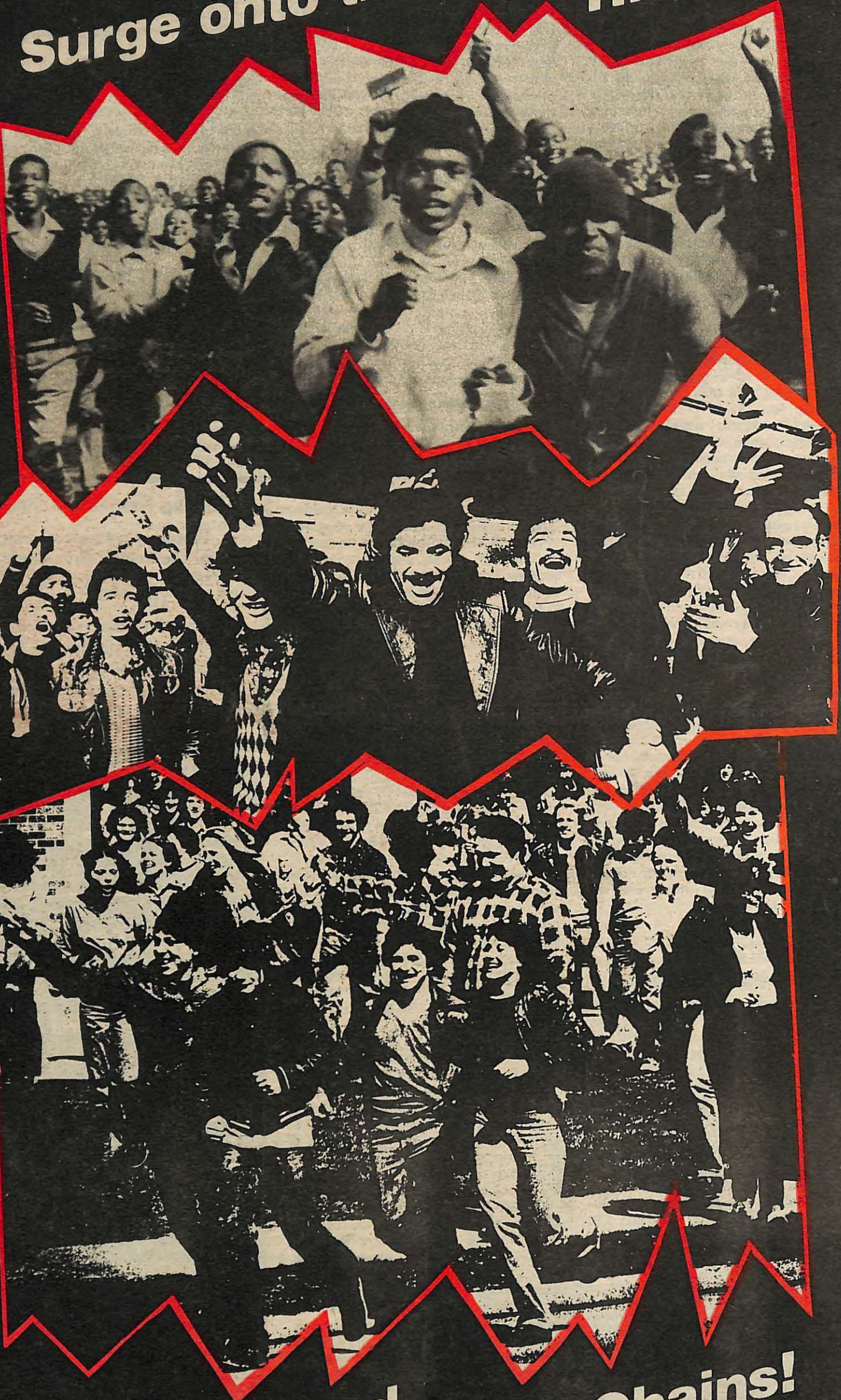
In many places, advanced revolutionary forces that had been suffocated by a deadly air of backwardness among the forces building Button Day broke through by the last day and showed some results. In Detroit, for example, more buttons (600) were sold on Thurs-

day than on the previous three days put together, and struggle raged all day in some plants about wearing them or not. Buttons in the pocket one minute came out the next onto shirts when struggle was raised over what this was all about. In Chicago, on Thursday, at one plant where many workers speak neither English nor Spanish, 50 buttons were sold in a couple of hours to one shift. A paddy wagon was there, a boss stood out front, the language barriers loomed; but it was clear that this was about

**MAY 1st — WELD THOSE WHO HATE THIS INTO A CLASS CONSCIOUS FORCE**

**May 1<sup>st</sup>  
1980**

**Surge onto the Stage of  
History!**



**Break Free and  
Out of Your Chains!  
Turn This Whole Country  
Upside Down!**

International Workers Day. Some people who knew no language but English, and without leaflets, just broke into song—the *Internationale*, anthem of the international working class—and workers bought buttons, with a few short words like “This is good...right...international working class.”

There were wide gaps in sales, with a few people selling 30 or more buttons in an hour on a transit train, and almost the same number of *Revolutionary Worker* newspapers, while other people, in almost identical conditions, sold one or two. It was a matter of line.

Where Bob Avakian’s name or picture was brought out in some places, it sharpened up the revolutionary stakes involved in Button Day, and sales shot up. In one place, a banner with his picture went up and intense discussion broke out about his case and the meaning of this action.

In some places, this was completely or largely liquidated—substituting instead some much more narrow and non-revolutionary “concern.” In Battle Creek, Michigan, where there had been a sharp confrontation between cops and the Black community and May Day was becoming known and embraced, Button Day organizers got up a picket line at the police station on the 27th and the rap that was given did not even mention Bob Avakian or urge people to buy buttons.

These were not “accidents” in the main, but the products of a political line—a non-revolutionary political line that is ducking out and even jumping out in the face of the revolutionary potential for May 1st.

In area after area across the country, sharp struggle with the enemy is bringing forward the advanced, revolutionary comrades within the Party and the new advanced among the masses to do battle against the bourgeoisie, right over the heads of the backward if necessary. Those that have begun to come forward have sensed that there are those in the Party who grasp and uphold Chairman Bob Avakian’s revolutionary line, including on May Day, and that there are those who do not. These masses are correct in what they sense.

This Party is not going to allow the backward to suffocate the force of the advanced coming forward. It is high time to pull out all stops and ride over the bullshit and sabotage cluttering the path. The revolutionary line is there to grasp; the point is to *grasp* and not run away from it.

**The Revolution is Being  
Battled Out Now**

The heart of the revolutionary line and policy on May Day is clear. May Day is a major step in revolution, here and around the world. Revolution does not come out of nowhere. What we do today can be crucial. Lenin put it this way: “The revolution itself must not by any means be regarded as a single act...but as a series of more or less powerful outbreaks rapidly alternating with periods of more or less intense calm.” As Bob Avakian put it in his New Year’s article in the *RW*, “The work we do now, the battles, especially the major political battles, we wage now can be crucial not only at hitting back, politically, at the enemy, and not simply as general preparation, but beyond that perhaps in deciding the outcome whenever the conditions for revolution do ripen... This emphasizes, again, that all we are doing now is or must be, precisely preparation for when the conditions do ripen and that (in line with the statement by Lenin referred to just above) our actions are, in another sense, a *part*, a very important part, of the whole process of revolution and have a great deal to do with victory or defeat when there is a qualitative leap in the situation.”

This is why May 1st is crucial. It is a political action, but it is like a *major*

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**S SHIT**

# Button Day

Continued from page 19

early campaign in a liberation war. There is no "back to normal" possible. May 1st will make a real difference.

Once most people from the basic masses really see this, they embrace May Day all the more firmly. But some people, a handful, even if they become puffed up for a time, understand this very well and are driven to wildly oppose May Day.

That is why one question that is before us now is, whose Party is this? Is this the Party of the revolutionary proletariat, or is it a resting place for those who feel they have something to save—some stake in keeping this section of the masses down? Today these two forces are struggling.

This is not a matter of some people's intentions, but of political line. It shows itself in a hundred ways, and did so in the struggle for Button Day. In one case in Atlanta, for example, a student called the May Day Committee to say that she had heard of Button Day, wanted to buy a button for herself, and that her friends wanted some too, but they wouldn't be able to afford them until Friday. The organizer, dragged back by the influence of a non-revolutionary political line, said only "OK"—get it together on Friday. Fortunately, another revolutionary heard of this and visited the woman, who took 25 buttons immediately on consignment to be paid back at the end of the week.

An even more stark example of this line struggle and the influence it can have on holding back the masses was in Youngstown, where the May Day Brigade has become a major social question. A May Day march was scheduled there for this Monday, but someone thought that not that many buttons would be sold. With the first hours, with much marching yet to go, all these buttons were sold, with marchers taking the buttons off their shirts to sell. 55 were sold, none were left. Potential revolutionary hands were left empty, allowed to drift away because of this gross underestimation of the people. Some of this was recouped later in the week as 115 buttons were sold there by Thursday. As it came out on Button Day, some people occasionally do militant actions and assume no one will come forward. According to this view, the revolutionaries are just—at best—lonely examples. These people don't believe there are many others who not only hate the system, but want—even demand—to be involved in political struggle against it. Button Day showed once again that this is so.

## A Class-Conscious Section

The revolutionary line of our Party, the one that provided the key to May Day, recognizes that there is an advanced section of workers out there that needs to be welded into a revolutionary force. These workers, as Lenin once put it, have their own "interests and requirements." It is not the task of revolutionaries to provide them with some hatred which they supposedly lack—as if there were some empty wilderness out there. They do not lack this at all. It is the task of revolutionaries to fulfill their "interests and requirements"—to provide them with the ability to act, to go over from individual hatred for the system into an organized force, to sharpen their hatred with scientific, revolutionary understanding, and clearly aim it at the enemy.

One example of this took place on a public transit car in Chicago, where a May Day organizer began agitating against the red, white and blue bloody rag of the imperialist rulers of this country. At that point, up jumped a leading backward fool, and one or two others, and they began singing "God Bless America." Few could even believe it. Some youth in the back of the car started laughing at these patriotic dogs. One woman in the car jumped up herself and gave the finger right in the fools' singing faces.

Here indeed was a section of people that had some real "interests and requirements"—to be welded into a real force against all this. But unfortunately

this was not grasped clearly. Instead of turning to these advanced forces, making clear how before them was the opportunity and necessity to really take on all this backwardness of the system that they hated, the opportunity was lost, and one or two buttons at most were sold.

These questions and even sharper ones were the ones being battled out in one way or another during the week of Button Day. The fact they were only beginning to get clearly identified and that the backward held sway to no small degree held Button Day back to 10,000. Some people were getting clearer and clearer on the revolutionary line, and others were opposing it. There are even those in the Party who—in theory or practice or both—believe May 1st itself to be "idealistic," "unrealistic" and all sorts of other nonsense. This view, which they applied to Button Day, will not hold sway. It will be challenged. The revolutionaries in the Party, and those who are coming forward, are clearer than ever that such people, if left to their ways, would seek to undermine May Day—by sabotaging it or simply by "going through the motions"—and then jumping out later with "I told you so." These revolutionaries are firm that this will not be allowed, and that it is time, and past time, to deflate this puffed-up line.

## Why This Struggle Now?

It is no surprise that this struggle would erupt now. The fact that it has is not just a matter of a few ideas that suddenly popped up in some people's heads, or that they just "hate May Day." There are reasons why this is so. This struggle is rooted in the objective conditions that exist today in this country and the world, and the questions that are posed by that. America—once on top of the world capitalist dung heap—is truly in decline. Some feel they have some stake in it, and wish to cling on to what will soon surely be a corpse in history's bone yard. Others, for whom life has been intolerable and is becoming more so, now see that they have no stake at all in this system, no "safe haven" in store, and they long for the coming opportunity to end this madness called American society.

These two roads are clashing in society, and—because of this—are sure to clash inside the revolutionary ranks. Just as the reactionary road is historically doomed in society, so too the Revolutionary Communist Party is firm and clear that it will flop inside its own ranks too, drowned out by the surging tide of those who are determined to see May 1st be a major step toward revolution here.

We are not playing a "game" or calling a calm "protest"—politely begging about our conditions—we are holding International Workers Day. Gone must be all remnants of "fail safe" thinking—holding back "so as not to lose so much." Instead, our orientation is that spelled out recently by the Chairman: "If you're afraid of losing what you've got—and this goes for state power too—then how can you be a revolutionary." This Party is prepared to risk a lot to win a lot. We will not emerge on the other side of May 1st with every aspect of the Party intact as it is now.

One of the new forces that we know of who came forward to be on the May Day Brigades came forward with the belief that "we will make revolution on May 1st." This, of course, is not what we are out to do, and our task now is not to aim to mobilize the sizeable section of the class that will be necessary to do that. But the basic spirit and attitude of that new person is infinitely preferable to the "we won't really do it" sentiment—spoken or unspoken—that lurks in the corners. The role of revolutionary science is then to temper and sharpen this basic spirit—not to douse it.

In the four weeks that remain until May Day, our orientation is the one set out back in the original May Day Manifesto "We must come from behind, catch up to the gathering momentum and march to the head of it, enabling the revolutionary movement and the conscious understanding of millions of people to take a leap forward, to keep pace with the rapidly changing times. And we must do this

now, for if we do not we may very well miss the tremendous possibilities that lie ahead."

One result of Button Day is that many more people much more consciously share that orientation. Revolutionary masses, it is true, face many difficulties. But it is their Party and their future. And what they have going for them—even more today—is that they dare to think and do, they dare to dauntlessly go forward, to break with the old. This is powerful indeed, and the Party is determined to lead it forward.

Part of leading this forward means carrying the struggle forward, to deflate and defeat those who insist on holding back the tide. A line like this has to be defeated in a struggle, it cannot be defeated in practice alone. But even more important now, it cannot really be defeated except through practice, and the struggle for May 1st must go ahead at a far faster rate. It must not be dragged back. The basis is there even more firmly than before to do this.

## Red Flag—Internationale

As a major step to May 1st, the Party and the National May Day Committee are calling for Thursday, April 24, one week before May 1st, to be Red Flag—Internationale Day. This will be a day when all those who want May Day will come into action—50,000 red flags will fly as a declaration and a signal of what lies a week ahead. It will be a day when those same people will flex their muscle—and all rise together at 1:55 P.M. in

the East, 12:55 Central time, 11:55 A.M. Mountain time, 10:55 in the West, and 7:55 in Hawaii—and join their voices in defiant singing of the *Internationale*—the anthem of the international working class. It will be a day, and the beginning of a last week, in which things will begin to rip, when others—friend and foe alike—really begin to get the sense that "these people are serious!" about May 1st; and people will let this be known in a thousand ways.

It will not only be the Party that will begin making these red flags; garment workers must begin doing it. Rolls of cloth will be brought into the plants, housing projects and schools, as the masses themselves take a hand. This will really begin to set the stage for breaking out on May 1st.

The conditions are there. The Party's new *Draft Programme and Constitution* is there to help raise the sights of the revolutionary fighters. This newspaper, the *Revolutionary Worker*, is coming out every week full of fresh new ammunition in this May Day struggle against enemies of all kinds. Button Day has set off a new stage. There are four weeks left until May Day. This means both that the time is urgent, and yet there is plenty of time if we seize it. The revolutionary forces are rising and the forces of backwardness will not be allowed to take the day. May 1st will win out.

"The spring thunder resounds, urging me to march to the battle field." □

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# Holy Water

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The new Zimbabwean Minister of Labor took to the radio to tell everyone to go back to work. In effect he argued that they should not try to take matters into their own hands, that their leaders would make things better for them in due time and that the main thing now was to keep the economy running—the white settler-controlled economy.

Mugabe himself has made a guiding principle of his new government the least possible disruption of the white settler and imperialist interests, promising gradual change sometime off in the future. There will certainly have to be some changes. Everyone, including the British and the U.S., realize that. The people will not long tolerate living in the old way. In his efforts to deal with these demands, without breaking the economic power or expropriating the vast holdings of the imperialists (65% of Rhodesian industry, with the bulk of the rest held by white settlers), Mugabe will "have some help from friends," reports *Newsweek*. "The U.S., Britain and other western governments indicated willingness to help with such priority items as public health and agricultural development." You might even say that the imperialists are eager and anxious to get their hands deeper into Zimbabwe, this time under the guise of aiding the people and their new government. And the Soviet imperialists are right there also, using whatever leverage they have through the liberation organizations.

*Workers Viewpoint* has cooked up a raggedy "Marxist" theoretical justification for Mugabe's conciliation and capitulation with the white settler military forces and political and economic structure. "Chairman Mao himself entered three united fronts during the Chinese national liberation struggle," they argue. "Mao continuously emphasized the need for and the relationship between the three magic weapons: the communist party, armed struggle and the united front." They might also add that Mao himself warned against the reactionaries who would use his words to defeat what he stood for.

Yes, Mao put forward the necessity of entering united fronts in the struggle against imperialism, a united front of the working class and the masses of people with those forces who objectively opposed imperialist domination. As he said in *On New Democracy*, "No matter what classes, parties or individuals in an oppressed nation join the revolution, and no matter whether they themselves are conscious of the point and understand it, so long as they oppose imperialism, their revolution becomes part of the proletarian socialist world revolution, and they become its allies."

But what argument is the *Workers Viewpoint* making? That by uniting with the military leader of the imperialist-backed white settler regime in Rhodesia, ZANU is entering an anti-imperialist united front? That by temporizing and conciliating with the imperialists themselves, Mugabe has entered a united front with the imperialists and their lackeys against imperialism? Come on! In their efforts to justify ZANU's settlement with the imperialists and white settlers by raising the "three magic weapons," *Workers Viewpoint* manages only to slice up its own arguments.

Objectively, Mugabe and the top leadership of ZANU, along with Joshua Nkomo and ZAPU, represent an aspiring national bourgeoisie. The class forces they represent are able, up to a point, to play an objectively anti-imperialist role, as they did in the long guerrilla struggle against Smith and the British. But they are not able to carry this struggle through to completion or victory. They do not see the power of the masses united in struggle as principal. Rather, they see themselves as "saviors" of the masses. And naturally, they believe that once they themselves are in power, or share power, then the interests of the masses will be served. History has time and again debunked this. In fact, once they are in power, or in this case, to get into

power, they rely not on the masses of people, but on wheeling and dealing with the imperialists, what *Workers Viewpoint* calls "outmaneuvering" the imperialists. But in the realm of the wheeling and dealing of bourgeois politics, the Mugabes are late-comers and outclassed. They use the struggle of the masses as leverage for their own advancement and end up dragging the country into neo-colonialism.

Underlying *Workers Viewpoint's* distortion of the reality of developments in Zimbabwe today is their own thinly disguised embrace of the "3 worlds" theory, made an international "strategic concept" by the Chinese revisionists after Mao's death. This "theory" is not based on advancing the interests of world revolution, but is based on sacrificing support for revolutionary struggles with the justification of uniting countries against the "main danger" of the Soviet Union. Because the "three worlds" strategy of the Chinese is a recipe for capitulation, it has found ardent supporters in many countries throughout the world among those self-styled "Marxists" anxious to grab hold of any justification for capitulating to their own bourgeoisie. They have found this "theory" a handy justification for ignoring and in fact opposing the genuine struggles for national liberation in the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, or for jumping in to say right on, right on, you've won, you've won, stop fighting, when the U.S. imperialists or their allies find a way to temporarily cool things out.

This same capitulation to U.S. imperialism is seen in the *Workers Viewpoint* (and CPML, and the rest) analysis of developments in Iran. While protesting that U.S. imperialism remains the main enemy of the Iranian people, *Workers Viewpoint* argues that the Iranians should drop their demand for the return of the Shah and conciliate with the U.S. because "the Soviet invasion (of Afghanistan) changed the balance of forces facing the Iranian people," and they go on to argue that the Iranian people cannot and should not "take on both superpowers at the same time." (i.e. take on the Soviets, not the U.S.)


In defending Iranian president Bani-Sadr's attempts to conciliate with the U.S. (efforts already challenged and rebuffed on several occasions by the militant students and revolutionaries) constructs the same dream world argument that they have with Mugabe and ZANU in Zimbabwe: Since victory has already been won against U.S. imperialism, any deals or compromises made with these imperialists are just fine, particularly if it clears the decks for opposing the Soviets. It's no coincidence that these are the same arguments made by the U.S. imperialists themselves. As it is for the Chinese, this three world's theory is nothing more than a raggedy excuse for colluding and capitulating to U.S. imperialism. The people of the "third world" must unite with the people of western Europe and Japan (who must in turn unite with their own capitalists) and the unite with the U.S. imperialists to take on the Soviets.

In the end, *Workers Viewpoint* is reduced to the pathetic argument that "even if a right-wing coup comes, who speaks for Zimbabwe is settled. Now with even more legitimacy and authority, ZANU has the right to organize the resources of the government and of the country." With the settlement, ZANU has been able to "gain worldwide and domestic legitimacy and support for their military fight" (which, of course, they have abandoned). But in whose eyes are they supposedly seeking legitimacy? ZANU always claimed, and rightly so, that they had legitimacy in the eyes of the masses of Zimbabwean people, a legitimacy gained in seven years of armed struggle against the Smith regime. They certainly had legitimacy in the eyes of revolutionaries and other progressive people who support the liberation of Zimbabwe from minority rule and imperialist domination. What *Workers Viewpoint* means is now they have legitimacy in the eyes of the imperialists and in "diplomatic circles." But that legitimacy came not because of the election victory, but because they agreed to play ball.

Presumably *Workers Viewpoint* would have also argued that the people of China, led by Mao and the Chinese Communist Party, should not have driven Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang off the mainland, but entered into a coalition government with them in 1949 so that they could have had legitimacy in the eyes of the imperialists.

The principal aspect of *Workers Viewpoint's* defense of Mugabe and ZANU's capitulation is their own willingness to conciliate with and cover for U.S. imperialism. But there is also a secondary, and no less disgusting, aspect of their antics: their own efforts to gain "legitimacy" by trying to capitalize on the spontaneous sentiments

among many Black people in the U.S. for continued support for ZANU, and by playing up to reformist and reactionary Black nationalists who don't really care if a government or party or individual is anti-imperialist, only that they be black and in power. Hence their silly and sad attempts to paint the RCP as racist for daring to criticize black leaders and organization in Zimbabwe. These games they play only emphasize the fact that they really do not give a damn whether the people of Zimbabwe are in the process of winning genuine liberation from imperialism and the white Rhodesian reactionaries or not. Once again, the *Workers Viewpoint*, like their fellow revisionists and pseudo-revolutionaries, have gone out of their way to disorient and disarm the masses. No wonder they like Mugabe so much. □



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**Correction**

In last week's issue of the *RW*, the article on page 4 reporting on the international meeting in Paris to support the struggle to keep Bob Avakian and the Mao Defendants free contained incorrect names of two of the organizations that helped organize the meeting or sent messages. One is a group in France, the *Marxist-Leninist Communist Organization Proletarian Way*, and the other is a Marxist-Leninist organization in Tunisia, *Ech-Choola*.

# Decline

Continued from page 14

so transformed the character of that struggle.

Today, as analyzed, there are real reasons that the U.S. working class is mainly a sleeping giant. The backward elements put a lot of pressure on the more advanced. For many in the working class there has not been the experience of sustained and militant political struggle like that which others went through in the 1960s, and there are still some crumbs to grab hold of and protect, some straws to grasp at. This, however, is not the total picture, even today. There are tens, even hundreds of thousands right now, within the working class, who not only wish for a drastic change in their lives but are convinced that this system has got to go; tens, hundreds of thousands who are open to the idea of revolution and who can be welded into a potent force which can activate the rest of the working class as the conditions ripen and can influence untold masses beyond their numbers. This is not the same working class of the 1950s. It contains significant elements with broader experiences: Vietnam veterans whose eyes were opened by a war of plunder, those among the youth who rebelled against the system, women who have arisen against their restricted and oppressed condition, and most of all large numbers of revolutionary-minded people from among the oppressed nationalities.

The ingredients of a mass movement in this country are these stirrings in the working class, the other movements and struggles which are like tributaries into the working class, and the convulsions that will rock this system with the aggravation of the economic crisis and the moves towards war. There is something else. That is the existence of a revolutionary vanguard, of a party which is armed with a correct understanding of the international and domestic situation and where developments are heading, which is capable of summing up the experiences of the masses and organizing and leading the armed onslaught against the bourgeoisie. A party cannot create a revolutionary situation; yet preparing for and utilizing the opportunities presented by such a situation requires this political leadership. When the contradictions accumulating reach such a point, then even the most minor flare-ups form part of a larger struggle. They take on an added significance when the system is vulnerable to a frontal assault, and because of this, and in conjunction with the leadership of the working class's vanguard, many such struggles will go over to the political realm—this is what happened in Iran among the oil workers.

But it would be wrong and naive to suppose that there will be a smooth development of things such that the working class and its vanguard will neatly gather the strength to take on the bourgeoisie as everything else falls in place. As the authority of the

bourgeoisie breaks down, powerful forces will be unleashed throughout society. Uprisings and torrents of resistance involving different sections of the population and with dynamics of their own will be more the order of the day. Movements and struggles concentrated, perhaps, among some of the oppressed nationalities or in various regions of the country and in which other organized forces, with programs of their own, command the respect and allegiance of substantial numbers of people, will, no doubt, arise. Under these complicated conditions the working class and its vanguard must seek a basis of unity with such forces while maintaining its independence and without ceasing to fight resolutely for leadership in the overall struggle and without compromising the basic interests of the masses.

The decisive question for the future is whether the working class can raise its head above the petty and mundane and grasp its historic role. That there will be turmoil in society is undeniable; where it will go depends in large measure on the capacity of the working class to take independent action in the broadest interests of society, that is, revolutionary action. The dialectic that has been etched out here is that already the conditions faced by people along with the social and political strains in society have sparked struggle and raised big questions in people's minds. Yet, what has been experienced is nothing compared with what lies ahead: war and a more cataclysmic decline in the economy. Is the situation, then, one of a waiting game? No, because the actions of the advanced sections of the working class can act as a lightning rod, as it were, to the rest of the working class and point the way forward to the diverse strata whose rumblings can be felt. The actions and stand taken by the advanced will right now call into question and sharpen the struggle within the ranks of the working class around the illusions and, yes, the rot and reaction which some still cling to. The class-conscious minority can accelerate—under the leadership of the Party—the tempo of development which will see millions awaken and thirst for change when a sharp and sudden turn in daily existence takes place. To go into the maelstrom of controversy and emotion around Iran, for example, to uphold the revolutionary interests of the international working class in support of that struggle, is not only to help make it possible for those who are confused and misled to break with such reaction and unleash those whom the ruling class would want to intimidate and demoralize, but to temper and train the advanced for a time when society will be rent by far more intense social conflict—and even then the majority may initially be “on the wrong side.”

The possibility of revolution in the United States cannot be ascertained from the existing level of struggle in this country—or the existing objective situation. It is based on what is developing throughout the world. The fragility of the imperialist bloc headed up by the United States and the extraordinary attempts to induce a war hysteria are an

economic and political barometer of the objective weakness of the ruling class; it is far from being down and out, but it is extremely desperate. There are seeds of the future in the current battles of the working class and other sections of the people; more important is what the future holds in store and how to prepare through these battles for it.

The particular position of U.S. imperialism in the world, a source of unprecedented strength in the past, is now, in dialectical relation, pressing in on it. Here in the United States we are dealing with the prospect of mass unemployment, the possibility of territory being “seized” by the “enemy,” of the terror of war and the ruling class which must resort to vastly repressive means here at home to prosecute it. The ruling class must take a different road with respect to the masses than what it has taken in the post-war period and even since the downturn of 1974-75. All those things which were taken for granted, that there would be gas at a pump, that schools would be open to send children to—they are not so certain any more, and so there are riots and near-riots over such things as the gas shortage. The spreading insecurity of life, the bottom falling out for millions, with a shutdown here, a credit squeeze there, such that there is no longer even a job for millions (a lousy job, but a job nonetheless, and maybe a Superbowl as entertainment); the dislocations of war—all this will wrench people's lives and intensify the disorder in society. Right here in the United States. The ruling class has on more than one occasion referred to the cities with their huge concentrations of poor as “time bombs” ready to go off; not a few officials have worried just about what would happen if for some reason welfare checks were cut off. The same ruling class bent every effort to beat back and smooth over the contagion of anger among the more strategic sections of the industrial proletariat in 1974-75. They have expressed great concern over the response of the youth to the draft and the influence of Vietnam-era veterans.

The United States may well turn out to be a place where the chain snaps in the coming conflagration, given the accumulation of all these contradictions. Whether it actually turns out to be the case or not, it is this possibility which the class-conscious section of the working class and revolutionary fighters must prepare for. It is to prepare to scale the heights of history. □

27. Roger J. Sullivan, Jeffrey M. Ranney and Richard S. Soll, *The Potential Effect of Crisis Relocation on Crisis Stability*, prepared for the U.S. Defense Civil Preparedness Agency (Arlington: System Planning Corporation, 1978), p. 122.
28. Kevin N. Lewis, “The Prompt and Delayed Effects of Nuclear War,” *Scientific American*, Volume 241, No. 1 (July 1979), pp. 35-47.
29. *Washington Post*, February 11, 1979.
30. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 105 and p. 160.
31. Bob Avakian, *Revolutionary Work in a Non-Revolutionary Situation* (Chicago: RCP Publications, 1978), pp. 6-7.

# BORDER

Continued from page 3

the Mexican workers who had just crossed the border to see if they would get hired today. In the first streaks of daylight the silhouette of an airplane could be seen swooping low, looking for “illegals”. Sitting on the side of the road, like a pale green snake, was the Migra van awaiting orders. As we spoke with them we found a deep hatred for U.S. imperialism among most of the workers in the parking lot. There were some who actually believed that the U.S. assisted Mexico by being in their country, or others who sought explanations for all the misery by looking up to heaven—but they were in the minority. As we talked about the plans for demonstrations for Thursday, May 1st, Revolutionary May Day, the workers began to gather around and listen intently. “It would inspire us and give the Mexican people hope to make revolution if you did it in the U.S.,” said the van driver. “Even if you were unsuccessful it would inspire us to rise up,” he added as 12 other heads nodded agreement. The question on many workers' minds as the conversations continued was, how would they get up to Los Angeles, 120 miles away, to join the May 1st march? These workers like many others we talked to were very heartened and also shocked to find revolutionary communists inside the U.S. But there was something else behind their desire to march in the demonstrations on Thursday, May 1st.

In Mexico, May Day is “officially” celebrated and has been bastardized into something like Labor Day (Día de Trabajadores—Day of the Workers). Its revolutionary heart has been ruthlessly gouged out so now the most radical demand is for “more democracy

for the workers” (translation: more voice in the government for the union leaders). The workers we talked to had no idea of May Day as a revolutionary day because in Mexico it is not. We talked to a man from Spain who now lives in Tijuana. His first year in Mexico he said he went into the streets on May 1st with great anticipation of seeing May Day in Mexico. “What I saw was busloads of workers pulling up and as they unloaded there was a union official taking roll call. If the workers are not there they get fined and suspended for 5 to 7 days. After the roll call, whenever the workers get the chance, they would disappear into the crowd,” he told us.

“It is used to cover things up,” Ramon explained. “May 1st is taken advantage of by the government and union leaders to talk tough. On May 2nd it is all forgotten.”

“There are big parades and speeches at the municipal palace. All the unions, (in Mexico there are 3 main ones sponsored by the government), talk about better salaries and how we have to wait for things to get better. It is not against the government and it is not a revolutionary day. It should be,” ends Raoul.

Primero de Mayo, the First of May, has been twisted into a very valuable safety valve for the Mexican ruling class in channeling the desire for revolution into a reformist, meat and potatoes, trade-unionist dead end. It is a day that celebrates wage slavery under the reins of U.S. imperialism and is promoted by the politicians and trade union hacks of Mexico's bourgeoisie. In fact, the propaganda for the First of May celebrations is sent to all trade unions by the federal government in Mexico City two weeks in advance. It's a very well orchestrated show, or as Raoul put it, “it's a big parade for better conditions and higher wages with a splash of red

thrown in.”

But has it always been like that? The reason that the Mexican government had to take over May Day and was not able just to do away with it altogether has to do with the Mexican people's strong tradition of fighting for freedom and the simmering cauldron of political dissent that is Mexico today. On November 11th, 1911, in commemoration of the hanging execution of the 4 Haymarket martyrs, Ricardo Flores Magon, leader of the Partido Liberal Mexicano (PLM), gave a speech calling on the Mexican workers to give up the idea of peaceful change and begin picking up the gun. “Strikes have gone out of fashion,” “Long live expropriation, Long Live the Red Flag. Violence has long been the right of the bourgeoisie. Violence must become the right of the oppressed... Liberty is not won on our knees, it is won on our feet. Returning blow for blow, wound for wound, death for death, humiliation for humiliation, and punishment for punishment. Let there be blood flowing in torrents—that is the price of liberty...” And he called on all workers to hear this message that comes from the graves of those killed in Haymarket Square in Chicago.

Magon spoke the language of internationalism. After he was exiled from Mexico in 1904 he joined up with the IWW (Industrial Workers of the World) in the U.S. and at one point they joined together to form the Proletarian Army which seized, by force of arms, Tijuana and Ensenada in Baja, California. Magon was later jailed by the U.S. government and murdered by them in prison.

Today's May Day in Mexico, with its fancy language about class struggle and with its union leaders talking about “unity and proletarian emancipation” on some of their posters, has nothing to

do with armed working class revolution. With its splash of red thrown in to blind the working class, and with its union nicknames like, “Alba Roja” (Red Dawn) it is nothing more than “white unions” parading beneath the crimson flag. Workers have even had the Internationale stolen from them and it is not to be heard at the official May Day.

But on this May 1st, workers in Mexico and around the world will be inspired and heartened that right in the belly of the beast there is a section of the working class and others who are raising the red flag for real on May 1st and preparing for revolution. “If they know May Day is going on, led by the RCP,” Raoul told us, summing up the feelings of millions oppressed by the U.S., “all over the world, but especially in Latin America where their chains are tighter on us, there will be rejoicing.” □

